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Once Upon a Time in Mexico: Teacher Tales About Development and Identity Formation in an Evolving Profession

TESIS

PARA OBTENER EL GRADO DE MAESTRÍA EN LINGÜÍSTICA APLICADA A LA ENSEÑANZA DEL INGLÉS

PRESENTA

AMANDA K. WILSON

GUANAJUATO, GUANAJUATO, MEXICO

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Tesis Director

Dra. M. Martha Lengeling

Examination Committee

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Prólogo

Esta investigación explora el impacto en el desarrollo docente y la identidad resultante de una evolución en la enseñanza del idioma inglés. Los siete participantes son profesores cuya experiencia agregada abarca un periodo de veintitrés años enseñando inglés en una universidad pública en el centro de la República Mexicana. Los efectos de esta "profesionalización" de la enseñanza del idioma inglés son vistos a través de revivir y volver a contar las historias de estos participantes que viven y han vivido la experiencia de la enseñanza del idioma inglés en México. Utilizando un enfoque cualitativo, esta investigación muestra las historias narradas de estos profesores de inglés a través de un lente activista. Las historias de estos maestros nos permiten obtener una perspectiva retrospectiva de sus experiencias, proporcionando una visión de cómo esta evolución en la enseñanza del inglés ha afectado su desarrollo profesional y su identidad como profesores. En sus narrativas, se revela un camino que ha ido cambiando a través de cerca de un cuarto de siglo, y que nos muestra desde el estímulo temprano, o incluso la presión de la institución sobre los profesores de inglés para desarrollarse profesionalmente, hasta la motivación para el desarrollo docente que ahora pareciera venir de los propios profesores. Esta motivación intrínseca por el profesionalismo parece nacer de un sentimiento de que este trabajo es importante, lo cual podría ser visto como un sentido de vocación, a la par de la marginación simultánea de la enseñanza del idioma inglés y cómo los maestros se enfrentan a las realidades de la profesionalización de la enseñanza del inglés en México. Este estudio no pretende ofrecer una revisión exhaustiva de las experiencias de los maestros en todo el país, sino más bien, una instantánea de los maestros en un entorno de una universidad durante el cuarto de siglo pasado hasta el presente.

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Chapter One: Introduction to the Study

1.1 Introduction

This study explores the effect on teacher professional development and professional identity formation resulting from the "professionalization" [1] of English language teaching (ELT) [2] that has taken place at a public University in central Mexico over the past quarter of a century. In this chapter, I will provide the background for this study by explaining why this topic is relevant globally and in Mexico, and why it interests me, and then introduce some of the relevant theoretical concepts that support this research. I will then describe the purpose of the study, outlining the research paradigm, methodology, and data-gathering techniques, and introduce some potential contributions from this exploration. Finally, I will provide an outline of the organization of this thesis.

1.2 Background of the Study

English has become an international language, a modern-day *lingua franca* (Davies, 2007, p. 11; Petrón & Greybeck, 2014, p. 144), and understanding this reality, Mexico as a country has adopted policies to promote the study of English in public schools (Sayer, 2015, p. 258). Moreover, Mexican students are studying English at record rates in order to enjoy increased job opportunities in a global economy. The forces generated by this reality have caused an evolution in English language teaching in Mexico. Central to this scenario are the English language teachers, and they are therefore the focal point of this study. Examining how the participants in this study have developed as teachers and formed professional identities permits a view of English language teacher "professionalism," especially as it has been affected by the concurrent "professionalization" of English language teaching.

[1] Quotation marks for terms derived from "profession" are used here to indicate that the meaning of the term is at issue, and is being examined in this thesis.

[2] ELT is used in this study to refer to both teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) and teaching of English as a second language (ESL).

My interest in ELT as a "profession" in this context stems from my position as a transplant both in location, from the U.S. to Mexico, and profession, from lawyer to English language teacher. Questions about my own transplanted identity have made me curious about my new colleagues and the journeys which have brought them to this place and occupation. The place I find myself is a public University in central Mexico. There are many transplants here, from other countries as well as other places within Mexico. By sharing their stories, the teachers and student-teacher participating in this study permit their lives to be examined as a means of discovering who they are and what has shaped them along their path. Their tales of the experiences and the journeys that brought them to this place and occupation reveal both how they have developed as teachers as well as how their professional identities have been formed, which are both key to understanding ELT as a "profession."

1.3 Literature Review of Key Concepts in the Thesis

1.3.1 Theoretical Framework in the Field

The theory that supports this research is related to teacher experiences, and how those experiences shape both the professional development of teachers and teacher identity formation. This sociocultural perspective adopted here is grounded in a Vygotskian view: "[I]t is through others that we develop into ourselves" (Vygotsky, 1981, p. 161). How individuals develop as teachers, and how their professional identities are formed are defined by both the "personal" and the "contextual," and as the context includes the profession itself, terms related to the "professionalism" of teachers and the "professionalization" of teaching are also key to this analysis.

1.3.2 Teacher Professional Development

Teacher professional development has been defined as "activity focused on helping experienced as well as beginning teachers strengthen their teaching capabilities" (Lortie, 2002, p. viii), and is recognized to be distinct from teacher training as it concerns complex processes involving how teachers enter the field, their socialization as teachers, and their motivation to develop professionally. The complexity of teacher development is a consequence of both the uniqueness and individuality of teachers, representing the "personal" aspect of teacher development, as well as their different and unique environments, or the "contextual" aspect. Sociocultural theory incorporates the Russian

term *perezhivanie* (Vygotsky, 1994), meaning that different people may react to the same environment in different ways, to recognize the "personal" part of the equation in teacher development. A teacher's experiences prior to entering the field, as well as their working and societal contexts, combine to comprise the "contextual" influence on teacher development. The interplay of the "contextual" and "personal" in teacher development involves a dialogic process by which an external influence is internalized, appropriated, externalized, and shared or shaped by additional external input, and then re-internalized and re-contextualized. This process recognizes the role of a teacher's reflective process to his or her development as a teacher and awareness, which is as distinct and unique as the individual.

Part of the complexity of teacher development involves how teachers enter the field. English language teachers in many parts of the world, including Mexico, have enjoyed a rather unique entry path to the teaching profession based solely on their ability with the language: "falling into the job" (Lengeling, 2007, 2010). With no prior formal education in teaching EFL, teachers who find themselves in these circumstances may turn to what Lortie (2002) referred to as "the apprenticeship of observation" (p. 62) to guide them as they began their teaching careers. This experience, common in Mexico, impacts their socialization into the teaching community as well as their motivation to develop professionally as English language teachers.

1.3.3 Teacher Professional Identity Formation

Teacher professional identity formation is also important to understand as it impacts how teachers develop as well as how they teach. Identity formation is an ongoing process, and like teacher development, it is also a complex process as it is similarly shaped by the "personal," one's personal beliefs, values, and history, as well as "contextual" influences, one's environment and experiences (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Clandinin, et al., 2006; Day, 2007; Johnston, 2003; Vygotsky, 1981). The study of teacher professional identity includes the processes related to formation of identity, the issue of marginalization and self-marginalization by language teachers, and an understanding of identity within the notion of a "profession" and the development of a "professional" identity.

As the "contextual" is recognized to be a powerful force in teacher identity formation, the position and status of the profession, as perceived by the teacher, affect identity. Teaching itself is a marginalized profession, and English language teaching has been dubbed "the lowest of the low" (Breshears, 2004, p. 23). How the individual both perceives and reacts to a societal judgment about their work depends on the "personal," as well as the context of the individual. While some English language teachers might push back against such marginalization by society by seeking to develop professionally in order to be "seen" as professional, others could react by refusing to engage in a system in which they feel taken advantage of (Johnston, 2003). Still others may form identities which conform with this societal marginalization, adopting an attitude of being "just" someone who teaches English. This self-marginalization of English language teachers has been recognized in several contexts around the globe (Breshears, 2004; Johnston, 1999; McKnight, 1992; Overbeek, 2014). Given the importance of a teacher's sense of "professionalism" to their identity, it is important to understand how "profession" and related terms are understood in the context of ELT.

1.3.4 "Professionalism" of Teachers and "Professionalization" of Teaching

When we combine an understanding of identity with the notion of "profession" and the development of "professional" identity, the complexity is manifold. As this study is concerned with teacher identity as it is affected by the "profession," the focus must necessarily be on "professional" identity within the ELT context. As with identity in general, the "professional" identity of teachers has been determined to be a function of unique, individual life experiences as well as environment, which in this case is the teaching workplace in Mexico.

How the terms "profession," "professionalism," and "professionalization" are applied to teaching and teachers varies widely in the literature from a strict comparison to professions such as law and medicine, to a middle-ground definition relying on special education and a dedication to the career, to the idea of being paid for work done, as opposed to a recreational. For purposes of this study, I propose a definition for "professionalism" that includes education, competence, and integrity on the part of teachers, while professional associations, journals, conferences, and professional qualifications shall be indicative of the "professionalization" of teaching.

1.4 Purpose of the Study and Potential Contribution

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of English language teachers and a student-teacher whose experience working at a public University in central Mexico spans the past twenty-three years. The question being investigated is:

> How have teacher development and professional identity formation of EFL teachers and a student-teacher at a public University in central Mexico been impacted by the evolution of ELT in Mexico over the past twenty-three years?

1.4.1 Paradigm, Methodology, and Techniques for the Study

Using a qualitative approach, this research views the narrated stories of six English teachers and one student-teacher through an activist lens. Teachers' stories allow us to gain a retrospective perspective of their experiences, "the big stories" (Barkhuizen, 2014, p. 1), providing a view of how this evolution in English teaching has impacted their development and identity as teachers. Their stories are told through semi-structured and unstructured interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observations. Recognizing that my own personal bias could be reflected in the re-telling of their stories, participant involvement in the process, by creating their own pseudonyms to be used in the study and reviewing both the selection of their life experiences to be included as well as the narration of their stories, increases the validity of the study.

This study is not intended to provide a comprehensive review of English language teachers, or provide generalizations about EFL teachers in Mexico or even at a particular institution. Rather, it provides a snapshot of teachers and a student-teacher who have worked in one University setting during the past quarter-century. Perhaps English language teachers in other locations may recognize something in what they read here and be able to add to the conversation about their own professionalism within this evolving profession. Some concepts that may contribute to the conversation are outlined next.

1.4.2 Potential Contribution of the Study

The idea of ELT as a "profession" is relatively recent, and while studies related to the "professionalization" of English language teaching have been conducted in other parts of the world (Breshears, 2004; Johnston, 1999; McKnight, 1992; Overbeek, 2014), research specific to Mexico is limited. Moreover, within the Mexican context, research

has focused more on the "personal" aspect of teacher development and teacher identity, and similar ideas related to the "professionalism" of English language teachers (Hubbard, 1995; Lengeling, 2007, 2010; Ramirez R. & Moreno Glockner, 2007). The "contextual" aspect of teacher development and identity formation resulting from the broader social and economic context in Mexico has not been explored in any depth. The causal relationship between the "professionalism" of teachers and the "professionalization" of ELT similarly has not been explored in depth. The stories of the teachers and student-teacher here, whose experiences span a quarter of a century at a single public University in Mexico, provide a view of how the evolution of English language teaching has motivated and shaped their development as teachers, and how it has affected the formation of their identities as teachers.

The study of teacher identity formation is even more recent, and much of the research regarding teacher development and identity formation has relied on a model in which teachers enter the field after receiving some sort of teacher training and education, thereby commenting generally on their development and identity formation while student teachers. That model, however, has not generally applied to English language teachers, and certainly not in Mexico where teachers historically have entered the field primarily because of their ability with the language.

This research further provides a glimpse into the socialization process for teachers who "fall into the job." As mentioned above, much of the prior research regarding teacher identity has focused on a traditional model in which student teachers begin to teach after formal training has been completed, which does not address the process for those who enter the profession without any formal training or education. This study builds on prior research (Lengeling, 2007, 2010) in the exploration of how teachers in this context begin to form their identities as teachers and the development process they experience.

1.5 Organization of the Thesis

In the next chapter, I provide the theoretical framework for this study and review relevant literature, beginning with a discussion of teacher development and teacher identity formation, followed by a review of the terms "professionalism" and "professionalization" as related to their interplay with teacher development and identity. Chapter Three describes the paradigm, ideology, methodology, and techniques I used to

explore the consequences for teachers from the professionalization of English teaching in Mexico, as well as the participants' involvement in the re-storying of their individual narratives. The narrated stories of the teachers and student teacher who have lived, re-lived, and shared their stories and experiences as English teachers at a public University in Mexico during almost a quarter of a century are told in Chapter Four. It is through the re-telling of their stories that an image of their experiences teaching English in Mexico emerges, as well as an understanding of how their experiences have affected their development as teachers and professional identity formation. Finally, in Chapter Five, I summarize what has been discovered through this narrative process, and the implications for the study of teacher development and teacher identity in ELT in Mexico. I also consider some limitations of the study, and finally, propose recommendations for future research in this area.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Now recognized as an international language, English has become an important ingredient for success in a global economy, and recognizing this, the Mexican government has taken actions promoting the study of English in public schools. Moreover, Mexican students are taking advantage of their opportunities to study English to increase their job opportunities in the global economy. The forces generated by this reality have caused an evolution in English language teaching in Mexico. This study adopts a sociocultural perspective in exploring the experiences of English teachers at a public University in central Mexico during the past twenty-three years in order to provide a view of the impact the "professionalization" of English language teaching has on teacher "professionalism," as illustrated through teacher development and identity.

Within this framework, I examine issues related to teacher development, including an examination of how language teachers enter the field, their socialization as teachers, and their motivation to develop professionally. I also explore issues related to teacher identity, including how identity is formed, the issue of self-marginalization by language teachers, and an understanding of identity within the notion of a "profession" and the development of a "professional" identity.

Interconnected with teacher development and identity formation are the ideas embedded in the terms "professionalism" and "professionalization." Thus far, there does not appear to be agreement on the meaning of these terms within or outside of the ELT community. As the focus of this study is teacher development and identity within a framework of ELT "professionalization," however, the terms "professionalism" and "professionalization" are key to a recognition of their interplay with these concepts. I therefore end this discussion in this chapter with a review of the etymology and semantics of the word "profession," and then examine how the terminology has developed and been defined in the literature, how "professionalism" of teachers and "professionalization" of

English teaching have been distinguished, and how that distinction has been applied in Mexico.

As this research is grounded in sociocultural theory and adopts a Vygotskian perspective, I begin with a discussion of that theoretical framework.

2.2 Theoretical Framework for this Study

This is an examination of teacher "professionalism," the professional development and identity formation of language teachers, within the context of the "professionalization" of English language teaching, focusing on "teachers' broader experiences as a core feature" (Cross, 2010, p. 436) of the research. In recognizing that it is teachers' experiences that shape both their professional development and identity formation, this research adopts a sociocultural perspective grounded in a Vygotskian view that "it is through others that we develop into ourselves" (Vygotsky, 1981, p. 161).

Sociocultural theory places emphasis on the role our external world plays and the impact it has in influencing the development of our internal selves. Vygotskian theory holds that "[i]t is the internalization of… external interactions that leads to the development of higher psychological functions" (Cross, 2010, p.439). It is therefore not only relevant, but important to this study regarding the impact the professionalization of English language teaching has on teacher professionalism. As Daniels, Cole, and Wertsch (2007) explain, the "human mind must be understood as the emergent outcome of cultural-historical processes" (p. 1). Both the history of the individual and the cultural or contextual influences are important factors in the development of the human mind, as seen through teacher professional development and identity formation. It is not possible for the "person and environment [to] be analytically separated and temporally ordered into independent and dependent variables" (Cole, 1996, p. 103). Both the individual and the environment in which he or she works and lives are critical to an understanding of the person. "[T]o understand the inner mental processes of human beings, we must look at human beings in their sociocultural context" (van der Veer, 2007, p. 21).

This is a relatively new perspective in research having to do with language teachers. As Cross explains:

> Early studies of language teacher cognition typically relied upon research designs reflecting a predominantly descriptive-analytic

> orientation, with a focus on the more immediate aspects of how teachers think and behave… [socioculturual theory] by way of contrast, requires historicity to be central in the overall design of the methodological and analytical framework; that is, any instance of observable activity that takes place in the present… is analyzed not only on the basis of what the teacher things… but also the genesis that underpins that thought/practice relationship. (p. 439)

A teacher's background and history, as well as context, are therefore relevant aspects of their development and identity formation.

In introducing this theory, Vygotsky used the Russian term *perezhivanie* to acknowledge the individuality of experience: "[T]he same environmental situation and the same environmental events can influence various people's development in different ways" because we each "experience[ ] the situation in a different way" (Vygotsky, 1994, p. 341). Thus, both the "individual" and the "contextual" are important to understanding teacher development and identity formation. Sociocultural theory and a Vygotskian perspective provide an effective "framework to understand the relationship among thinking, practice, and context" (Cross, 2010, p. 437; Golombek & Klager, 2015; Kanno & Stuart, 2011) when examining teacher development and identity formation. An important element of this theory is the recognition that for the individual teacher, these states are not static, but are continuously evolving because the context is continuously changing (Golombek & Klager, 2015, p. 19). Changes in context in turn affect the "individual" aspects, and the cycle continues to evolve. As Daniels, Cole, and Wertsch (2007) describe, "Development takes place, both inside and outside the skin" (p. 281).

Because of the interplay of the "individual" and the "contextual," and using these theories as a framework for this study, I also adopt the view that a fabric of interwoven threads connects the concepts of teacher professional development, teacher identity formation, the "professionalism" of English language teachers, and the "professionalization" of English language teaching. Teacher development and how teachers become teachers is the launching point for all that follows, and so I begin the literature review with a discussion of that topic.

2.3 Teacher Development

Teacher professional development has been defined as "activity focused on helping experienced as well as beginning teachers strengthen their teaching capabilities" (Lortie, 2002, p. viii; see also Diaz Maggioli, 2012; Head & Taylor, 1997), thereby allowing a teacher to become the best teacher he or she can be (Edge & Richards, 1993, p. 1; Underhill, 1986, p. 1). It ranges from top-down, formal programs designed for a multitude of teachers, to bottom-up "small-scale individual initiatives focusing on personal development" (Hayes, 2014, p. 6; see also Mann, 2005; Tahir, Qadir, & Malik, 2014). Teacher training, which "concerns knowledge of the topic to be taught, and of the methodology for teaching it… emphasiz[ing] classroom skills and techniques" (Head & Taylor, 1997, p. 9), is now distinguished from teacher development, which has "moved away from the traditional in-service teacher training… model" (Avalos, 2011, p. 17). In its place is a "recognition that teacher learning and development is a complex process that brings together a host of different elements" (Ibid.). What distinguishes teacher development is the acknowledgment of the teacher's reflective process as an "essential nature of teacher development" (Head & Taylor, 1997, p. 12). This "is a process of inner dialogue and conversation with self" which leads to a teacher's "awareness of practice" (Mann, 2005, p. 108). Johnston (2003) makes the distinction that "in ELT at least, teacher development is something that teachers themselves undertake and that is guided by the teachers concerned" (p. 95; see also Wallace, 1991).

As we have seen, teacher development has evolved from a more traditional idea of teacher training to a process involving teacher reflection, and as a result of this shift in emphasis, teacher development has been recognized to involve a complex process because of the individuality of teachers and their different contexts. The reflective process must in turn be as distinct and unique as the individual. The complexity created by this circle of "personal" and "contextual" influences arises because our individual experiences are interpreted through and by our individual "self," what Golombek and Doran (2014) called the "prism of *perezhivanie*" (p. 104, emphasis in original). This process is depicted below in *Figure 1*, the reflective process.

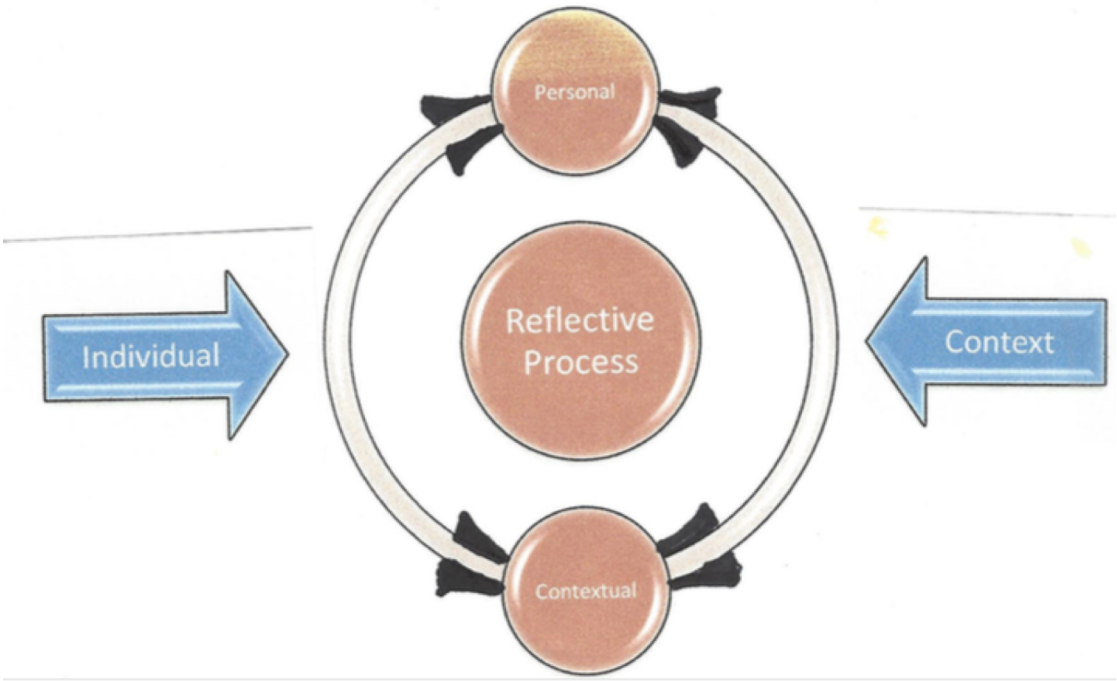

Figure 1. The reflective process, which involves a cycle of the individual interacting with their context, through a continuous circle of influence from both the personal and contextual.

Recognition of this reflective cycle has meant "that at the centre of the process, teachers continue to be both the subjects and objects of learning and development" (Avalos, 2011, p. 17). By studying how teachers learn and develop, insights have been made into the intricacy of teacher cognition and learning processes, and the importance of distinct factors related to the teacher as an individual has been recognized.

In reviewing advances made in teacher education, Johnson (2006) noted that current research has shown that "teachers' prior experiences, their interpretations of the activities they engage in, and, most important, the contexts within which they work are extremely influential in shaping how and why teachers do what they do" (p. 236). As our personal experiences as teachers are related to our inner world as well as the world around us, when discussing teacher development, it is useful then to consider ideas related to sociocultural theory. We do not learn in a vacuum, but rather, our cognitive development is a process of internalization, or the "progressive movement from external socially mediated activity to internal mediation controlled by individual learners" (Johnson & Golombek, 2003, p. 731). It is this dialogic process by which an external influence is internalized, appropriated, externalized, and shared or shaped by additional external

input, and then reinternalized and recontextualized. This model allows us to better understand how teachers learn.

While a significant part of the sociocultural learning process is internal, Johnson and Golombek (2003) focus on what we can "see" in the teacher learning process. They claim that through their research, "evidence of transformation" was demonstrated by changes in a student teacher's "thinking processes *and* instructional activities" (Ibid., p. 734, emphasis in original). I question whether researchers actually "see" the thinking process, or merely the manifestations of it at the point when it is externalized once again. While I agree that the resulting instructional activities could be evidence of such a transformation, I do not believe it possible to "see" the internal activity that "transforms teachers' understandings of themselves as teachers, of their students, and of the activities of teaching" (Ibid., p. 735). Participants perhaps can themselves see what is happening internally through a process of reflection. Researchers can observe, however, how teachers can externalize their current understandings and then re-conceptualize and re-contextualize their understandings. What those experiences ultimately lead to is visible, not the internal process itself. Regardless of whether we "see" the actual process or the results of that process, that this is a complex and uniquely individual process is evident.

As the influence of the individuality and uniqueness of teachers and their environments is recognized, it has become apparent that no "one-size-fits-all" model for teacher development exists. Rather, teacher development is dependent on the "particular educational policy environments or school cultures" as well as the individual teachers themselves (Avalos, 2011, p. 10). As Avalos explains, "Not every form of professional development, even those with the greatest evidence of positive impact, is of itself relevant to all teachers" (Ibid.). Such activity, then, is personal to each teacher as well as to his or her individual context. Recognizing the importance of this for English language teachers, Johnston (2003) advocates that ELT teachers initiate and pursue their own development, and "always be seen to be in charge of their own development" (p. 95). The sociocultural theory of the cognitive development of language teachers helps us understand that teachers have an understanding based on their education and experience, and it is this which can be developed in order to help them as teachers so that they, in turn, can help their students learn. It is our life experiences which shape us as teachers, which dictate

our beliefs and determine our development. As explained by Lengeling (2010), "[T]eachers hold a complex body of knowledge, gained from socially constructed experiences within a social context" (p. 57). The sociocultural theory of teacher learning reflects this idea of teacher knowledge as understanding that is developed through a process of taking in knowledge through education and experience, and ultimately developing it into an understanding that goes beyond simple knowledge.

To provide an understanding of teacher development as it relates to this study, I include next a discussion about how English teachers enter the field, how they become socialized to their teaching contexts, and ultimately, what motivates teachers' professional development within their different experiences and unique contexts.

2.3.1 Becoming an English Teacher

In much of the world, teachers generally enter the field after receiving specific training and education related to the academic subject they will teach.[3] For example, a math teacher in the U.S. generally will need to have an advanced degree in math as preparation for teaching the subject (Study.com, n.d., "Career Requirements"). Language teaching, conversely, has evolved so that it is now important not only to have mastered the subject matter, in this case the language, but also concepts related to the pedagogy of teaching a language "with an emphasis on teachers and what they do" (Lengeling, 2010, p. 41). This, however, has not always been the case.

Historically, language teachers in many parts of the world have become teachers based solely on their ability with the language. While there are English language teachers who Farmer (2005) would identify as "talented artists" (p. 3), and others who are "learned academics" (Ibid.), there are others still known as "'backpackers' whose only claim to competence is that they grew up in an English-speaking country" (Ibid.). This certainly has been true in Mexico, where English language teaching as a career is still relatively young, and Davies (Wilson, 2015) reports that English language teacher training did not exist until the early 1970s (para. 11). In this early context, teachers "entered the profession with no prior formal education in teaching the English language. Their

[3] As this study focuses on teachers at a public university, I refer here to qualifications for public university teachers, recognizing that requirements for teaching in other institutions, such as primary school, secondary school, and high school, and between public and private institutions, may be different.

expertise was their command of English, which was instrumental in gaining entry into the EFL profession, not their knowledge of skills and techniques" (Lengeling, 2010, p. 26). An early case study of English teachers in Mexico described how public and private schools placed importance on their teachers' abilities to speak the language rather than teacher training or education, and consequently regarded English teachers as easily replaceable (Hubbard, 1995, p. 11). Becoming an English teacher in this manner, which Lengeling (2007) termed "falling into the job," was based on "the common myth [that] 'if you can speak English, you can teach it'" (p. 91). Given this environment, it is likely that teachers who found themselves in these circumstances may have relied on what Lortie (2002) referred to as "the apprenticeship of observation" (p. 62) to guide them as they began their teaching careers.

As a consequence of Lortie's apprenticeship theory, when discussing teacher development, it has been hypothesized that you teach the way you were taught (Korthagen, 2004, p. 77). In other words, the way you teach and the way you think about teaching is completely dependent upon who you are. Who you are, in turn, is determined by many factors, including, as Hansen (1995) mentions, pre-training influences. In his seminal work on teaching, Lortie (1998) described an apprenticeship that all teachers go through while they themselves are students, simply by virtue of the fact that they are exposed to teaching methods and ideals of their own teachers. Lortie's assertion that how teachers teach is essentially a function of the number of hours teachers have themselves spent as students in the classroom perhaps ignores the importance of teacher training and education. Nevertheless, his estimate that "the average student has spent 13,000 hours in direct contact with classroom teachers by the time he graduates from high school" (Ibid., p. 61) has led Borg (2004) to theorize that it is this exposure which has the greatest impact on how we teach, and is thus "largely responsible for many of the preconceptions that pre-service student teachers hold about teaching" (Ibid., p. 274). The danger inherent with this "apprenticeship" influencing our teaching to such an extent is that, according to Lortie (2002), "unless beginning teachers undergo training experiences which offset their individualistic and traditional experiences, the occupation will be staffed by people who have little concern with building a shared technical culture" (Ibid., p. 67). As Borg (2004) explains:

> One of the consequences of this apprenticeship period is that, whereas people entering other professions are more likely to be aware of the limitations of their knowledge, student teachers may fail to realize that the aspects of teaching which they perceive as students represented only a partial view of the teacher's job. (p. 274)

Although this is an interesting theory, Mewborn and Tyminski (2006) assert it is "an example of 'snark syndrome,'" or "an idea that takes on the air of authority through repetition, instead of empirical data" (p. 30). This criticism may be a valid one as more recent research indicates that perhaps not everything learned during this apprenticeship is negative, and "the autobiographical memories of students should be solicited for exploration and sometimes affirmation" (Boyd, et al., 2013, p. 28). The original argument by Lortie ignores the effect a good teaching model has on future teachers, and fails to "explain how good teaching gets replicated" (Mewborn & Tyminski, 2006, p. 31). It also ignores "how the cycle of replication of poor teaching can be disrupted" (Ibid.).

Contrary to a negative view of the "apprenticeship of observation," it now appears that the cycle of repeating poor teaching models may be broken when teachers recognize the influence of "specific, vividly remembered incidents from their own schooling" (Mewborn & Tyminski, 2006, p. 32). This is achieved when teachers "both recall and… reflect on the myriad experiences they have had as… learners and the specific roles that teachers have played in those experiences" (Ibid.). The question that remains is whether such recall and reflection can be achieved by teachers on their own, or whether this type of teacher development requires specific teacher training.

As stated previously, "in Mexico 'falling into' the job represents the primary EFL career entry path... Few teachers begin in the classroom with any formal EFL training. This is not mentioned to demean these individuals, but rather as a statement of fact" (Lengeling, 2010, p. 190). One result of this common scheme for becoming an English language teacher is that teacher training or education has not been considered important, much less training or education in language teaching. Mastery of the subject matter simply to the point of being able to speak the language has been the sole key to obtaining an English teaching job for many teachers. Prior to 1990, "training for English teachers was almost non-existent" (Lengeling, 2007, p. 91). An early case study of English

teachers in Mexico described how public and private schools placed importance on their teachers' abilities to speak the language rather than teacher training or education, and consequently regarded English teachers as easily replaceable (Hubbard, 1995, p. 11). A narrative written about the same time-period in another state in Mexico similarly recounts how "good pronunciation" was the only qualification for teaching English, not a university degree or teaching certificate (Ban, 2009, p. 60). Thus, the entry in English teaching in Mexico based mainly on an ability with the language and nothing more resulted in an "unfledged entry into the EFL profession [which] carries a psychological burden" (Lengeling, 2010, p. 190). This burden follows teachers as they continue in their profession (Ibid.) and is manifest in how they develop as teachers.

This reality is changing, however. More and more, English language teachers world-wide are expected to have training and education in teaching a language, in addition to an ability with the language. Training and education specific to teaching a language is still a relatively new requirement. As a result, many English language teachers have been faced with the psychological burden of "unfledged entry" into the EFL profession, together with the consequence of beginning to teach without realizing the full nature of the job, as discussed above. This may affect how teachers perceive themselves within the teaching community, and I turn next to the process new teachers go through as they join the society of teachers.

2.3.2 Socialization into the EFL Teaching Profession

Teacher socialization has been defined as "the process whereby the individual becomes a participating member of the society of teachers" (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p. 329). As with other aspects of teacher development, socialization is recognized to be a highly individualized process dependent on the individual teacher as well as the context. It is also a multidimensional process involving an interplay of what the teacher brings to the context and the particular teaching environment. Finally, it is also recognized to be an on-going process. As Tahir, Qadir, and Malik (2014) describe, "Teacher socialization is not an event; it is [a] consistent and continuous process which prevails over the entire professional career of the teacher´s professional and organizational life" (p. 72). Although this complex process takes place over the course of a teacher's career, researchers have identified three distinct phases during which teachers become socialized

into teaching. Formal teacher education creates the dividing lines among the three stages teachers experience as they are socialized as members of the teaching community: prior to formal teacher education, preservice teacher education, and in-service teaching (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p. 332). *Figure 2* illustrates these stages of teacher socialization.

Figure 2. Stages of teacher socialization.

These stages may not be so cleanly divided, however, and it may be more helpful to think of this process as taking place across a continuum among these stages. In the Mexican context where, as discussed previously, many teachers have fallen into the job, skipping the demarcation of formal teacher education, a continuum model may therefore be more applicable. Nonetheless, it is helpful to consider the stages individually in order to understand the theory which describes this phenomenon of joining the teacher community.

The first stage, which occurs prior to formal teacher education, has been described using various models: an evolutionary theory, child-adult relationship theory, and the "apprenticeship of observation" theory (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, pp. 332-333). As mentioned previously, this last theory first described by Lortie (2002) has been widely accepted: "[T]he apprenticeship-of-observation undergone by all who enter teaching begins the process of socialization in a particular way; it acquaints students with the tasks of the teacher and fosters the development of identifications with teachers" (p. 67). The next stage takes place during preservice teacher education, and is influenced by general education and academic courses, methods and foundations courses, and field-based experience (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p. 335). This and the final stage are also believed to be greatly influenced by what students bring with them from their apprenticeship of observation. The final stage occurs after teachers begin teaching, during their in-service experience, as teachers become socialized into the culture and workplace of their teaching environment (Ibid., p. 338). During this stage, teachers are heavily influenced by their

students, the ecology of the classroom, colleagues, evaluators, the local social context, and broader societal and cultural forces (Ibid., pp. 339-340). This last influence on teacher socialization from society and culture has been recognized as needing further research (Ibid., p 340).

As previously mentioned, teacher socialization is dependent not only on the individuality of the teacher, but the uniqueness of the teaching environment as well. For language teachers working in an EFL environment, this is especially important. According to Tahir, Qadir, and Malik (2014), "Teacher socialization, especially language teacher education, is rooted in a particular culture and community and therefore the studies and practices in non-native English speaking countries must be viewed differently from those found in native English-speaking countries" (p. 72). The uniqueness of the teaching environment, therefore, is of great importance in the socialization process.

A marked difference in the Mexico EFL context, as already mentioned, is that English teachers historically entered the profession without any formal teacher training (Lengeling, 2010, p. 204). As it is their formal education which divides the three stages identified in the research regarding teacher socialization, it is apparent that becoming a member of the society of English teachers in Mexico has, at least in the recent past, necessarily involved a different process. As Lortie (2002) explains, "[C]onditions of entry play an important part in socializing members to a given occupation" (p. 55). As discussed previously, the fact that English teachers in Mexico have had an "[u]nfledged entry into the EFL profession" has been recognized to create a psychological burden for those teachers (Lengeling, 2010, p. 190). How English teachers manage this burden and what motivates their professional development under these circumstances is discussed next.

2.3.3 Teacher Motivation for Professional Development

What drives a teacher to seek to develop within his or her profession? Lengeling (2010) describes motivation as "the driving force behind teacher-learners' desires and decisions" (p. 205). Professional development is generally motivated in one of two ways: extrinsic motivation involving forces external to the teacher, and intrinsic motivation coming from within the teacher (Johnson, 2006, p. 14).

Historically, teacher motivation generally speaking may have been primarily extrinsic, as professional development occurred at the behest of the teaching institutions. As Lortie (1998) explains:

> It was not long ago that teachers improved their knowledge in essentially one way – they took courses in college and universities. During the early part of the century, thousands upon thousands of teachers upgraded their schooling by taking summer and evening courses. School districts supported such education, recognizing the accumulation of degrees and credits in placing teachers on salary schedules, a practice which remains common today. (pp. 159-160)

This impetus to obtain professional training and education for professional advancement has become part of Mexico´s teaching environment as well. A powerful extrinsic motivator has been described as "the power of English – how the language enables individuals to attract and receive jobs" (Lengeling, 2010, p. 206). As Lortie (1998) acknowledged, a teacher's employer can provide a strong motivation for teacher development by increasing pay and providing advancement in recognition of additional teacher training. Lengeling (2010) also recognized this as a reality in Mexico, stating, "A traditional motivation for advanced training and higher education has always been credentials, which loosely may translate into 'jobs'" (p. 206).

Mexico is experiencing an apparent escalation in job qualifications for English teachers, at least in part due to a national program requiring English language classes from public preschool to high school, and an influx of international companies doing business in Mexico (Lengeling, Crawford, & Mora Pablo, 2016, pp. 71-72). The academic reality of university teachers has seen an increased pressure to have ever-higher levels of educational degrees (Muñoz de Cote, Lengeling, & Armenta, 2014, p. 18). What was previously possible by virtue of one's ability with the language, Lengeling (2010) reports has evolved so that "[m]ore and more, an EFL certificate now represents the minimum for entry into the field" (p. 91). Further, Lengeling predicts that entry into the field shall become more demanding still, so that formal teacher education will become the norm (Ibid.). Within the University, that prediction has become fact under national policies requiring a BA degree in an "appropriate area" for foreign teachers to obtain a

work permit in Mexico, and requiring teachers to have a Ph.D. in order to achieve a permanent position at a public university (Lengeling, Crawford, & Mora Pablo, 2016, pp. 72-73). Such outside pressures provide extrinsic motivation, as teachers in ELT are required to seek out and obtain additional qualifications as well as education specific to teaching English.

Although initially, teachers in Mexico and elsewhere may have relied principally on their employers' ideas about their professional development, and rejected "any suggestion that they should become directly engaged in improving the knowledge and performance of their faculties" (Lortie, 1998, p. 160), as the profession has grown, that attitude has also evolved. In discussing the history of teacher development, Head and Taylor (1997) identify a change that occurred "during the 1980s [as] English language teachers began to feel the need for some form of self-motivated professional development" (p. 7). Prior to that time, teacher training was typically provided in the work environment by the schools where they worked, with an emphasis placed on classroom skills and techniques. This scheme evolved with an expansion of language teaching along with academic courses specific to this field, and a corresponding shift in focus to the learning process, "spawning new ideas of a more learner-centered approach to teaching" (Ibid., p. 8). Teachers were motived by their own desire to understand what was happening with the students in their classrooms, as well as their role in the learning process. This further evolved with a greater focus on the processes involved for the teachers themselves, and as mentioned previously, they became "both the subjects and objects of learning and development" (Avalos, 2011, p. 17).

The process of becoming a teacher and socializing into the profession helps to explain where the drive to develop professionally comes from in that context. As stated previously, teachers who "fall into the job" without any specific training, and find themselves perhaps relying on their own "apprenticeship of observation" as they socialize into a community of language teachers, may ultimately feel unprepared to teach English. How teachers learn to teach has been the subject of much research. Theory surrounding the "apprenticeship of observation" indicates that teachers teach the way they were taught without necessarily realizing that the "aspects of teaching which they perceive as students represented only a partial view of the teacher's job" (Borg, 2004, p. 274). As teachers

begin to recognize that their "apprenticeship of observation" has provided them with only a partial view of the job, the complexity of the job becomes a reality.

In Mexico, this socialization process has not been researched widely, although it has been examined fairly extensively by Lengeling (2007, 2010, 2013; Lengeling & Souther, 2014). The somewhat unique context in Mexico, where a teacher's ability with the language has been a common method of entry into EFL, make her research particularly relevant to this study. The reality of beginning to teach without prior formal education may trigger the teacher's intrinsic desire to become "better prepared as an EFL teacher" (Lengeling, 2010, p. 209). As a consequence of how they became English teachers, any professional development would have to take place after they start teaching. Lengeling describes a "common scenario where untrained teachers with several years of experience often felt they were missing something, began to question their classroom strategy, and subsequently decided to take the COTE[4] course" (Ibid., p. 210). Their motivation to become better classroom teachers in order to help their students was based on an internal desire to develop professionally.

A related intrinsic motivation may also arise from a teacher's sense of vocation, which is sometimes associated with teaching. Lengeling (2010) identified this phenomenon in Mexico, noting that once a teacher decides that EFL teaching is his or her "call of profession," he or she becomes "commit[ted] to the profession" (pp. 206-207). This newfound commitment results in the desire to develop professionally as the teacher acts on this internal motivation to seek out further training and formal education. Although in both of these scenarios, the intrinsic motivation to develop professionally may also be related to how teachers perceive themselves within the teaching community, and a desire to compare favorably within the society of teachers, that idea has not yet been fully explored.

A third source of intrinsic motivation has been identified as "language acquisition and personal growth" (Lengeling, 2010, p. 205). As Lengeling describes, "A strong positive association with English may foster a deeply embedded lifelong interest in language learning" (Ibid.). This may be related to early exposure to the language and what has been called "a good ear for language." Although this may provide a strong

[4] The Certificate of Overseas Teachers of English (COTE) program from the University of Cambridge.

motive for professional development, it appears that in such a circumstance, further training or formal education may have little to do with becoming part of a community of teachers. Rather, in this case, further training and formal education would appear to be motivated by the teacher's desire for their own personal growth with the subject matter which they teach – the language. In this case, what may appear to be an intrinsic motive to develop professionally may actually have little or nothing to do with the teaching profession itself.

This discussion demonstrates that teacher development has evolved from training promoted and provided by a teacher's institution to something more self-motivated coming from individual teachers themselves. As noted by Mathew (2014), this has created a situation in which only those teachers with a strong intrinsic motive for professional development will continue to develop. As he explains, if schools and policy makers do not actively support professional development for teachers, "while a few teachers will struggle to stay growing and motivated, the large majority who do not have the will and/or the energy to struggle [will] give up and settle down to a 'normal' routine" (Ibid., p. 34).

Teacher motivation helps describe the process teachers experience as they develop professionally and socialize into their teaching community. According to Lengeling (2010), while teacher socialization describes how teachers become members of the society of teachers, "[b]ecoming a member of the EFL profession is also connected to teacher identity" (p. 190). That may be especially true in Mexico because of the "unfledged entry" into the teaching community noted previously, and it is to the question of teacher identity which I turn next.

2.4 Teacher Identity

How teachers teach is deeply linked to their individual identity, and this identity has been theorized to be "crucial" to understanding language teaching and how teachers function (Korthagen, 2004, p. 82). Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, and Johnson (2005) assert that "in order to understand language teaching and learning we need to understand teachers; and in order to understand teachers, we need to have a clearer sense of who they are: the professional, cultural, political, and individual identities which they claim or which are assigned to them" (p. 22). The study of teacher identity is relatively recent,

however, as described by Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004), who identify 1988-2000 as the "period that teachers' professional identity emerged as a research area" (p. 108).

Identity, or the way we "see" ourselves, is on the surface an apparently simple concept to define. But it does not require much digging to discover that this apparently simple idea of self-perception is in fact complex. That complexity in part stems from the process inherent in developing identity. It is an on-going process that develops throughout one's life (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 107; Johnston, 2003, p. 79; Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 17). Our identity is tied up with our personal beliefs, values, and history. It is therefore something unique and individual, something "personal" to each of us.

But our identity does not exist in a vacuum, and the "personal" is only one part of it. Identity is a function of environment and experience within that environment, of "landscapes past and present" (Clandinin, et al., 2006, p. 9). Norton Peirce (1995) recognized the importance of context in identity formation which she described as "conceived of as both subject of and subject to relations of power within a particular site, community, and society" (p. 15). As identity derives from both "personal" and "contextual" influences, the "personal" comes into play once again as it shapes how context affects identity. The concept of *perezhivanie* as described above and applied to the study of teacher development is helpful when considering teacher identity as well. Although our context may be shared by others, our response to it is highly individual. This process of teacher development is inextricably linked with a teacher's developing professional identity, which has also been recognized to be highly "personal" as well as "contextual." Teacher identity is key to understanding how teachers teach. While context influences teacher development and how teachers socialize into the teaching community, it perhaps plays an even more significant role in the development of a teacher's professional identity. This is especially important in Mexico, where English language teaching has been described as a marginalized within the teaching profession. How we calculate or gauge our identity within our context is influenced by how we individually view and react to our individual environment and our own unique experiences. It is this "interplay between the private and public, the personal and professional lives of teachers" that is "a key factor in their sense of identity" (Day, 2007, p. 603). As our context is

constantly changing, so too then is our identity. Identity development is "an ongoing process of interpreting oneself as a certain kind of person and being recognized as such in a given context" (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 108).

When we combine this understanding of identity with the notion of "profession" and the development of "professional" identity, the complexity is manifold. Identity is how we make sense of ourselves, our work, and our environment. In her report on English as a Second Language teachers in the U.S., Edstam (2001) notes that "where they work, who they work with, who they teach, and what they teach" (p. 213) affects teachers' sense of identity as professionals. Identity is "rooted both in the personal and the professional" (Ibid., p. 113). As this study is concerned with teacher identity as it is affected by the "profession," the focus must necessarily be on "professional" identity within that context. Identity in general, and the "professional" identity of teachers more specifically, are the results of our unique, individual life experiences as well as our unique, individual responses to our environment, which for teachers is the teaching workplace. I examine next the process of developing teacher identity.

2.4.1 Formation and Development of Teacher Identity

As with other areas of study within teacher development, teacher identity is highly dependent on the individual beliefs, values, background, and history of teachers. All our life experiences are what shape us as teachers. Looking at teacher stories allows us to examine how life experiences affect teacher identities and beliefs. "[T]eachers' stories reveal teacher identities since that identity is evident in their stories of teaching and themselves as teachers" (Hamilton, 2012, p. xiii). As student-teachers socialize into the teaching community, several factors have been identified as significant in the process of developing their teacher identity: "(1) immediate family, (2) significant others or extended family, (3) atypical teaching episodes, (5) policy context, teaching traditions, and cultural archetypes, and (6) tacitly acquired understandings" (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 114). During this process of developing teacher identity, student-teachers may struggle with feeling more like a student than a teacher, and even feeling "incompetent in [subject matter] knowledge while being expected to behave like an expert" (Ibid., p. 115). As Lortie (2002) explained, student-teachers experience significant anxiety as they begin the socialization process, which he describes as "sink or

swim" (p. 60). While this model helps explain the beginning process of teacher identity development as student-teachers join the community of teachers, it does not address the process for those who enter the profession by "falling into the job," without any formal training or education. As discussed more below, this appears to be an area where additional research would be useful.

Among the factors listed above, a teacher's context has been found to be greatly influential, perhaps even more so than in other professions. As a teacher's context is directly linked to the community of teachers a new teacher has joined, teacher socialization into that new community and his or her "developing notions of the professional community" are important to the development of teacher identity (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 115). Although each teacher must be recognized as individual, and the "personal" as a critical part of how his or her teacher identity develops, socialization into the teaching community is the means by which teachers begin to develop their own teacher identity. Teacher identity is therefore both relative to and related to the teaching community, as "the self can never be described without reference to those who surround it" (Ibid., p. 114).

For teachers, context therefore has a strong influence on professional identity, and the portion of a teacher's professional identity which is influenced by the teaching context is substantial. A teacher's workplace can be "very persuasive, very demanding, and, in most cases, very restrictive" in the impact it has on identity (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 113). But the teaching context consists not only of what happens inside the classroom and school, but outside as well. Teacher identity is "shaped by the traditions of the school where the teacher works and… the broader social, cultural, and historical context within which the stories are lived out" (Ibid., p. 121). How teachers view themselves within the broader society is also a significant part of what forms a teacher's professional identity. A teacher's view of his or her own teacher identity is influenced by how teachers and teaching are viewed by others. "[B]eing a teacher is a matter of the teacher being seen as a teacher by himself or herself and by others" (Ibid., p. 113). Expectations about what a teacher is, how a teacher should act, and what a teacher should know are potentially potent forces coming from outside the classroom. Such judgments by others about teachers and teaching are an important aspect of the development of

teacher identity. Or, to be specific, how and what a teacher understands these societal judgments to be will influence that teacher's professional identity. How much such expectations and judgments have on an individual teacher will be a function of how the individual teacher views these expectations, how the teacher reacts to such judgments, and how the teacher then views his or her position within such conceptions about the profession. Ultimately, how this influences a teacher's developing identity will be influenced by the teacher's own judgments about what he or she believes to be important in their profession (Ibid., p. 108).

With experience, and as teacher identity continues to develop, teachers gradually see a shift in their identity from "I teach" to "I am a teacher." The shift to this broader view occurs as the teacher's focus evolves to his or her membership and role within the profession (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 118). It is this concern with the "profession" as it relates to teacher identity within the English teaching profession which is discussed next.

2.4.2 Marginalization and Self-Marginalization in English Language Teaching

As discussed above, teacher identity is a function of the "personal" and the "contextual," and one aspect of context derives from a societal perception about teaching and teachers. Korthagen (2004) explains that "'status' refers to the overall conception of one's own place or position in relation to all the elements in one's world, including oneself… [and] is largely determined by how we see our relationships with significant others" (p. 84). In describing the teaching profession, Cohen and Scheer (2013) found, "Low pay and low status [are] timeless characteristics of the profession," (p. 3). They continue by noting that teaching is typified by its isolation, vulnerability, and powerlessness (Ibid.). Day (2007) reported similar findings in studies conducted in England, France, and Denmark, where "ownership of the three key components of professionalism… – knowledge, autonomy and responsibility – is being contested" (p. 606). Teachers' "sense of being valued" and of "making a difference" was being eroded by changes in their teaching environments (Ibid., pp. 606-607).

Within the teaching profession, English language teaching apparently inhabits an even lower rung on the profession ladder. A report by a teacher's professional organization asserts that "the ESL teacher is lower in status than the content-area teacher"

(Staehr Fenner, 2013, p. 7). As Johnston (2003) explains, "One of the reasons that the notion of marginality is so prevalent in language teaching is that it covers a wide range of related phenomena. Marginalization affects professional and academic relations; it is also social and political; and it concerns psychological questions of identity" (p. 106). Such judgments about teaching and teachers, as well as views specific to English language teaching and teachers, most certainly affect an English language teacher's identity. The open question is how a teacher's professional identity will be influenced by these societal judgments.

The effect on teacher identity from this low opinion of English teaching and teachers is predictable: English teachers likely suffer from a poor self-image and feelings of inferiority. They may develop a professional identity of being "just" an English teacher. It may also change a teacher's sense of importance about their work. As Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004) note, "Teachers who teach [low-status] subjects tend to locate their professional identity in teaching in general rather than in their subject skills" (p. 119). Johnston (2003) acknowledges that "many teachers and programs" in ELT are in a marginalized position (p. 86). As the subject matter English language teachers teach is not recognized as valuable in society's judgment or difficult to teach for someone who speaks the language, the teacher's focus of their own self-worth and identity as a teacher will necessarily shift to that aspect of their work which is at least slightly more respected: teaching. The English language teacher's identity will thereby develop with a focus on "I am a teacher" rather than "I am an English language teacher."

Compounding the effect of societal judgments about English language teaching and teachers, research has shown that low self-confidence particularly plagues teachers who "fall into the job." English language teachers who enter the field without any formal training, based solely on their ability with the language, do not "consider[ ] themselves qualified to teach" (Lengeling, 2007, p. 95). In such a circumstance, with this "unfledged entry" into teaching, the English language teacher may not even develop the one-sided professional identity described above: "I teach." They do not feel competent as teachers due to their lack of formal training. As raised earlier, much of the research regarding teacher identity has focused on a traditional model in which student-teachers begin to teach after formal training has been completed. Within this model, the anxieties and

uncertainties experienced by student-teachers are well established. The student-teacher model does not, however, even begin to address the plight of new teachers who have "fallen into the job" with no formal training or education in teaching. The resulting feelings of lack of competence may affect the teacher's developing identity unless and until something changes in either their "personal" or "contextual" self. More research is needed to discover how teachers in this situation begin to form their identities as teachers, the development process they experience, and what "personal" or "contextual" changes affect their identity development as teachers.

How a teacher feels about their profession, their work, and their environment, as well as how their school and society perceive the teacher are key not only to the teacher's identity, but to "lasting and meaningful change" (Cohen, 2002, p. 533). Change which results in quality in a school, it has been argued, is linked to teachers having a "highly developed professional identity" (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 119). But as Johnston (2003) notes, English language teachers face a dilemma: "How can I reconcile the identity of being a professional with the realities of ELT in most countries and contexts?" (p. 116). He identifies a "fundamental tension in ELT professionalism" between claimed identity and assigned identity: "that although many teachers strive to be professionals, their aspirations are not reflected in the way their work is perceived by those around them" (p. 86). It is easy to understand how this tension could easily lead to self-marginalization by English language teachers, and highlights the importance of the "contextual" in teacher professional identity formation.

This discussion has relied to a great extent on terminology used in the literature when discussing teacher identity: "professional" identity. The evolution of the term, and the issue of what is meant by "profession" when speaking of teaching in general, and more specifically language teaching, is discussed next.

2.4.3 Identity Formation Within the English Language Teaching "Profession"

As discussed above, teacher identity formation is a process that begins as teachers are socialized into the community of teachers. Some research refers to this as "professional" identity formation, which is an important distinction to explore for purposes of this study. As Korthagen (2004) notes, "In the few publications devoted to this subject, we find no clear definition of the concept of teachers' professional identity"

(p. 82). Although it may not be easily defined, how it is developed can be described. The process of developing a "professional" identity for teachers has been portrayed as an "interaction between what is found relevant by others in the vocation and what teachers value themselves" (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 121). Based on this process, Korthagen (2004) promotes a definition provided by Beijaard for teacher professional identity: "Who or what someone is, the various meanings people can attach to themselves, or the meanings attributed by others" (p. 82). Again, this process of developing identity involves the interplay of "personal" and "contextual," but the context here depends in great part on the beliefs held by other members of the teaching community about what the identity of that profession is. One important aspect of that contextual component of teacher identity includes knowledge specific to the field of teaching, as determined collectively by members of the community of teachers.

An issue discussed above that is important in Mexico is identity development by teachers who "fall into the job." Teachers who begin teaching without first obtaining knowledge specific to language teaching may enter the profession without feeling qualified. Lortie (2002) discussed the reality check such teachers may experience when they realize that being a teacher and teaching is not what it might have appeared from the vantage point of a student watching teachers in the classroom. In this situation, it seems likely that a teacher may have trouble making the shift from "I teach" to "I am a teacher," which comes with a feeling of membership within the profession. Lengeling (2007) has identified this phenomenon with teachers in Mexico who first "fell into the job" and subsequently obtained some type of formal teacher training, and who then describe how this training finally allowed them to identify as "real teachers" and feel "more professional" (Ibid., p. 95).

As Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004) recognize, "what counts as professional in [teacher professional identity]… remains unclear" (p. 125). It appears, however, that the "personal" side of teacher identity is related to a teacher's "professionalism," while the "context" side of the equation is somehow related to the field of teaching itself. Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop further argue that the context side of this equation requires further research to fully understand teacher "professional" identity. As they explain, "in most of the studies on professional identity formation, the emphasis was on the 'personal

side' and less on the context and how the 'professional side' is seen in and by this context" (Ibid., p. 125). This appears to be related to Lortie's (1998) recognition of the importance of "social psychological considerations" and the effect of intrinsic rewards on a teacher's "psychic income," which he identified as an area for further study (p. 146). As Day (2007) recognized, "If we are to understand teachers' professionalism, it is necessary to take account of teacher identities" (p. 604). As both the way in which individuals develop as teachers, and how their professional identities are formed are defined by an interplay of the "personal" and the "contextual," and as the context includes the profession itself, terms related to the "professionalism" of teachers and the "professionalization" of teaching are also key to this analysis. The issue of "profession" and "professionalism" as applied to ELT and English language teachers is therefore discussed next.

2.5 The "Profession" of English Language Teaching

The idea of relating the term "profession" to teaching is not yet entirely accepted (Day, 2007, p. 597), and its application to ELT is even less certain, as language teaching has only relatively recently been considered distinct from other types of teaching. As a "professional organization" for language teachers, TESOL,[5] founded in 1966 (Anderson, 1967, p. 173), claims to be a professional organization with a mission to "advance professional expertise in English language teaching and learning for speakers of other languages worldwide" (TESOL International Association, Mission and Values, n.d., para. 1). Additionally in Mexico, the Mexican Association of Teachers of English, A.C. (MEXTESOL) is even younger, not having been formed until 1973 (Wilson, 2015, paras. 23-24). MEXTESOL similarly declares itself to be "a professional academic association which seeks to develop in its members, as well as in non-members, the highest standards for teaching English to speakers of other languages" (MEXTESOL, Mission, n.d., para. 1). But what is a "profession," and how do you define "professional," "professionalism," and "professionalization" when considering language teaching? The importance of distinguishing these terms becomes apparent when considering their impact on teacher development and teacher identity, as discussed above. I begin with a review of the historical genesis of these terms.

[5] Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).

2.5.1 An Etymological and Semantic Review of the Word "Profession"

As Maley (1992) summarizes, the "semantics of 'profession', 'professional', and 'professionalism' allow for several different interpretations" (p. 96). As seen in *Figure 2*, the etymological derivation of the term "profession" shows it developed in a religious context.

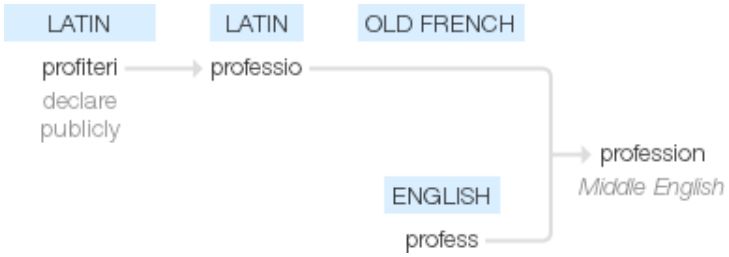

Figure 3. Etymological derivation of the term "profession": 1175-1225; Middle English < Medieval Latin professiōn- (stem of professiō) the taking of the vows of a religious order (Profession, n.d.a).

Brown (1992) explains, "The earliest meaning of the term "profession" was religious, and referred to a proclamation of faith… By 1675, the term had acquired secular significance, meaning 'having claim to due qualifications'" (p. 18). Its etymological history illustrates this evolution:

> c.1200, vows taken upon entering a religious order,' from Old French *profession* (12c.), from Latin *professionem* (nominative *professio*) 'public declaration,' from past participle stem of *profiteri* 'declare openly' (see *profess*). Meaning 'any solemn declaration' is from mid-14c. Meaning 'occupation one professes to be skilled in' is from early 15c.; meaning 'body of persons engaged in some occupation' is from 1610; as a euphemism for 'prostitution' (compare *oldest profession*) it is recorded from 1888 (Profession, n.d.b, emphasis in original).

Perhaps because of the historical significance of the term, it is not uncommon to hear teachers speak of their work as a vocation, or of having a calling. What do these terms mean with respect to ELT today?

2.5.2 Defining the Terminology for English Language Teaching

In analyzing the sociology of the term "profession," Freidson (1994) specified that the usual attributes of a profession consist of some organizational control over entry in the profession, autonomy in terms of establishing and evaluating acceptable practices, representation by a powerful institution, and a body of knowledge and skills that is

recognized and highly regarded by the broader society (p. 9). A review of the literature relevant to education, and ELT in particular, however, reveals distinct views about the meaning of the term. At one end of the spectrum, in the strictest sense, the definition is made by comparison to professions such as law and medicine, and includes the idea of social standing; a middle-ground definition speaks more to specific education and a dedication to the career; and at the other end of the spectrum, the idea of being paid for work done, as opposed to a recreational activity, is sufficient to signify "profession" (Maley, 1992, p. 96). Perhaps the diversity of these definitions is related to the diversity of those engaged in ELT. As discussed above, teachers have entered the field via many varied paths, coming from many varied educational backgrounds. Maley (1992) points to such diversity as a "bedevil[ing]" factor contributing to the difficulty of the "professionalization" of ELT (p. 96). Can there be agreement among such a diverse group about what distinguishes ELT as a "profession"?

Strictly speaking, the term "profession" when applied to teaching follows a model based on the medical profession, and has been defined to include three unique characteristics: (1) administration by its members, (2) standards and processes for entry, and (3) a recognized and defined knowledge base (Breshears, 2004, p. 26; Brown, 1992, p. 22; Cohen, 2002, p. 535; Ingersoll & Perda, 2008, pp. 106-107). This most rigid definition of "profession" has been championed as an archetype for teaching since the nineteenth century. Quoting teacher and "feminist leader Mary Abigail Dodge," Brown (1992) explains that "as early as 1880," Dodge proposed that "'[t]eachers ought to run the schools exactly as doctors run a hospital'" (p. 60). In documenting this movement to "professionalize" teaching, Ingersoll and Perda (2008) describe an effort to "promote the view that … teaching is a highly complex kind of work, requiring specialized knowledge and skill and deserving of the same status and standing as traditional professions like law and medicine" (p. 106). Lortie (1998), however, suggested that a comparison to medicine simply indicates an "eager[ness] for teaching to possess the same standing," and would interpret "differences from the high status professions as signals for change" (p. 161).

Although this medical model is promoted by some as an appropriate way of gauging language teaching as a "profession," and would see that as a path for improving the professional standing of language teaching as a career, others assert that this model

simply cannot fit with the reality of language teaching. Even the basic organizational structure in many school systems, where control is generally held by those with business or administrative rather than teaching backgrounds (Lortie, 2002, p. xiv), does "not support[ ] the hopes of teachers for professional status" (Lortie, 1998, p. 160). A distinction is made between teaching and "high professions" such as medicine and law based on how teachers arrive to the profession. "[S]tudent teachers arrive for their training courses having spent thousands of hours as schoolchildren observing and evaluating professionals in action. This contrasts with novices learning other profession, such as those of lawyers or doctors" (Borg, 2004, p. 274). Because of such distinctions, Johnston (1997) would reject the medical model for teaching, asserting that "teaching is a very different kind of occupation from the established professions such as medicine" (p. 702). Darn (2005) also rejects this model for ELT, stating that of the "thirteen criteria needed to turn an occupation into a profession" identified by Maley (1992), "[ELT] failed to meet nine" (para. 5). Recognizing this rift, a middle ground for applying the terms "profession" and "professionalism" has been identified. Nunan (2001) promotes this middle ground by looking to definitions of the terms:

> According to the *Cobuild Dictionary,* "a profession is a type of job that requires advanced education and training." The *Newbury House Dictionary* defines professionalism as "the qualities of competence and integrity demonstrated by the best people in the field." (p. 4)

In keeping with this idea of education and training, Lortie (1998) proposed that professional development "may provide an incubus for strengthening the technical culture of teaching" (p. 160), leading to a technical base of teaching that could, in turn, lead to recognition of teaching as a "profession." Wallace (1991) similarly recognized the importance of a base of knowledge and formal study (p. 5). In echoing this point of view, Farmer (2006) argued that "the knowledge held by professions is not secret: the science they use is available to all. But knowing how to apply that knowledge to solving problems does require skill of a different order, and that is the special province of the professions" (p. 160). As discussed above, the idea that teachers' socially constructed experiences provide them with a wide body of knowledge. Widdowson (1990) recommends a similar viewpoint for language teaching as a "profession," in which "a

pedagogy of language teaching" is recognized, and that it be made known that there is "a profession which practices it" (p. 1). As an organization purporting to promote expertise in English language teaching, TESOL International Association (2008) similarly calls for "standards of competency and educational preparation" (para. 3). These arguments coincide with that portion of Friedson's (1994) general sociological definition of "profession" discussed above, which recognizes a requisite body of knowledge and skill (p. 9).

In addition to these ideas of education, competence, and integrity, Maley (1992) sees "emerging signs [of] a process of 'creeping professionalism'… taking place" (pp. 97-98). These signs include the "worldwide burgeoning of teachers' associations… plethora of conferences… [t]he rapid spread of grassroots Special Interest Groups and Teacher Development Groups," as well as qualifying institutions and teacher exams, as part of the language teaching profession (Ibid.). For Maley, "the growth of professional associations like IATEFL[6] and TESOL, both in numbers and in the scope of their action, is one of the most encouraging developments I have seen in my professional life" (ELT News, 2001, On Professionalism section, para. 2). This sentiment was shared by Nunan (ELT News, 2010) when asked what has been TESOL's biggest contributions to ELT:

> I think it's done a great deal to professionalize the EFL/ESL world. It provides wonderful professional development opportunities through the annual convention, the TESOL academies, etc. In the field of research, it has established the TESOL International Research Foundation. Within the U.S. it does a great job of advocacy for the profession. And it has done a great deal to develop and disseminate standards for teaching and teacher education in the last 4-5 years. (On TESOL section, para. 2)

These notions of teacher training and development, professional language teacher organizations, conferences, journals, and research specific to the field, accompanied by seminars, lectures, publication, are all recognized as crucial to this middle ground definition of "profession," and has led Darn (2005) to conclude that "[a]ll may not be lost" on the road to the "professionalization" of ELT (para. 8).

[6] International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL).

At the other end of the spectrum, Ur (2002) would define the terms quite broadly, and specifying a "professional" as "someone whose work involves performing a certain function with some degree of expertise" (p. 388). This broadest of definitions recognizes that language teachers are "professionals" as distinct from a lay population, amateurs, technicians, and academicians (Ibid., pp. 388-390). In sum, Ur states that "to say that we English teachers are professionals is to imply that: We are a community… We are committed… We publish…We learn… We are autonomous… We are responsible for training new teachers" (Ibid., p. 391). She asserts, however, that there are "still too many amateurs around… resulting in lowering of teaching standards… too many academics telling us how to teach… and too many 'technician' teachers" (Ibid., pp. 391-392). The existence of teachers' organizations, journals, seminars, conferences, accreditation courses, and teachers who lecture and write seems to indicate to Ur as well a "significant progress toward professionalism" (Ibid., p. 392). Although Ur purports to define "profession" broadly, she also recognizes the importance of these other hallmarks which are included in the middle ground definition articulated above.

Echoing the sentiments of Darn (2005), Maley (1992), and Nunan (ELT News, 2010), Davies (Wilson, 2015) identifies similar hallmarks of the English teaching "profession" in Mexico:

> I think what you see is a whole lot of substantial impacts, which together change the thing radically. Before MEXTESOL, you had the *Anglo* and *Relaciones Culturales* offering English language teaching courses to the general public. Then MEXTESOL. Then *licenciaturas* began opening up in the universities in the 1980s. Then you had the British Council and its agreements with the SEP from the 1990s, with the Cambridge COTE course, and other courses, including open BAs. One thing is not more important than anything else. It is lots of flowers in the garden. (para. 29)

Within the variety of definitions, therefore, the middle-ground definitions appear to fit best within the current context, and so I adopt this definition for purposes of this study. For this research, then, "professionalism" shall be viewed as related to education, competence, and integrity on the part of language teaching professionals, and language

teaching professional associations, journals, conferences, and professional qualifications as indicative of the "professionalization" of language teaching. A distinction between the "professionalism" of teachers and the "professionalization" of English teaching, however, remains to be clarified.

2.5.3 Distinguishing "Professionalism" and "Professionalization" in English Language Teaching

The distinction between "professionalism" and "professionalization" is key to understanding how the terms can and should be applied within the field of English teaching. Crandall (1993) distinguishes these terms by noting, "It is important… not to confuse professionalization (status enhancement through certification or credentialing, contracts, and tenure) with professionalism (professional practice, involvement in program development, continued learning)" (pp. 499-500). Breshears (2004) similarly draws a clear distinction between "professionalism" and "professionalization," explaining that they are "unique, though interrelated, processes" (p. 25). "Professionalism" in education has been defined as the "internal quality of teaching," while "professionalization" embodies the sociological and historical process "relating to the authority and status of the (teaching) profession" (Englund, 1996, p. 77). As these terms are clearly interrelated, where then do the responsibilities and opportunities for English teachers lie when considering the "profession" from this perspective?

While some would place the responsibility for developing the profession on the teachers themselves, others recognize that this may not be practical. Breshears (2004) "challenge[s] the assumption that professionalism is primarily the responsibility of the teacher" by studying the "teaching conditions of workers in [ELT to] suggest that factors outside the control of the teacher" hinder the "professionalization" of ELT (p. 24). Johnston (1997) seemingly would concur with this observation, having found a sense of charity work or altruism among expatriate English language teachers which he attributed to "the dynamic nature of the broader social and economic context" (p. 704). He viewed this "not as an individual failing but as a broader contextual problem" (Ibid., p. 703).

Others, however, see no path forward for the profession apart from the "professionalism" of the teachers themselves. Pettis (1997), would place the responsibility for professional development on the English language teachers, regardless of their varied environments (p. 70). She further discusses "'professionalization' of

teaching" as a model for teacher education that focuses on professional autonomy (Ibid., p. 17), and promotes the "creation of a set of standards for professional practice" for teachers (Ibid., p. 18). Pettis posits that to be a "professionally competent educator" you "must be principled and knowledgeable in addition to skillful," your "professional needs and interests… [must] change [ ] over time and continue to evolve," and your "commitment to professional development must be ongoing and personal" (Ibid., p. 68). This focus on teachers' personal commitment to "professionalism" is perhaps a one-sided view which ignores its interconnectedness to the "professionalization" of English teaching, as noted by Breshears (2004), as it ignores factors inherent in each context which are beyond the control of the teachers.

Marginalization of ELT is widely acknowledged around the globe, and other teacher studies and stories have discussed this sense of disregard (Breshears, 2004; Johnston, 1997; McKnight, 1992; Overbeek, 2014). Johnston (1997), for example, found that "[t]eachers in many national contexts—some would say in most—tend to be underpaid and overworked, often operating in difficult physical and psychological conditions" (p. 682). He described English language teachers in Poland for whom "prospects for professionalization are… seen to be limited because, although teachers act professionally in the day-to-day sense of working conscientiously and responsibly, the socioeconomic conditions make it impossible (or at least extremely unwise) for them to make a long-term commitment" to ELT Ibid., p. 707). For example, when asked if she considered herself a professional, one of the participant teachers in Johnston's study responded: "'I think I could be; but I'm not, at school, because I don't have time to organize my classes in such a way that they would look like, as if, well, they are organized by a professional person'" (Ibid., p. 705).

Other studies have described similar issues within the profession in various locations around the world. In describing the "hell-like conditions" experienced while teaching English in South Korea (para. 10), Overbeek (2014) explains that she fell into the job (para. 6), and then took a TEFL certificate course as her "innate professionalism took over" (para. 7). She says she continues to grow professionally through opportunities available through a local TESOL organization (Ibid., para. 12), and now, relying on a medical model, recognizes a need "to somehow have all [English language] teachers

themselves become professionals… and then to be treated as such" (Ibid., para. 13). McKnight (1992) also described such marginalization of ELT in Australia: "[ELT] has no proper career structure and… [English language] teachers suffer from low morale and low status, lack opportunities for study leave, have high rates of attrition from the field, frequently lack a power base within their institution, and may be treated as an underclass by colleagues and superiors" (p. 30). Writing about EFL teachers in Canada, Breshears (2004) also recognized "the marginalization of [English language] teachers among other teaching communities," (p. 23) who were "jokingly" referred to as "the lowest of the low" (Ibid.). Johnston (1999) subsequently characterized his earlier study of English teachers in Poland as concerned with "issues of marginalization and disjuncture" (p. 258) in EFL teacher´s professional lives, all of which seems to be echoed by these reports from South Korea, Australia, and Canada.

There continues to be some debate about where the responsibility for "professionalization" of English teaching lies, whether with English language teachers or society. Again, the marginalization of English language teaching and teachers is a key factor in this debate. These stories are illustrative of the "factors outside the control of the teacher" around the globe which may be hindering the "professionalization" of ELT (Breshears, 2004, p. 24), making the "professionalism" of English teachers almost beside the point. Given this marginalization of English teaching, I look next at how these concepts have developed in the specific context of Mexico, and where the responsibility for the advancement of the profession has been placed in that context.

2.5.4 Applying "Professionalism" and "Professionalization" to English Language Teaching in Mexico

The journey toward professionalism in ELT has led to a comparison with a "marauding arm[y] in 17th Century Europe with a core of highly trained and motivated cavalry surrounded by foot soldiers of sometimes dubious reliability and a host of camp-followers bringing up the rear" (Maley, 1992, p. 99). This army appears to be on the move in Mexico. As stated above, Davies (Wilson, 2015, para. 29) has described the "many flowers in the garden," such as language teaching training and education programs, and the advent of the professional association MEXTESOL in 1973, which mark the "professionalization" of English teaching in Mexico. Describing how MEXTESOL was formed, Davies says:

> I suppose it was this feeling that English language teaching is *de facto* a profession now, even though a lot of people doing it are not professionals. But it is a profession. It's established in Mexico, and it's growing in Mexico, both in the public and private sectors. And if you have a profession, you really need a professional organization to push things, promote things. (Ibid., para. 25)

Another hallmark of the "professionalization" of English teaching in Mexico has been specific English language teacher training. In addition to the national professional organization, Ban (2009) similarly recounts that in the mid-1990s in Mexico, "English as a foreign language teaching in Mexico at that time was beginning a professionalization process" (p. 60) because qualified teachers had university degrees for language teaching (Ibid., pp. 60-61). Since 1993, the British Council in Mexico has been offering certification programs for English language teaching (Lengeling, Crawford, & Mora Pablo, 2016, p. 64), and according to Lengeling (2010), "[t]his single initiative helped to transform [ELT] throughout Mexico from a job into a profession" (p. 114). As she explains, "Degrees are now essential" in public universities in Mexico (Lengeling, 2007, p. 95), which has "helped EFL become a more respected profession in Mexico" (Ibid.).

As discussed above, the responsibility for such "professionalization" is alternately placed on the teachers themselves, or on the broader social and economic context in which they work. As one example arising in a study of an in-service professional development program in Mexico, centralized certification of teacher education programs was suggested as necessary to "prepare globally minded teachers" (Alfaro & Quezada, 2010, p. 47). In recommending comprehensive reforms to the Mexican educational system, Mussett (2010) promotes making "continuing training compulsory for teachers" in Mexico, and would place the responsibility for the "professionalization" of English teaching squarely on the schools, by focusing on teacher education and continuing training as a way for "Mexico to raise teacher quality and 'professionalize' teachers" (p. 10). Arguing that "initial teacher education – although necessary and important – cannot, by itself, raise teacher quality in Mexico," she recognizes that "the school environment has to be more supportive towards professional development activities" (Ibid.). This begs the question: what opportunities are available for teacher education and continuing

training in a context where teaching as a profession does not necessarily enjoy a positive reputation, and where we see the same type of marginalization of English teaching that is present in other parts of the world, as described above?

As seen in studies specific to Mexico (Farmer, Llaven Nucamendi, & Chuc Piña, 2012; Hubbard, 1995), teaching as a profession apparently continues to be marginalized, and English language teaching appears to be on the very margins of teaching. The disregard for English teachers which Johnston (1997) found in Poland was also documented at approximately the same time in Mexico by Hubbard (1995), who found "institutional resistance to the idea that teaching foreign languages merited the status of professionals studies" (p. 13) at a public University in Mexico, where he believed "teacher´s employers regard them as relatively low-level workers, who can easily be replaced and are therefore of no consequence" (p. 14). In Mexico, as in other parts of the world, teachers feel underpaid, undervalued, and underappreciated. English teachers are still not always included within the teaching community in Mexico. This sense of marginalization within the ELT community has more recently been documented by Farmer, Llaven Nucamendi, and Chuc Piña (2012), who noted a "low level of recognition of ELT practitioners within their universities and at [a] national level" (p. 63). As they explain, "the Mexican government's desirable standards for university lecturers" certainly "brings benefits to both staff and institutions… so the low level of recognition of ELT practitioners within their universities and at [a] national level must be due to other factors" (Ibid.).

One factor that may affect this is, as Davies (2009) notes, a general perception that English is not important for the professional success of most Mexican students (p. 11). As Mora Vazquez, Trejo Guzmán, and Roux (2013) explain, this "low status" is especially true for English teaching, as it is both "undervalued and marginalized" (p. 1) within the general teaching community. Students, of course, see this and are aware of the problems their teachers face. They understand that teachers are not well respected in their communities, and English teachers even less so. A public perception that teaching is not well rewarded, either monetarily or with respect, makes it unlikely that the inherent "professionalism" of English teachers will lead to the "professionalization" of English

teaching without something more, without some change in the work environment in which English teachers find themselves.

This discussion demonstrates the importance of understanding the terms "profession" and "professional" as they are applied to English language teaching, as well as how the terms are manifest in the "professionalism" of teachers and "professionalization" of teaching in ELT in Mexico. Throughout this discussion, it is evident that teacher development and teacher identity are related to the "professionalism" of English teachers. The broader social and economic context and its effect on the "professionalization" of English teaching, however, also have an impact on teacher development and teacher identity. The array of definitions in the literature related to these terms is perhaps related to the diversity inherent within the teaching community. For purposes of this study, "professionalism" shall be viewed as related to education, competence, and integrity on the part of teachers, while professional associations, journals, conferences, and professional qualifications shall be indicative of the "professionalization" of teaching.

2.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have explored the interrelationships between teacher development, and teacher identity, and discussed how those concepts are affected by the application of the terms "professionalism" and "professionalization." As has become apparent, many of the concepts discussed as relevant in one area overlap and are repeated in others. The importance of the individual in terms of both teacher development and teacher identity, as well as the impact the "personal" and "contextual" have in both areas, is evident. As Vygotsky (1981) explains, "[I]t is through others that we develop into ourselves" (p. 161). The sum-total of all of our experiences, including our "apprenticeship of observation," have an important impact on teacher development, and how teachers socialize into the community of teachers. This concept is of particular importance in the Mexican context where many teachers have entered the profession by "falling into the job." The impact from this "unfledged entry" is significant when considering teacher socialization and what motivates teachers to develop professionally. The use of the term "professional" and how it has been applied both to ideas of "professional" development and "professional" identity formation is also important to

understand for this study. In addition, the notion of marginalization of English teaching is a common issue that affects both teacher development and teacher identity, as well as the "professionalism" of teachers and the "professionalization" of teaching.

The stories of English language teachers who have lived the experience of developing as teachers and forming a "professional" identity may help us to have a better understanding of how "professionalism" and "professionalization" are used and how they are applied in the Mexican context by revealing what these teachers think about teaching and about themselves as teachers. I turn next to a discussion of the particular route I chose to explore the effects from the "professionalization" of English teaching on teacher development and identity in Mexico.

Chapter Three: Paradigm, Ideology, Methodology, and Techni**ques**

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I turn to the paradigm, ideology, methodology, and techniques used to explore the consequences for teachers from the "professionalization" of English teaching in Mexico, placing the study within the theoretical framework described in the previous chapter, and discuss why I chose this particular route in making this study. This is an exploration of the impact on teacher development and teacher identity at a public University in central Mexico resulting from the evolution in English teaching as a profession in Mexico. Using a qualitative approach, it views the narrated stories of English teachers through an activist lens. The stories being narrated are those of seven teachers, with teaching experience ranging from beginner-teacher to twenty-three years of experience teaching, who are and have been living through the professionalization of English teaching in Mexico. Using teacher stories to gain a retrospective perspective of their experiences provides a view of how this evolution in English teaching has impacted their development and identities as teachers. Teachers' stories "have functions of self and cultural identity, entertainment, moral evaluation, and news. They provide media for reflecting teachers' cultural context in the work they do" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, pp. 62-63). This study is not intended to provide a comprehensive review of the experiences of teachers throughout the country, but rather, a snapshot of teachers in one University setting during the past quarter-century. Our personal experiences are related to the world around us, and this snapshot may nonetheless provide that cultural context described by Coffey and Atkinson. "Narrative sometimes can be quite focused, and that's good because you get a real in-depth knowledge of the particular topic that you're looking at," as Barkhuizen explains (Wilson, 2017, pp. 5-6), but it can also "look at broader connections" (Ibid.). Those broader connections may allow English language teachers in other locations to recognize something in what they read here.

3.2 Context of the Study

Questions about my own transplanted identity, from a lawyer in the U.S. to an English language teacher in Mexico, have made me curious about my new colleagues and the journeys that have brought them to this place and occupation. The place I find myself is in central Mexico, as seen in *Figure 4*, at a Language Department in a public University, pictured in *Figure 5*.

Figure 4. Central Mexico context of study: the University *Departamento de Lenguas* is located in the center of the state capital. (a2ua.com (Photographer), n.d.).

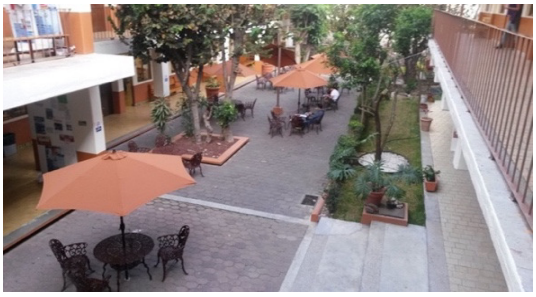

Figure 5. University context of study: Language Department facilities at the University include 19 *aulas* (classrooms), a CAADI[7] for students, computer lab, academic staff library, auditorium, copy center, and snack bar (Wilson, A.K. (Photographer), 2015, May).

There are many transplants here, from other countries as well as other places within Mexico. As this is a public University with various English-teaching programs along with a Language School, my fellow-transplants can be found teaching English in the Language School, teaching teachers, or studying to be English teachers.[8] For this study, I collected the individual stories of seven teachers at one University in central Mexico whose experience levels range from beginner-teacher, to seasoned teacher at or near retirement.

3.3 Approach

3.3.1 Paradigm and Ideology

Understanding the difference between qualitative and quantitative studies is important to an understanding of the perspective taken in this study. Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) explain that "[i]t is not the use of numbers which distinguishes" (p. 4) the two

[7] CAADI (*Centro de Auto Aprendizaje de Idiomas*), a self-access study center for language students.

[8] English-teaching programs at the University in this study include the Diplomado en la Enseñanza del Inglés (Diplomado), In-Service Certificate in English Language Teaching (ICELT), Licenciatura en la Enseñanza del Inglés (BA), and the Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés (MA).

research paradigms. Rather, it is the stark contrast in the perspective of the researcher. Quantitative studies adopt a positivistic or post-positivistic perspective, in which there is one true answer to a research question which is there, waiting to be discovered (Ibid.). Qualitative research, on the other hand, is not intended to discover the one true answer. The purpose of a qualitative study is "not in prediction and control but in understanding" (Ibid.). The purpose here, therefore, is not to quantify the experiences of the people who participated, but to try to describe their experiences as a means of understanding the impact the "professionalization" of English language teaching has on teacher "professionalism," as illustrated through teacher development and identity in an educational setting. As Cross (2010) acknowledges, quantitative methods may have their place "in understanding teachers and their work," (p. 438), but qualitative research has provided "substantive gains" (Ibid.) in that understanding. Those gains are likely a result of "research that goes beyond a focus on descriptive accounts of how things exist in the present, to, instead, attempting to understand why *that* present has come to exist in the way that it has" (Ibid., p. 439, emphasis in original). An understanding of why the teachers who participated in this study have developed professionally in the way that they have, and why their identities have formed in the way that they have, is key to understanding the impact the professionalization of English language teaching has had on them as teachers.

This is a study of the lives and experiences of seven people, all English language teachers working at a public University in central Mexico. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) explain that "qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (p. 3). Their stories are those of seven individuals who, although they may have some shared experiences, have lived those experiences individually. Because this study involves people, it must be recognized that their stories are as individual as they are, and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to try to quantify those experiences. Furthermore, any such results would likely be meaningless. As Kim (2016) recognizes, there are "flaws and limitations of applying solely scientific knowledge to the understanding of human phenomena fraught with complexity, uncertainty, uniqueness, instability, ambiguity, and value-conflict" (p. 4). On the other hand, a qualitative paradigm allows us to "'illuminate'

the life circumstances of individual and communities" (Squire, et al., 2014, p. 74). By recognizing the complexities and uncertainties involved in the individual experiences of the participants here, and illuminating their experiences within the Mexican context, we may thereby hope to gain an understanding of how the professionalism of these participants has been affected by the professionalization of English language teaching in their context.

Qualitative investigations provide an "in-depth understanding of the 'meaning in the particular'" (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 27). I have therefore used a qualitative model here in focusing on the stories of teachers at one University in central Mexico at various stages in their careers in order to examine how the professionalization of English teaching has affected them, and to then derive some meaning from their particular stories. How I interpret their stories, however, is a product of my own story. Qualitative research is a reflection of "the researcher's subjective interpretation of the data" (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 38), and is consequently a product of the researcher's personal values, history, attitudes, and beliefs. My world view prohibits me from seeing issues involving people in terms of absolutes or something that can be quantified, but rather, as varying perspectives shaded by the recognition of similarities in human nature as well as the distinct differences of the individual. In doing this study, it has been important for me to understand and recognize, therefore, how my own history has affected my biases.

Prior to becoming a transplanted English-teacher in Mexico, the majority of my professional life was focused on "public interest" litigation, and as an activist lawyer, my role was to help people who had been disenfranchised by the conditions in their lives by using the legal justice system to improve their lot in life. Denzin and Lincoln (2013) explain that qualitative studies can "be used to address issues [of] equity and social justice" (p. vii), and this ability meshes neatly with my history.

The activist lens through which I still see the world is perhaps best summarized by Wright Mills: "many personal troubles cannot be solved merely as troubles, but must be understood in terms of public issues – and in terms of the problems of history-making" (as cited in Bathmaker, 2010, p. 4). As I view this study as an examination of an evolution, if not revolution, within the English-teaching community in my adopted country, and because of my personal beliefs and background as a public interest lawyer,

this study has necessarily been viewed through an activist lens (Hunter, Emerald, & Martin, 2013; Sachs, 2003). As described above, this study relies on a Vygotskian framework, which is compatible with my activist view as Vygotsky "participated as an activist in the transformations occurring in his own country (Daniels, Cole, & Wertsch, 2007, p. 4). I view the transformations taking place in English language teaching in Mexico as a modern-day revolution, as radical perhaps as the revolution that informed Vygotsky's activism.

My own activist ideology has clearly impacted my overall approach to this study. Viewing a person's life story as a method for understanding how they arrived at a particular point in their life was how I approached being an activist lawyer, and I have adopted a similar perspective in examining the stories of teachers at one University in doing this study. Understanding that I view the data collected here through an activist lens has allowed me to address my biases by adopting a narrative inquiry methodology in this study. Further, as Kohler Riessman (2008) acknowledges, "Lawyers construct narratives in courtrooms to persuade judges and juries" (p. 10), so it is only natural that I would be drawn to this methodology.

3.3.2 Research Methodology

After considering several possible methodologies with which to underpin this study, and reflecting on my ideology and the effect that would undoubtedly have here, I concluded that my background as a lawyer and my personal activist bias fit well with narrative inquiry. "Methodologically speaking, narrative inquiry is an interdisciplinary, qualitative research that pursues a narrative way of knowing by exploring the narratives or stories of participants" (Kim, 2016, p. xv). It also permits researchers to "mak[e] connections through narrative of various things that we've been studying about teachers, and about teacher education… all the different topics on [identity], motivation, and teacher beliefs, and all those different things," as described by Barkhuizen (Wilson, 2017, p. 5). As those are all issues relevant to this study, narrative appears to be particularly appropriate.

Personal stories provide a social role which connects to the "flow of power in the wider world" (Kohler Riessman, 2008, p. 8). As the subject of my inquiry is the effect the professionalization of English teaching has had on teacher development and identity

formation of English teachers in Mexico, narrative inquiry seems particularly appropriate. Through narrative, we can examine how our life experiences shape us by "living and telling, and re-living and re-telling" (Clandinin, Steeves, & Caine, 2013, p. xv) those experiences. With that goal in place, I began the process of collecting the stories of the teachers in a narrative framework. "Narratives are stories of experience, and stories lived and told are the core of any narrative research activity" (Barkhuizen & Wette, 2008, p. 373).

Narrating the personal stories of English teachers at one University who have lived the experience of teaching English in Mexico over the past quarter of a century provides a perspective of how the professionalization of English teaching in Mexico has impacted teacher development and teachers' identities during that time, and an understanding of "how personal lives traverse social change" (Andrews, Squire, & Tamboukou, 2013, p. 4). Narrative inquiry allows the researcher to make "connections to the macro-context, as described by Barkhuizen (Wilson, 2017, p. 5), by "looking at policy, … looking at the practices of teacher education, … looking at institutional practices" (Ibid.). This methodology is therefore coherent with the Vygotskian perspective taken here as it recognizes the importance of the contextual, as well as the individual.

For a Vygotskian perspective, it is tehe "focus on teachers' life narratives that accentuates historicity within the study of language teacher cognition" (Cross, 2010, p. 439) rather than an "attempt to *relate* observable instances of classroom practice with how teachers think" (Ibid., emphasis in original). Why a teacher is where he or she is today is embedded in the general story of the development of the profession and is a reflection of their working environment. As Barkhuizen and Wette (2008) recognize, lived experiences take place within a three-dimensional narrative context, "a particular time and space and with other people" (p. 374). Johnston (1997) explained that his participants' life stories were discursively constructed, and that in this process, "each telling of a life is created for the specific occasion of that telling" (p. 705). As he recognized, there may therefore be a distinction between what is "the truth" and how it is re-told. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) note that this is likely, as "memory is selective, shaped, and retold in the continuum of one's experiences" (p. 142). It is this meaning-

making in the re-telling of their life stories that is of concern in Johnston´s analysis of his participants´ discourse. Through the telling and re-telling of participants' stories, we come to understand how people make meaning of their own lives and experiences (Lengeling, Mora Pablo, & Rivas, 2013, p. 352). It is through teachers' stories, and their own meaning-making of those stories, that we gain an insight into the effect the evolution of English teaching in Mexico has had on teachers. Through that process, we can see "how the past is related to the present" (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 68).

Although a distinction may be made between "story" and "narrative," I use the terms interchangeably in this study to mean a recounting of events in an organized manner which leads to an interpretation with some social significance (Squire, et al., 2014, p. 7). Self-doubts about my ability to narrate the stories of the teachers who participated in this study, as well as my own story, have plagued me throughout this process. What "social significance" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 130) would these stories represent through my efforts at the re-telling of them? Part of my doubts came from the difficulty in selecting which life experiences to re-tell, as well as how to tell them. The selecting and re-telling would clearly be bound by my subjective view of what is relevant or important. As part of this process, I have been forced to recognize the extent to which my own opinions, judgements, thoughts, and feelings affect my perceptions and understanding, and I have reflected on this thought process in a Field Journal, as illustrated in excerpts included in Appendix A. For that reason, as well as a desire to make this process as open and transparent as possible, I have relied on my colleagues, the participant teachers, to actively take part in the re-telling of "their stories."

First, I involved the participants in this process at an early stage in the study by encouraging them to choose their own pseudonym to be used in the re-telling of their story. This was done during their initial interview. Not only do I believe this provided a sense of anonymity which allowed them to be as open and honest as possible in the telling of their stories, I believe it also gave them a sense of ownership in the re-living and re-telling of their stories. The pseudonyms they chose also provided additional data to be used in examining their teacher identities and beliefs. Later, after the data was collected and was in the process of being put into narrative form, the participants were provided with their portion of the study so they could both review it and provide feedback. The

participants were involved in this process of member-checking by giving input in the selection of which of their life experiences to include in the re-telling, as well as the narration of their stories. The validity of the study was increased as a result of including the participants in the process (Ortlipp, 2008, p. 701).

Participant involvement in the selection of events and re-telling of their stories is a clear advantage of narrative inquiry studies. I must also recognize, however, that the selection of life incidents as told by the participants has similarly been the product of their own subjective decisions, equally marked by their own values, histories, attitudes, and beliefs. I have therefore also struggled with how to make this process more transparent when re-telling their stories, and how to increase both the objectivity and reliability of my re-telling. This is an important issue because the recounting of life experiences gives us access to "the subjective dimensions of social action" (Maines, Pierce, & Lasett, 2008, p. 3). Through that, "motivations, emotions, [and] imaginations" are made visible (Ibid.), and it is that which this study seeks to explore: the impact on the identities and beliefs of English teachers by the evolution of the English-teaching profession in Mexico.

In interpreting anyone's story, one's own personal beliefs and background will play a part in that interpretation. While my prior life experiences clearly affected how I selected, viewed, and analyzed the other participants' stories, the influence on the process of re-telling and analyzing my own story has most probably been even more marked precisely because it is my own story. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) recognized that this is especially common in autobiographical texts as "memory is selective, shaped, and retold in the continuum of one's experiences" (p. 142). As this process has been marked by my personal values, history, attitudes, and beliefs, it is important to acknowledge and make that visible in order to create as open and honest a narrative as possible (Dörnyei, 2011; Hunter, Emerald, & Martin, 2013; Ortlipp, 2008).

Given my own activist bias, I felt it was especially important for the teachers who participated in this study to be involved in the re-telling of their individual stories, as well as in commenting on the conclusions of the study. With their involvement in the process, my subjective decisions about which of their life events to include as well as how to re-tell them, have been balanced by their own subjective views of their stories. Using a dual perspective provided by input from the participants together with my own subjective

views, enhances both the objectivity and reliability of the results. Dörnyei (2011) encourages this "because of the emphasis placed in qualitative research on uncovering participant meaning" (p. 59).

Because of the complexities and uncertainties inherent in studying human beings, qualitative studies are recognized to be rather messy concerns. Kim (2016) describes studies of human concerns to be "like walking in a swamp, not an easy path, but one that explores the complex issues of what it means to be human" (p. 4). In the next section, I describe the data collection techniques used in this study to navigate that swampy path.

3.3.3 Data Collection Techniques

The selection of techniques used as well as how they were implemented evolved during the process of collecting data in this study. I initially selected certain techniques based on my preconceived notions about doing research, as well as my uncertainties about the process of collecting research data. As I began to use various techniques, I also began to reflect on the research process and my experiences with different techniques. As a result, I began to recognize that some of the techniques were more successful than others. I also began to identify adjustments or modifications I could make in implementing some of the techniques I was using in order to make the data collected more reliable. As part of this reflection process, I described my experiences in trying certain techniques, modifying them, and then trying them again. That process was included in a Field Journal, which together with the other techniques I used, is described more fully below. The gamut of techniques I used in this study, with varying success, include: questionnaires, interviews, observations, and my personal journal. They are discussed here generally in the order they were used during this study, and not by order of importance or effectiveness.

3.3.3.1 Questionnaires

I began this research by emailing a pilot questionnaire, shown in *Figure 6*, to one participant prior to scheduling a face-to-face interview with her.

Questionnaire

1. Where are you from?
2. How long have you lived in Guanajuato?
3. What is your educational history? Where did you study, when, what degrees/certificates have you obtained?
4. Where was your first job teaching English? When?
5. How old were you when you started teaching English?
6. What background/education did you have when you first started teaching English?
7. What additional education have you received since then?
8. How long have you been teaching at the university?
9. What levels of English/programs have you taught at the university? What are you teaching now?

Figure 6. Pilot questionnaire.

My intention in using questionnaires was to reduce the amount of time participants would need to spend being interviewed, which would not only benefit them in their busy schedules, but make the data collection and transcription process a little easier for me. The questionnaire I designed was meant to elicit background information (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 102) to be used in preparation for a follow-up interview. I discovered during her follow-up interview, however, that the information I had elicited in the questionnaire came up again naturally as we spoke. The questionnaire resulted in this participant talking about her background after also taking the time to complete the questionnaire.

Following this initial questionnaire, I then designed an open-ended questionnaire for participants with only one question: "How would you complete this: I came to be here (Guanajuato/University of Guanajuato) because..." This was emailed to a pilot group of three university English teachers during the summer vacation. None of those questionnaires were returned.

As Dörnyei (2011) notes, and I discovered, "questionnaires are not particularly suited for truly qualitative, exploratory research" (p. 107). As neither the pilot questionnaire nor the open-ended questionnaire technique were successful, either in providing information, in using participant time efficiently, or in eliciting responses, I abandoned that technique early in the data collection process.

3.3.3.2 Interviews

Interviewing is a qualitative data collection technique in which a researcher talks to participants and records their answers, and is an integral part of narrative inquiry studies. As Flick (2009) explains, interviewing involves "questions, and the answers that are elicited by them" (p. 147). By using this data collection technique, I was able to gather information about participants by talking to them individually and face-to-face. As recommended by Flick, I recorded our conversations, and then transcribed the interviews (p. 147), and selected excerpts of those interview transcripts are included in Appendix B.

The first and other early interviews were conducted as semi-structured interviews. Dörnyei (2011) explains that in semi-structured interviews, the interviewer uses "a set of pre-prepared guiding questions and prompts" but the person being interviewed is "encouraged to elaborate on the issues raised in an exploratory manner" (p. 136). In discussing semi-structured interviews, Flick (2009) describes them as "shap[ing] conversations arising in the field into interviews" (p. 169). The pre-prepared questions used as guides for these interviews is shown in *Figure 7*.

Interview Questions

1. Why did you choose your field of study? (*See* Questionnaire answer #3)
2. How did you become a teacher? (*See* Questionnaire answer #4)
3. Are you a member of any teacher organization? Have you published?
4. Are you doing anything to grow professionally now? What?
5. What do you want to do professionally in the future?
6. What do you think the pressures are on teachers in Mexico?
7. Do you consider teaching English to be a profession?
   a. Do you think of yourself as a professional?
   b. Do you see EFL as a profession?
   c. What does it mean to be a professional?
   d. How do you define profession?

Figure 7. Pilot semi-structured interview questions.

To begin this process, the first interview took place after providing the participant with a questionnaire, as discussed above. A follow-up interview was then structured around responses to the questionnaire. As previously mentioned, however, the information the participant provided in the questionnaire came up naturally during the interview, causing her to repeat much of her background story. As a result of this experience, I modified my approach by eliminating the questionnaire from this process. Despite not having a questionnaire to guide me, before the other interviews took place, I

prepared a list of general questions which I used as a standard, and then supplemented those with follow-up questions to obtain fuller information as issues arose during the course of the interviews. Because I deviated from the prepared questions, this was not a structured interview. Neither was it an unstructured interview, as my prepared questions constituted more than a few "grand tour" (Dörnyei, 2011, p.136) opening questions, after which an interview is then allowed to run its own course. The semi-structured interview falls somewhere between these two models.

Flick (2009) subcategorizes semi-structured interviews as problem-centered, expert, and ethnographic. He describes the latter as "shap[ing] conversations arising in the field into interviews" (Ibid., p.169). As the purpose of these interviews is to explore the experiences of these teachers from their points of view, a conversational tone was adopted as more likely to elicit the data I am seeking. I initially adopted this interview structure because I believed it would allow me to get consistent results from study participants, as I discussed in the February 18, 2015, entry in my Field Journal, shown in Appendix A. It undoubtedly also assuaged my insecurities about collecting data for this study, as I again wrote about in my Field Journal on May 12, 2015, as shown in Appendix A, and provided me with a crutch to fall back on during the interview process.

After conducting a few interviews using this framework, however, I began to feel concerned that my questions were unduly influencing the participants' responses, which I again wrote about in my Field Journal on May 12, 2015, shown in Appendix A. And as I began to collect interview data, I also started to recognize what I thought were common themes. This gave me more confidence about the interview process and the nature of the data I was gathering, as I discussed a few days later in my Field Journal, as can be seen in Appendix A, entry for May 14, 2015. This comfort level, together with my concerns about influencing the data by the form of my questions, caused me to decide to move to an entirely unstructured interview format. As I considered how to structure a "grand tour" (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 136) interview, I decided to try starting with only one question: "How did you get here?" From that point, I encouraged the participants to tell their stories as they wished, guided only by questions that naturally arose during our conversations. As Coffey and Atkinson (1996) explain, "The chronicling of a life, or part of a life, often starts from a point of 'how it all happened' or 'how I came to be where I am today" (p.

68). An unstructured interview approach seemed most appropriate for this study because of my focus on "personal historical account[s] of how a particular phenomenon has developed" (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 136) as a way to view the impact of that phenomenon: the evolution in English teaching on those who have lived through this experience. This "grand tour" opening (Ibid.), allowed the interviews to run their own course so that the participants could tell their stories with less interference from my activist bias. Although I acknowledge my own bias in this process and have tried to compensate for that by various means as discussed previously in this chapter, using unstructured interviews was one of the methods I adopted so that I could gather more reliable and untainted data.

Dörnyei (2011) describes two types of interviews: single or multiple sessions. My original intent for this research was to conduct multiple interviews with the participants over a period of time, making it more of a longitudinal study. This strategy seemed particularly fitting for this study because, as noted by Richards (2009), "[O]ne of the most encouraging features of research on identity and socialisation has been the appearance of longitudinal studies" (p.156). While some follow-up interviews were conducted to clarify details, the time period for gathering data did not permit a true longitudinal study. Even without multiple interviews conducted over a period of time, to the extent that the participants were relating their experiences over a period of twenty-three years, the data collected did, however, provide a retrospective view of those experiences.

3.3.3.3 Observations

Observation, as a research method in applied linguistics, is a data collection method of watching and recording participants. It is a technique commonly used in qualitative studies as it utilizes "naturalistic data" (Davis, 1995, p.432). Richards and Schmidt (2010) define observation research in language classrooms as "the purposeful examination of teaching and/or learning events through systematic processes of data collection and analysis" (p. 371).

During the course of this study, I incorporated a process of reflecting on the data as it was being collected. In this process of reviewing data collected during the interviews, questions arose related to some participants' comments about their role as language teachers. These issues were directly related to teacher self-perception, which in turn raised questions in my mind about teacher identity formation, and which I wrote

about in my Field Journal on May 18, 2015, as can be seen in Appendix A. I conducted classroom observations with a few of the participants, as shown in Appendix C, because I felt I could most effectively explore those questions further by observing participants interact with their students in the classroom setting. For these observations, I both took notes and recorded the class (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 179). The opportunity to observe participants in their classrooms both helped clarify issues raised during the interviews, as well as provide a fuller picture of the teachers themselves.

My goal here was to not intrude in the interactions which I wanted to observe between teachers and students as I hoped to obtain an untainted view of that relationship. Groom and Littlemore (2011) describe a "crucial distinction between participant observation, where the observer is part of the action, and non-participant observation, where the researcher is not part of the action" (p. 72). In this study, my goal is to be a non-participant observer. Although I sat apart from the action in the classroom and tried to be as unobtrusive as possible, I doubt that I was truly a non-participant observer. Further, although I had a specific goal in mind for these observations, data collected by observation as part of a qualitative study will necessarily be affected by the observer's preconceptions, background, biases, interests, and mood. In addition to my mere presence having an impact on the student-teacher interactions that I wished to observe, my personal background and beliefs undoubtedly affected my perceptions of those interactions. Clearly, I had at least some participatory role in the observation process, which must be recognized.

3.3.3.4 Field Journal

Journals are useful for making a record of events and ideas for later reflection and also to "help[ ] trigger insights" (Richards & Lockhart, 1996, p. 7). In narrative inquiry, data can be collected both from participant journals as well as field journals by the researcher. In the early stages of this study, I considered asking the participants to keep journals, as I wrote about in my own Field Journal on March 7 and 10, 2015, as documented in Appendix A. In reflecting on this possible method for obtaining data, as can be seen in my Field Journal on March 10, 2015, shown in Appendix A, I debated with myself about how participant journals could be created and whether I should provide guidelines about how often participants should write in their journals, whether I should

present participants with specific questions for them to consider in journaling, and how and whether I should enforce my preconceived ideas about consistency and content with respect to participant journals. I also questioned how and to what extent participants might be involved in the analytical process, and whether it would it be wise to "make the process of analysis and the selection of data for analysis open for reconstruction by the participants?" (Ortlipp, 2008, p.701). Finally, my concern about consuming too much of the participants' time and energy led to me to the decision not to ask the participants to keep reflective journals.

As a result of this internal debate about who should journal and what use it would have in this research, I ultimately decided to keep my own Field Journal. As noted by Ortlipp (2008), a researcher's journal can benefit the research process by "engaging with the notion of creating transparency in the research process, and… hav[ing] concrete effects on the research design" (p.696). In my Field Journal, I would then strive to include both my reflections about the research process as well as notes about my own experience in becoming an English teacher in Mexico, as I wrote about in my Field Journal on February 11 and 27, 2015, as can be seen in excerpts from those dates included in Appendix A. I therefore described my experience changing countries and professions, exploring the idea of my own identity transformation, and how my identity has been affected by changes in my life in my Field Journal on February 18, 2015, as included in Appendix A. This process has helped me to identify potential areas of inquiry for this study. It also helped me identify and explore my biases, beliefs, and personal assumptions, making them more transparent (Ortlipp, 2008, p. 695).

Throughout this study, as I learned and thought about the research process, I also used my Field Journal to describe my doubts about how the research was progressing and explain changes in the research methodology and techniques I made as they occurred. This allowed me to "engag[e] with the idea of transparency in the research process and the effect of critical self-reflection on the research design" (Ortlipp, 2008, p. 696). By reflecting on the process in an on-going way, I was able to identify internal conflicts that I was experiencing, explore the sources of doubts that were arising from the data collection techniques I was using, and thereby search for resolutions to these identified issues. This process allowed me to insert additional transparency in the research process

as I was able to "provide a research 'trail' of gradually altering methodologies and reshaping analysis" (Ibid., p. 696).

3.3.4 Data Encoding

Because of my concerns about improving reliability for the data collected in this narrative inquiry study, I developed two schemes to help organize the data collected. The first part of this process involved organizing the data collected, as shown in *Figure 8*, to include a data code, pseudonyms chosen by the participants, type of data collection technique used, and other general information which I felt to be relevant to this study, such as a participant's sex, age, years of experience teaching, and whether or not they are a native English-speaker.

Code	Pseudonym	Technique	Date	M/F	Age	Yrs Teaching	NEST/ N-NEST	Trx	Comments
INT-PAUL	Paul (real name)	Semi-structured interview San Fernando Plaza	4/26/15	M	76 (4/15/39)	52 (1965)	NEST	✓	Experienced teacher
INT-VANESSA	Vanessa	Unstructured interview classroom	5/28/15	F	60 (2/5/55)	23 (1992)	NEST	✓	Experienced teacher
INT-LILLY	Lilly	Unstructured interview office	5/20/15	F	58 (7/9/58)	22+ (1993)	NEST	✓	Experienced teacher
INT-GRACE	Grace	Unstructured interview office	5/20/15	F	47 (6/27/67)	18 (8/1997)	NEST	✓	Experienced teacher
QUE-MEGAN	Megan	Questionnaire	3/10/15	F	45 (1970)	17 (1998)	N-NEST		Mid-level teacher
INT-MEGAN		Semi-structured interview	3/12/15					✓	
JRN-AMANDA		Journal entry	5/18/15						
OBS-MEGAN		Classroom observation	5/20/15						
INT-LEONOR	Leonor	Semi-structured interview classroom	5/9/15	F	34 (3/10/81)	7 (2008)	N-NEST	✓	Mid-level teacher
INT-YODA	Yoda	Unstructured interview classroom	5/21/15	M	27 (5/30/88)	1 (8/2015)	NEST	✓	Novice teacher
OBS-YODA		Classroom observation	1/27/15						
INT-LUKE	Luke	Unstructured interview classroom	5/20/15	M	29 (4/12/86)	5 (2013) 2 MEX	NEST	✓	Novice teacher

Figure 8. Data encoding system.[9]

This data was then structured into a thematic re-storying system, shown in *Figure 9*, to help identify common themes and then organize the details of the participants' stories through a re-storying system.

RSR TECH	RAW DATA	TOPIC	INTERPRETATION	POSSIBLE THEME	POSSIBLE OUTCOME	LITERATURE	NOTES OBSERVATIONS
Semi-struct Interv	"I didn't even dare say I was a teacher." (Leonor)	Ter Dev.	Felt unqualified as Ter because of entry into profession	"Unfledged entry"	Led to intrinsic motivation	Lengeling, 2007, 2010; Johnston, 2003, Borg, 2011	Beginning to teach w/o qualification motivated professional development
Unstr Interv	"I know I don't want to be a teacher forever." (Yoda)	Identity	perhaps stems from childhood exp., negative societal views of Ting; no desire to identify as Ter. Strong contextual influence on identity.	Negative impression re. Ting	Has not socialized into English Ting profession	Clandinin et al, 2006; Norton Peirce, 1995	No commitment to Ting profession, rejects identity as Ter, keeping his options open for a different future.
Unstr Interv	"I had no teaching background at all." (Vanessa)	Falling into the job	Felt unprepared to teach	"Unfledged entry"	Entry to Ting may impede socialization	Lengeling, 2007, 2010	May not have socialized into Ting community because of method of entry into profession.

Figure 9. Data thematic re-storying system.

[9] Adapted from Goodwin, 2011, pp. 83-86.

A thematic approach is recognized as a method useful in providing insight into life experiences, and illuminating their relationship to identity development (Holstein & Gubrium, 2012, p. 7). The thematic re-storying system used here was also intended to provide some degree of consistency in my observations about and analysis of the data (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 56). By charting the raw data using this system, I was able to recognize common themes among the participants. Themes have been identified in the data "for both explicit and implicit references to professional role identity" (Farrell, 2011, p. 56). At the conclusion of this process, the participants' individual stories were re-told, and as a result of this two-fold process, I was able to include details related to the identified themes in the re-telling of the participants' stories, with the aim of hopefully revealing some meaning (Daiute, 2014, p. 1). Finally, the resulting re-telling of their stories was presented to the participants for their input, clarification, and correction wherever necessary. In that way, participants have been an integral part of the process.

Major events which were recounted by the participants in telling their stories were also put into a timeline, shown in *Figure 10*, to provide a visual perspective of where those events were in relationship to each other, and to provide an overall view of the breadth of their experiences during the time-period covered by this study.

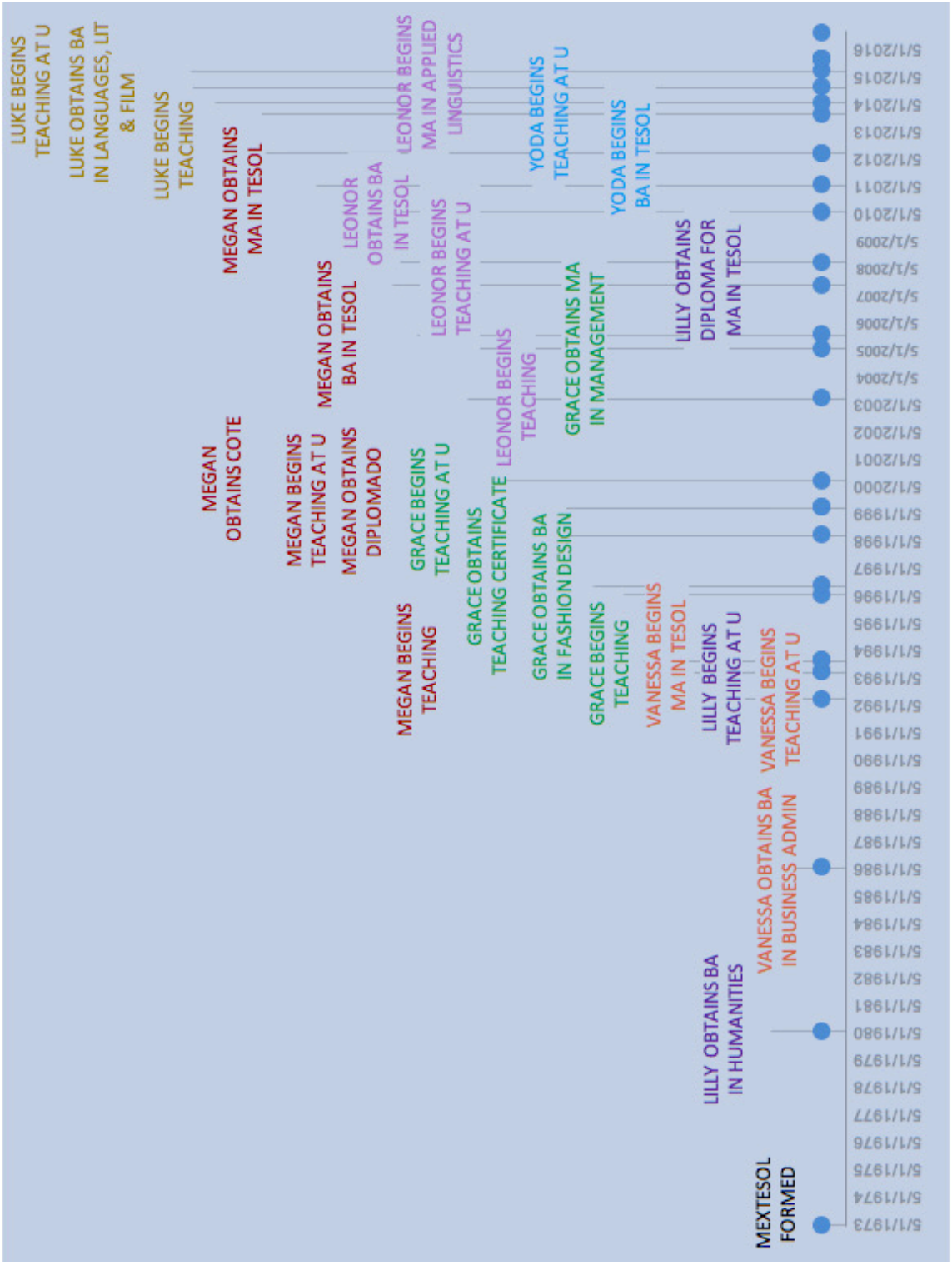

Figure 10. Participant timeline: dates of milestones in participant teachers' lives.

This figure is coded by color for each participant, providing a visual understanding of the relationship of the timing of events among the participants, as well as the number of years covered by this study, from 1992 to 2015. It further gives a visual sense of the range of

experience among the participants, from beginner-teacher to twenty-three years of experience teaching.

3.4 Participant Involvement and Ethical Considerations

As with all qualitative studies, measures must be taken to increase the validity and reliability of the results. To address these issues, the participants here have been involved in the re-storying of their individual narratives, engendering greater validity in the study. As discussed above, I chose to analyze the data using a thematic re-storying system in order to further enhance the reliability of this study.

As the data collected here is intended to elicit participants' personal views, ethical considerations, including informed consent, are important in order to avoid any ethical conflict. Ethical considerations of privacy and informed consent are important aspects of conducting any research (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 63). As Dörnyei describes, "Social research – including research in education – concerns people's lives in the social world and therefore it inevitably involves ethical issues" (Ibid.). This is perhaps even more critical when examining the lives of colleagues. Using narrative inquiry as the methodology here has allowed me to address any ethical issues regarding the use of data obtained from colleagues because of the transparent and open nature of this methodology. This transparency comes not only from obtaining permission from the University to conduct this investigation, which is included in Appendix D, and the written consent of each of the participants, shown in Appendix E, but from involving the participants in the re-telling and re-storying of their own life experiences.

3.5 Summary

My own history has led not only to my interest in the impact on teachers' beliefs and identities caused by the evolution in English teaching as a profession in Mexico, it has informed my approach to this research. By recognizing that my history has also created a particular bias, I realized that a qualitative approach using narrative inquiry would fit well with my activist view. Narrative inquiry focuses on individual stories as a method for piecing together the fabric of the whole context. Viewing this research through my activist lens has meant that my personal biases had an imprint on the decisions and choices I have made throughout this project, as well as my interpretations. But the nature of narrative inquiry, which gives a voice to the research participants by inviting

their involvement in telling their stories as well as in reaching conclusions, has made this project more open and transparent. It has allowed me to present the stories of some of those who have experienced the professionalization of English teaching in Mexico, and examine the impact this evolution has had on their professional development and identity formation as teachers. Using narrative inquiry, I was able to compose the life-stories of the participants, "woven from threads of interviews, observations, and documents" (Kohler Riessman, 2008, p. 5). It is the tapestry created by those many threads which I examine next.

Chapter Four: Teachers Tell Their Tales

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will begin with the stories of the participants in this study, relying not only on their re-living and re-telling of those stories, but their review and input in the re-telling for purposes of this study, as described in the previous chapter. The stories re-told in here are those of teachers who have lived, re-lived, and shared their stories and experiences as English teachers at a public University in Mexico during almost a quarter of a century. It is through the re-telling of their stories that an image of their experiences teaching English in Mexico emerges, and it is those images that I will use for the analysis in the second part of this chapter, pulling their individual stories together into themes that emerge from those stories. It is through their stories and experiences that we can build a picture of the English teacher in Mexico, and gain an understanding of how the professionalization of English teaching as a career has affected teachers' lives.

4.2 Teacher Stories

4.2.1 Vanessa, the Atypical Backpacker Teacher

Vanessa may not be your typical "backpacker teacher" because although she started teaching as a tourist, she did not "go home" or continue her travels somewhere else. She stayed. Vanessa first visited Guanajuato in the 1980s, explaining, "I really loved the city. I fell in love with it like so many people. So I kept coming back, and coming back every vacation that I could." At that time, she was working at a U.S. University, not as a teacher and not with languages, but as a program administrator in a business school. That position gave her the opportunity to return to Mexico for different exchange programs between her University and different universities in Mexico. Eventually, after 19 years of working at her University, Vanessa had the opportunity to leave that job and follow her dream of living in Guanajuato. A few months later, she started teaching at the University.

> I always had this dream to live in Guanajuato, so I came here in 1991 in the fall to study Spanish. And the reason I got my job was the director at

> that time came up to me and said, "Do you speak English?" "Yeah." "Are you going to be here next semester?" "Yeah." "Do you want to teach?" "Yeah!" (laughing). In those days, that was what it was like. There was no question of, "Do you have a teaching certificate? Do you have a BA? Do you have a masters?" In the Language School, at least it was: "Can you speak English?" and "Will you be here?"

But Vanessa had never taught before. "I never was a teacher. I may be one of the very few people here who did not want to become a teacher," she says. At that time, she was working as a program administrator at a U.S. University and her undergraduate studies had been in business administration. As Vanessa describes, "I had no teaching background at all." She had, however, taken an introductory teaching class when she began to consider leaving her position as a program administrator. "Right before I came here, I did take one class in the graduate school of education: an introduction to teaching. Not for credit, just out of curiosity. Because I thought, 'Well maybe I could do that in Mexico.' I thought, 'What else could I do in Mexico?'"

Vanessa came to Guanajuato and to teaching English as a "backpacker teacher." She came to study Spanish, but thought she would return to the U.S. or travel to other countries in Central and South America. "I really did not plan to stay. I just thought I would see if I liked it." But then, life happened. "I started getting connected with people that live here, and I had a boyfriend, and then I actually really started liking teaching once I knew… I had no idea when I started!"

Once Vanessa started teaching, the reality of what she had undertaken hit her. "At first I felt kind of scared… maybe not scared… I was confident. But I thought, 'Can I really do this?' And I took it really seriously, because I felt like 'I can't mess up.'" When Vanessa started teaching, she says, "They handed me a book and said, 'Just follow the teacher's book.' It was listen to the recording and repeat. Dialogues and grammar." As a native speaker, she had not learned the language by learning grammar, but the language program was "pretty grammar oriented then," according to Vanessa.

> One of the coordinators yelled at me when I made a mistake using fewer and less. She said, "What are you doing teaching here? It's not 'less people', it's 'fewer people!'" I felt kind of intimidated at first.

But Vanessa was motivated. "I picked a grammar book up, and I would read stuff, and prepare myself. And then I guess I felt like a teacher. People were calling me teacher on the street (laughing)."

Picking up a grammar book was not the only thing Vanessa did to learn to teach. The University where she worked sent the English teachers to various training programs.

> In those days, they would send us to the "Best of British Council." Once a year, they had the "Best of British Council" in Mexico City, and we would also go to Guadalajara. They wanted everybody to improve. They wanted us to become educated. And you picked up a lot of tips and techniques.

In addition to training courses, the University also encouraged teachers to get advanced education in teaching a language. As a result, and with the financial help of her University, Vanessa enrolled in a distance Master in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) with the Institute of Education, University of London. "It was the first Master's program they ever had here. I took all of the classes. I finished all of the courses. And I got really good grades. And then at the end, I didn't like it anymore." In the end, Vanessa did not complete the Master's program. Once again, life happened.

> At that time, I was having problems with my boyfriend. He left, then he came back, and I was trying to work things out with him and not ignore him. So I thought, "I'll just do it later." But I never did. The more time passed, the less I cared about it.

Not only did life circumstances interfere with Vanessa's graduate studies, her feelings about her career and the importance she felt about teaching the language were also factors.

> What made me really not want to finish the Masters was when they started the BA program here. In order to teach in the BA, you had to have a Masters, and I didn't want to teach in the BA. They kept telling me, "You're not going to be able to teach in the BA if you don't finish." And I thought, "Good!" (laughing). I was tired of regurgitating theory, and I'm not interested in teaching theory. I want *to teach*. To me it's very different.

Although Vanessa says she does not want to teach theory, she was a teacher trainer and evaluator for COTE/ICELT[10] for 12 years because, she explained, "I enjoyed the practical side."

Vanessa had discovered that she "really liked teaching English." For her, "the students made it fun." Although she was using an audio-lingual book, she explains, "What was fun was that the other teachers knew that that's not the way it works. So, we would share games and songs, and it was fun. It was fun!" After twenty-three years in an English language classroom, Vanessa still enjoys teaching. "It's still fun to be in the classroom. But not the rest of it."

By "the rest of it," Vanessa is referring to that which "comes from above, from administration." She describes how preparation time was taken away from language teachers. "They were pressuring us, the administration, above whoever was here." In place of preparation time, teachers were assigned to work in the CAADI. *Plaza*[11] positions for language teachers were reduced, and eventually eliminated. Teachers with *plazas* were expected to do research, "which I don't enjoy," says Vanessa. "I always feel stressed out. Like on the weekend, I always rush to do things in my house so I can prepare or grade exams. I just feel tired all the time." Vanessa decided to retire from the University "mainly for this reason," she said, and retired shortly after she was interviewed for this project.

Vanessa has lived through many changes at UG. During the years she has been teaching English at the University, the English program has been reorganized from the *Centro de Idiomas*, to the *Escuela de Idiomas*, and is now a department within the *División de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades.* The changes did not just affect the name, Vanessa explains. "To me, there's too much administration above us, a bureaucracy." That change, she feels, has impacted the ability of the teachers to affect change, and for "the Coordinators and the Director of the Center to do what they think is right."

The teaching staff has also changed, in Vanessa's view.

[10] The COTE program from the University of Cambridge eventually became the ICELT.

[11] *Plazas* are equivalent to tenure positions in U.S. and British university systems.

> It used to be almost all native speakers and a few Mexicans who had lived outside of the country. In the past, there was more diversity. Maybe some native-English teachers at that time came here with a short-course certificate in TEFL, but their undergraduate degrees were in art, science, mathematics, literature, Spanish, anthropology, or political science. The diversity and new blood each semester led to what I think was a lively, fun, and interesting teaching environment.

Vanessa's perception is that hiring practices changed around the time the BA program started.

> Well, the government has made it harder to hire native speakers. But before that even happened, a couple of directors kind of told us they had to hire the BA graduates. Being in our BA program does not mean that you are proficient in English, though.

Vanessa believes proficiency with the language to be "the most important thing," along with "knowing how to teach." This change in hiring practice, which favored hiring people with education in teaching English rather than those who simply could speak the language, Vanessa explained, led to her perception that she "may be one of the very few people here who did not want to become a teacher." Because of her perception that "now, most teachers have the same background: the same undergraduate and graduate degrees," Vanessa was surprised to learn that other participants in this study also had not expressed a desire to become English teachers prior to entering the field.

To Vanessa, teaching English is a profession because "a profession is something that you dedicate your… I don't want to say 'your life,' but a good part of your life to. As a teacher, you want your students to learn, you want to improve, and you want them to improve." For Vanessa, teaching is a way of helping "the world – maybe not the world – but helping someone else." And that gives her a sense of satisfaction in her work. "You'd have to have satisfaction or else go do something else. So, it's dedication. Dedication and ability."

Looking back now, Vanessa says that although she arrived to teaching "without the required background, I have always received excellent student and teacher observation evaluations." Vanessa became a teacher because of her ability with the

language, but she developed as a teacher both because of her own intrinsic motivation to learn about teaching and the extrinsic motivation coming from her University's emphasis in providing teacher training and opportunities for advanced study. Vanessa has lived this change in her teaching environment, and it has affected her view of language teaching as a profession. As she explains, "You have to have standards, and you have to have requirements. So that now, someone can't get hired without certain prerequisites, or background, or whatever you want to call it." Although Vanessa herself was hired because she spoke English and was going to be in Mexico for at least another semester, after twenty-three years of teaching, Vanessa has seen her work environment change to the extent that she now believes, "If they had had that when I first came here, I wouldn't have been hired!" Her status as a native speaker and ability with the language would not be sufficient to meet the prerequisites for a teaching position that exist at her University now.

4.2.2 Lilly, the Nontraditional Teacher

Love brought Lilly to Mexico. "When I was a student in London, I had a Mexican boyfriend. He was doing a doctorate, and when he finished, we came here." That was in 1993, and although the boyfriend did not last, Lilly's love for Mexico, and Guanajuato in particular, did. So how did she become an English teacher at the University?

> When I came to Guanajuato, my Spanish wasn't very developed. I had studied history in England, and I really wanted to continue studying history. But my Spanish was not good enough to do a Masters or anything like that. So I thought, "Well, I'll teach English for a while until my Spanish improves, and then I'll do something in history." But of course, the rest *is* history.

Being a native speaker of English opened the door for Lilly to begin teaching English at the University. "At that time it was fairly clear that if you had any reasonable general education, and you were a native speaker, you could get a job teaching."

While entering the field was easy, Lilly found the work itself was not. Although she spoke the language, she had not had any training as an English teacher.

> It was hard for me in the beginning. I was kind of a shy personality, and I had never had any experience or given any thought towards teaching

> before. So, I was kind of thrown into it without much preparation, and I didn't have any idea what I was doing (laughing).

Lilly's feeling that she had been "thrown into" teaching led to a sense of frustration with the work.

> I think I had been teaching a week, and I just thought, "I can't do this! I can't do this!" I remember going to the Language School Director and saying, "I'm just not made to be a teacher!" She took me out for a beer (laughing). And she told me, "Just hang on. Just be patient. Just give it some more time."

Because Lilly had no training as a teacher when she started, she relied on the course book as "some kind of structure or some kind of guide." Lilly describes how they also began to receive training in English teaching through the Language Department at the University: "At the end of the semester and the beginning of the semester, we had internal workshops of different kinds. Sometimes we'd have internal things with people who were already working here, or sometimes with visitors."

Although Lilly loved Guanajuato and was beginning to love teaching English, her life had a few interruptions in store for her. "Basically, I can say there have been three phases to my life in Guanajuato." After the "first phase" of teaching at the University, she "left and went home to England for family reasons." She returned to Guanajuato a second time, got married, and started teaching again before life brought another interruption. "When my kids were small, my husband did a Masters in the United States, so we were away for three years." She returned again to Guanajuato, starting her "third phase." She taught English in a high school for a short while, obtaining that position because "I had some experience by that time, and again I think being a native speaker always helped." Eventually, she returned to teaching English at the University.

After being away from Guanajuato for approximately five years, Lilly found things had changed when she came back to the University. In addition to finding that "programs throughout the University were becoming more formal," Lilly also found the Language School in particular was different. "The Language Department had grown a lot. It had become a lot more professional in a lot of ways. It was more connected to

international programs, and had more connection with the outside world." Lilly explains there was also a different attitude toward English teaching.

> Our status as teachers also had changed. Because you know, in the early days, the legality of our work situation and all that was kind of "rough and ready." People just kind of worked it out any old way (laughing). But by the time I came back, it was starting to get more established.

The changes Lilly found upon her return she attributes to "a general change: a general change in the University, and a general change in society." There was a marked difference in both the emphasis put on learning a language as well as "the kind of prestige that goes with those things," she felt.

> Languages tended to be sort of sidetracked, and I think over the years, the language element has become more and more important with its role in education in general. Especially in the last ten years. In the early days, it was considered a bit like a prestigious language school. English was considered kind of an extra. And now, it's really got a fundamental role in students' education.

The changes Lilly found at the University when she returned were not limited to the Language Department and other programs. Significantly, they also included a change in the student body. When she started teaching in 1993, her students included "a lot of women students who seemed to be studying languages for fun with the intention of going shopping in Houston and things like that." Now, Lilly notes, there are more women university students than men. "So that's changed a lot."

With the change in attitude toward both English language learning and English teaching as a profession, Lilly discovered some new tensions for the English teachers as well. Because the atmosphere at the Language School was also changing regarding teacher qualifications, she explains that she did a Masters in TESOL at Canterbury Christ Church University, although she did not finish the thesis. There was a new pressure on teachers to get higher education in their fields.

> The University in general was becoming much more formal in its structure. All the University, not just here in languages. Everything was

> becoming more academic, with more demands on everybody for formal education, and training, and all the rest of it, for job security and *plazas*.

Once again, however, Lilly's professional development was interrupted by circumstances in her life.

> I was single by then. It's sad, but you know… It was a mistake not to finish my Masters in a way, because it was, in theory, the best time to become more professional about everything and do it. But emotionally, I wasn't in a very good place for it.

Lilly found that she didn't feel "connected enough" with the school and the tutors in the distance Master's program. And with that, together with the other events happening in her life during that time, she explains, "I let things go on too long without finishing them up. Even so, I think I learned a lot from it. I really did learn a lot."

Although Lilly did not finish the degree, taking the Masters courses affected Lilly's feelings about herself as a teacher. "My sense of the business in general has become much more mature." During the time she was studying the Masters, Lilly also started to teach in the ICELT from the University of Cambridge given at the University, and the BA *en la Enseñanza del Inglés*. As she explains, "All of that kind of experience, all the different kinds of teacher training experience, working with young professionals, has taught me a lot. I feel I'm a lot more rounded in my general understanding as a result."

Another change Lilly found when she returned to the University was the CAADI. Part of her assignment was to work there, as well as teach regular English classes. "The CAADI was new to me. It had not existed before when I was here. I felt very comfortable there right from the beginning. It's a very natural place for me to be." Lilly's teaching style seemed to fit well with the philosophy: students work more autonomously. "I've always had this general outlook that what I do is basically cooperative. I feel like I'm helping people along." Lilly feels that the CAADI's environment has allowed her to address some of the difficulties she experienced as a teacher when she first started teaching English, which did not disappear with her growing confidence as a teacher. "I think some of the same issues that were a problem for me when I first started teaching, the idea of being a controller and all that, never sat very well with me. That was never

very comfortable to me." For Lilly, the CAADI allowed her to "teach" English in a way that fit her growing sense of herself as a teacher.

> I believe that the CAADI is a great place where you can feel that you're one of the team. It's not like you're the teacher and they're the students. It's more of a cooperative kind of relationship that goes on there. I usually find that I receive as much as I give from the people I work with, the students I'm with there.

Lilly considers herself more of a "facilitator" than a traditional teacher, both in the CAADI and in the classroom. "I probably feel less like a teacher than many people do. I think I feel that role of 'teacher' less seriously than other people do." She says she has "gravitated to teaching upper level English students," and attributes her ease with her role as facilitator, even in a classroom setting, to working with students who are motivated. "These people are in those levels because they want to be. They're not really obligatory levels for any of the programs that I know of. So, the people who are there, want to be there. And that makes a huge difference." For Lilly, the ability to teach students in a way that makes sense to her is an important aspect of her work.

> Luckily, here in the school, we are given the flexibility to be able to adapt. I'm not kept on a program in the same way a lot of schools are. I like that ability to be able to adapt to what my students want in the classroom.

Lilly has lived through many changes in the profession since she first started teaching English in 1993. "When we first started, we were just thrown into it. And probably we weren't great teachers at the beginning. We worked our way through the process." Although she has seen the profession grow and develop, Lilly does not see all the changes as positive ones.

> These days, it's more of a profession. It's a lot more organized. But I think something's been lost, as well as gained. I think the fact that we came in with world experiences of different kinds brought a lot into our teaching. Whereas these days, young things that come straight from high school into degree programs, there's something lost as well. It's not because they're not native speakers. It's not that. It's not having life experience, I think. And just our world experience, our life experience…

> we came in later, after doing something else. It's nice that things get more professional, but I think there is that aspect to it as well that we had an advantage, that we did other things first, and that we can bring that into the classroom, too.

Looking back over the past twenty-two years that Lilly has been teaching English at her University, how does she see herself fitting into the changes that she has seen take place at the University where she has been teaching English?

> If you were to ask me if I feel like I'm a professional, I never pushed the option of finishing the Masters or doing doctorates and *plazas* and all that. I never did that. But in myself personally, I feel like I've worked well with a lot of people in a lot of different circumstances. And I feel like I can do a lot of different things. Personally, I feel like I've done some of the things I wanted to do.

Although Lilly may not have followed a traditional academic path, and expresses some regret and self-doubt about the choices she has made during her teaching career, she has always considered herself to be a nontraditional teacher. In that regard, she seems to be content with what she has accomplished as a language teacher.

4.2.3 Megan, the Accidental Teacher

"I *don't* want to be a teacher!" Megan was sure of that. As a sixth-grader, she had already seen five different teachers that school year in her rural mining town. "They were changing teachers all the time. Because of the place where I lived, teachers had to travel long distances to teach. It was difficult for them." Megan did not want that lifestyle for herself. "I thought, 'No, I *don't* want to be a teacher. I *don't* want to be a teacher.'" The only option for girls in her town, however, was to become a teacher. The boys would become miners, and the girls would be teachers. But Megan thought being a teacher was not for her. "All my childhood, I felt like, 'Teacher? No. Teacher? No, never. Never. Never!'"

Growing up in this small town in Mexico, Megan had a unique opportunity. Spanish was spoken in her home as that was the language spoken by her mother, but she and her brothers spoke English outside of their home and with their father. "The mine where my father worked as a mining engineer belonged to an American company," so he

spoke English because of his work. "They also had American people working in Mexico, and they sent the family, everybody, to live there. The kids had to go to school, but they didn't speak Spanish. So, the school was in English." That meant that Megan and her brothers spoke English at school and with their playmates. That was how she learned English. There were no formal classes in English. For her, it was just natural because "I had both languages, Spanish and English, all around me."

Because of her ability to speak English, Megan was approached about teaching the language while she was studying business administration at a University in Guadalajara. One day, a teacher at her University asked if she spoke English. "I think so," Megan said. She had grown up with the language, but never studied it formally, so she was not entirely sure. "Wouldn't you like to be a teacher?" her teacher asked. "No. I can't." Her teacher was insistent. "Yes. If you speak English, you can be a teacher." Megan was equally firm. "No! It's the same with Spanish. I speak Spanish and I know I can't teach Spanish."

Megan had learned both languages the same way, by hearing them spoken all around her as she was growing up. She had never had any formal training in either language. But her teacher was adamant. "She told me, 'Go. I already arranged a meeting with the director. He's going to wait for you.' So, they gave me an exam, but they gave me an exam with the answers (laughing) by mistake." Not only had Megan not studied English as a language, she had never had any training in teaching a language. The questions on the exam seemed strange to her. They wanted to know how she would teach certain vocabulary, or how many ways there were to say "no" in English. She had the answer key right there. Should she check her answers? "Oy, is this the right thing to do?" she thought. She decided to check her answers against the answer key, and with her final score of 95 out of 100, Megan was offered a job teaching English. "I was studying business administration, and at that time I quit, and I started teaching."

But Megan felt like "a fake" when she started teaching. She believed she was only there because of an accident. Her students called her "teacher," or in Spanish, "*maestra*." Megan flinched at the term. "*¡No! ¡Yo no soy maestra!* I am a liar!" Megan never formally learned a second language. She was instead exposed to both English and Spanish in her environment growing up. Megan did not feel like a teacher. She did not

know what she was doing. "But I discovered that I liked it. A lot," she says now. All her childhood, she had felt that teaching was not what she wanted to do, but the reality of her first experience was that teaching was not so bad. She worked from Monday to Friday and had lots of vacation time. She had lingering doubts about her ability to teach, however. "I felt like, well, if I'm going to do this, I need to know what I'm doing, or how I'm doing it. So, I found an English teaching certificate, and I took it."

Megan got married and had two children. After a few years, she and her family moved from Guadalajara to Guanajuato to be closer to her parents. A month after arriving in Guanajuato, Megan was teaching English. "I was teaching in *Colegio Valenciana.* And also, I was teaching private classes. I was all over the place." Then one day, her father said, "Oh, look!" He showed her the newspaper, which had information about the *Diplomado en la Enseñanza del Inglés* at the University. "He told me, 'I think you should take it.' And I thought, 'Okay, let's go see!'" Not long after enrolling in the course, she started teaching at the University.

> The *Diplomado* started in February, and by August, I finished working in *Valenciana*. So, I was looking for a new job. I don't remember who told me, but I was walking in *Plaza de la Paz* and they said, "Hey! Do you know they're looking for a teacher in *Centro de Idiomas*?" And I said, "Oh, I didn't know." And they were like, "Yeah. It's for a teacher who's going to have a baby, so it's just two months." So, I came, and I saw the coordinators at that time, who had been my teachers in the *Diplomado,* so they knew me. And I started teaching here in the school.

When Megan finished the *Diplomado*, she started the COTE. Just as she entered the *Diplomado* program on her father's advice, she started the COTE as a result of someone else's encouragement.

> One of my teachers pushed me to do it. She said, "Okay. You're finishing the *Diplomado,* and should take this next." And I thought, "Okay! Let's do it! I don't have anything else to do. My kids aren't babies now. Okay!" It was good because I didn't have to pay. It was part of the teaching thing here.

So, on the day she finished the Diplomado, Megan started the COTE.

As soon as Megan finished the COTE, she applied for the BA *en la Enseñanza del Inglés* at the University. "Why am I doing this?" she thought. "How am I going to do this? Classes are every Friday and Saturday, and I'm teaching every day from 8:00 a.m. to noon. I don't know how I'm going to do it!" But she did it. Next came a Masters in TESOL from the University of Auckland. Once again, it was not something Megan planned. When she finished the BA, her bosses at the University asked, "What are your plans after this?" Megan had to say something and she started looking for different options. But not right away, she thought. She had just finished a difficult time completing the BA, and she was still teaching. Someone else intervened once again.

> They told me, "We're going to form a group for an MA here at the University," and I said, "Yeah, let's do it!" So, all my major decisions in my life were made by others. I was just like, "Yeah, okay. I'll do it. Yeah!" Basically, it was that.

Megan says she has felt "pushed" to pursue higher education, with the impetus to do so coming from "someone else."

In addition to feeling "pushed" by others to obtain education in teaching, Megan also had a personal motivation for getting the BA: she wanted to feel like she was part of a group. "In the past, I hadn't finished my major. So, I didn't belong to a group or anything. And here with the BA, it seemed to me at that time that I was going to be part of a group." Megan thought that if she got a BA, then maybe she would be part of a group, a community.

> In Guadalajara, I heard about MEXTESOL and those things, and I thought that was interesting. My father belongs to a mining association. And you can see how they get along, with their conventions and everything, sharing ideas with colleagues, and having access to professional publications. And I thought that was something interesting.

Although she expected that getting a BA degree in teaching English, would make her feel part of the group, her experience, however, did not provide her with the sense of community she was looking for.

> When I started the BA, it was strange, because my co-workers were my teachers at the same time. So, during the week, we were co-workers. And

> then Friday and Saturday, they were my teachers. So, I didn't know… I thought, "How should I address them?" We were colleagues. But then no. Friday and Saturday, we were not colleagues. In the end, I wasn't part of any group. I'm here by myself.

After fourteen years at the University, Megan feels that there is little coherency among the group of English teachers. She has seen a lot of teachers come and go. As one of the more experienced English teachers at the University, she has been asked to mentor new teachers. "How's it going? How are your classes?" Megan asks one of the new teachers she has been asked to mentor. Megan has started to dread these conversations with the new teacher. They meet every few weeks. "Your name again?" the new teacher asks each time. "Oh!" Megan thinks, "She doesn't even know my name!" After training new teachers every semester, Megan doesn't want to do it anymore. For Megan, it only serves to point out how much she does not feel like she is part of a group of teachers.

Megan feels disconnected by both time and space from the other language teachers. She is one of the few teachers who has an office, but it is located away from the other language teachers, most of whom have lockers in the "Teacher's Dungeon." Because she teaches in the morning, she does not have much contact with the majority of the other English teachers, who arrive in the afternoon. Even with the other morning teachers, Megan feels separated. "In the past, well at least in the morning, I could see them. But now it's like, I arrive here in my office, I go teach, and I come back here." She does not identify with the other teachers in the Language Department, although they share some things. Megan says she simply does not identify herself as a "teacher."

Megan still has "issues" with the word teacher. She never wanted to be a teacher as a child, and felt like a "fake" when she started teaching. For Megan, "Teacher. That's something very strong. I'm not a teacher." Even after obtaining the *Diplomado*, COTE, BA and MA, Megan does not feel like a teacher, and she does not feel like she is part of the teaching community. "Call me Megan," she tells her students. "I don't like to be called 'teacher.'" In the classroom, Megan often sits with her students rather than stand at the front of the room. She has an open and easy demeanor, matching her self-perception as guide or facilitator. When Megan meets someone and they ask what she

does, she says, "I teach English." She does not say she is an English teacher. In class, Megan says she tells her students, "I know a little bit more than you, just a little bit more. So, I'm here to help you in this process of learning." To Megan, she is helping people. She feels like a guide, and still does not call herself a teacher or want to be called "teacher." That sense that her entry into English language teaching was an accident appears to persist, despite the academic qualifications she achieved after she started to teach.

4.2.4 Grace, the Vagabond Teacher

Grace's story also begins in England with a Mexican boy. "I met my ex-husband more than nineteen years ago in England. He was studying a Masters the first time I met him. And then I met him again when he went back to study his Ph.D. I was already working for a fashion company as a French interpreter in England." They got married in England, and then, "the deal was for us to come back here to Guanajuato because he had to repay his time to the University for his graduate studies." Two weeks after they arrived in Mexico, Grace was teaching English at the University.

That was in 1997. Her first teaching position was in an English program in the *Departamento de Relaciones Industriales* at the University, and six months later, she started working at the University's Language Center. "There was a position available, a part-time position. I had to go through an interview with some of the people in coordination at that time. They offered me the job, and that's how I got here." In the interview, "they just wanted to check the experience I had teaching. I had taught English in Brazil. Kind of conversation and basic levels really."

Although she had taught English, that was not Grace's initial career plan, and she had no prior experience teaching before going to Brazil as part of her degree in fashion.

> I studied fashion for my first degree. I did a sandwich course, and the year out I was going to spend in Sri Lanka. I didn't make it because my mom died just before. So eventually, I went to Brazil for six months. And in Brazil, when you do your professional practice, I guess it is called, they don't pay you. I had to find something to pay the rent and eat, so I started teaching. And that's how I started teaching.

After Grace returned to England and finished her degree in fashion, she also completed a six-month certificate in teaching English at a community college in England. "I thought, 'This might well come in handy one day.'"

Despite her experience teaching in Brazil and her teaching certificate, when Grace started teaching at the University, she felt like she had "just landed in it," as had some of the other English teachers at the University at that time, she explains. "Some had a teaching certificate or a degree in teaching, and some just kind of landed in it, like me, after studying different areas. Back then, it was more flexible."

Becoming an English teacher was not difficult because of that "flexibility." But becoming an English teacher had not been part of Grace's career plan. "I didn't plan to teach. The teaching certificate was just a backup plan. It wasn't an intention. It wasn't my long-term goal. I didn't want to be a teacher. No way! I gave myself a year or two years to teach, to learn Spanish, and then get back into fashion." What Grace discovered, nonetheless, was that "it was fun."

> I didn't know any Spanish and my first students didn't know any English, and so we had a great time using sign language. I still see one of my first students from that first semester. I still see him, and he's married with kids now. And he said to me, "Can I give you a kiss?" Because we were practicing "can." And I said, "No." I remember that. I still see him; he works at the University. "Can I give you a kiss teacher?" "No you can't" (laughing).

Although Grace still harbored thoughts of starting her own fashion business, those evaporated when her son was born. She says that she realized then, "Oh, I'm not going to start my own fashion business with a baby." She continued to teach, however, "because I liked it," she explains.

> I don't believe in regrets and such. I think you've got to get on with things. But at the same time… before my son was born, I had plans to do other things. And sometimes I think, "Would my life be different if I'd done other things?" But I have kids, so I wouldn't change anything because of that. I couldn't live without them. They're my priority, and I wouldn't give them up for anything.

So, Grace continued to teach English, and eventually was offered a scholarship to do a Masters. "I got a Masters from Southern Oregon University given here at the University. I did the thesis in education management, so I guess I kind of bypassed teaching and went into administration more." Although administration interests Grace, she feels "it's been kicked back in my face several times because I didn't go into English language teaching. I went into management. That's not worth a lot around here."

In addition to teaching regular English classes, Grace administers the placement exam, and is the supervisor of the ENLACE for the continuous education departments in Salamanca, San Miguel, and Irapuato. Grace has also has taught in the *Diplomado en Enseñanza del Inglés,* which she has been doing since it first began being offered at the University in 2000, and the BA *en la Enseñanza del Inglés*.

> I like doing both, teaching and the administrative stuff. I prefer teaching teachers, I think, because I can use the knowledge that I have, which comes from my studies, and my experiences in management, my experiences working with people, administration, and education in general, I think. I like teaching, but I get burned out from time to time. So I like doing both."

After teaching English for eighteen years, Grace thinks of herself "as a vagabond."

> I like to be everywhere, doing everything, and not just teaching, and not just researching, and not just doing administrative things. I like to have my fingers in all kinds of pies. Because if I don't, I get frustrated. If I'm just teaching, I feel like I'm losing my brain. And if I'm just sitting here in my office doing administrative stuff, I feel like I'm just sitting here wasting trees. So I like to be part of everything.

The knowledge Grace has as a teacher not only helps her teach other teachers. It has also informed her own teaching practice. She feels that one of the biggest changes she has experienced during the years she has been teaching has been her own teaching style.

> The way I teach is the biggest change I've gone through from when I started teaching to now because I was very traditional in teaching when I started. I learned to teach that way in Brazil because one of the schools I started working for liked that: drilling and stuff like that. Very traditional.

> Now, I'm freer. A lot freer. A lot more relaxed. A lot more student-centered I think.

Grace believes the way she teaches now is better both for herself as well as the students. "The students seem to like it. Up until now, I have had good evaluations. They seem to like it. And I have students come back and study with me different semesters."

In addition to her teaching style, Grace has also seen changes at the University during her eighteen years teaching there. "It's in a different place physically. It's bigger. The people are different. And we're now part of the Division, which is on a larger scale." Because of these changes, Grace feels that the English Department has become more separate. "Physically we are separated. And also, because of the Division. We have to go through different channels to get answers and things like that. Whereas before, it was closer and there were fewer people to deal with." Being part of a Division means "we have to get together with other departments, where before it was kind of our little close-knit department. We got along very well. I think we did. We had a very nice working atmosphere."

How does Grace respond when students ask her for advice about becoming English teachers themselves? "I have students say that to me every single semester. My first reaction is, 'Are you crazy? Do you want to be poor for the rest of your life?' (laughing)." But Grace goes on to clarify, "I just say, 'Go for it if you like it because it is a good profession. But you will not make your fortune doing that.'" Grace does not believe everyone can be an English teacher, but that it takes special qualities. "You have to have tolerance, patience, understanding, and a willingness to work with people. Because we, teachers, are a pain in the neck. So, I think you need to know what you are doing."

Even when people have what it takes to be a teacher, Grace believes that English teaching is not always treated as a profession. "They don't take it seriously. They think, 'You're an English teacher? You don't need qualifications to do that.' And they say, 'Why should we give you a scholarship to go and study this?' Things like that." Grace says she herself has had that reaction to teaching English "from years ago." She believes the perception people have about her changes when they learn that she has a degree in a different field.

> I say, "I'm an English teacher," and when I tell them what I studied, they kind of look at me in shock because I studied fashion design. They don't believe that I've actually got a talent somewhere. I think English teaching is a talent, but I also believe a lot of people don't think it is. I think a lot of people think it's easy to do. And of course, it isn't. Not everybody can be a teacher. But some people think it's just an easy thing that anybody can do. Some people.

For Grace, however, teaching "any language" is a profession. "It's a profession because it requires an ability to work in a position with the knowledge that you have, the theory, and the practice." Grace believes that is especially true in Mexico because learning English is important for the students.

> I see it as a profession because learning a language is not easy, and especially here in Mexico for our students. English is an obligation. It helps them get along their way, and if they don't get English, they don't get that *titulo*.[13] So, I think we help them to do that, and I think motivation is a big part of that. If we don't motivate the students, they leave and think, "Oh, God, I don't want to go back into an English classroom." And that's it. Sometimes they don't graduate because they don't like it.

Grace now believes that learning English is important for her students' careers, although her own career plans did not include English language teaching and, at least initially, she did not intend to continue in this field. Her self-positioning as "a vagabond" may be reflected in her chosen academic path since she began teaching, which has not been a traditional one for teacher development. Grace is still reluctant to identify as a teacher, and it is interesting to note that she apparently has a greater sense of pride and identity related to her studies in fashion design. Her perceptions that English language teaching is not taken seriously appear to have had a great impact on both her teacher professional development and identity formation.

4.2.5 Leonor, the Proud Mexican Teacher

When Leonor started teaching English, she was excited: about the money. "A friend who owned a school needed an English teacher. He asked me if I wanted to teach

[13] The term *titulo* here refers to a university degree.

English, and when he told me the salary, I said, 'Wow, of course!' I didn't think twice, I just said, 'Yeah!'"

Leonor was studying English at the Language Center at the University when she was offered her first job teaching English. She was focused on "just studying English" in order to finish high school. She was "good in grammar, writing a sentence, looking at the grammar structure. I could do all the exercises in the books." But, she says, "I wasn't able to speak the language." So, Leonor started studying English at the University to improve her ability to produce the language. It was her ability with the language that led her to start teaching English. So, Leonor began teaching kindergarten and elementary school students.

> It was a tragic experience because I didn't take into account many things, like kindergarten kids are not able to read. It was really irresponsible of me to take that position only because I was learning English, because there are so many things behind being an English teacher. I basically did it because of the money. That was wrong. I actually suffered a lot, because can you imagine that? All of the sudden to be there? I didn't have any idea what I was doing. I didn't have any training.

Leonor decided she needed to do something about her feelings that she was not prepared to be an English teacher. "There were publishers like MacMillan giving workshops for you to buy their books, and they explained views on education. Somehow, I went to those training sessions, and in those, was everything I got. That was how I started." As she "started to learn a little bit about the profession," Leonor looked for opportunities to observe her students, and reflect on how children react to different teaching techniques and how they behave in the classroom. "Using those observation sessions helped me to grasp ideas like kids learn by moving around." With this, she began to "build up teacher knowledge, little by little." Leonor also found support from the other teachers. But the textbook was her principle guide. "I followed the book one hundred percent. That was my planning: two minutes, stand up; the teacher says hi… I followed that one hundred percent."

As Leonor built up her teacher knowledge, she also started to build an attachment to teaching. "After a year, besides enjoying the payment, I realized I had fallen in love

with the job. So, I felt like, 'Okay. Now, I have to be a real teacher, a qualified teacher.' That's why I studied the BA." Entering the BA *en la Enseñanza del Inglés* at the University was a big step in Leonor's teacher development.

> I like to learn. In the BA, I was the best student in my class for four years in a row because I just knew that was what I wanted in life. I was very serious when I started to study the BA. And the next step for me, that was obvious: to study an MA was the logical step… Someday, I would like to study a Ph.D. But for now, I need to focus on the present and finishing the MA program.

Leonor found other avenues to develop as an English teacher. While she was studying the BA, she joined the professional organization for English teachers in Mexico: MEXTESOL.

> I was really committed when I was studying in the BA, and I had things that I needed to work on, that I just couldn't understand. What we studied in class wasn't enough. I went to different national MEXTESOL conventions. I took advantage of all these people, these people with big names who I had read, and who were coming to those big conferences.

In addition to joining MEXTESOL, Leonor has also taken part in publishing professionally, and thinks she will publish again in the future as a way of contributing to the profession.

> I think it's my responsibility. In my classes, every single day I see my frustrations there, in the class. So, if I do something, it will be because it's worth it. I don't always have the time to come up with ideas right now. But I'd like to see what it would be like to contribute. I like that idea, to contribute with a little something.

Leonor also feels that part of being an English language teacher is being treated like a professional. Leonor is concerned that teachers are not well supported.

> Money is an issue, and it affects us. It affected me. It affected me the first semester that I was here at the University. They didn't pay me for almost the entire semester. My motivation was under the ground. Sometimes I didn't want to plan my classes. And sometimes I didn't plan my classes,

> to be honest, because I thought, "Why do I do it? They don't pay me now and I'm teaching now." So, money is an issue.

Money is not the only factor that signals to Leonor how English language teachers are perceived. She has also found that equipment and teaching conditions are issues affecting English teaching and teachers. When she first started teaching, she says, "I didn't have a CD player, I didn't have markers, I didn't have a TV. The school desks were heavy and the classrooms were small. I couldn't make copies, but had to pay for my copies for class activities."

Dealing with the reality of what it is like to teach English in Mexico has led Leonor to feel that English teaching is not yet viewed as a profession in Mexico. "A profession needs to be respected. But I see it with my boyfriend, and with some other peers. They don't say it, but..." It troubles Leonor that her chosen profession is not respected. It bothers her especially after all she has done to develop as a teacher. She is no longer an English teacher simply because she speaks the language. Leonor has taken steps to develop as an English teacher because she feels what she does as an English teacher is important.

> I want to explain to people that in my eyes, I have respect for what we do. But they feel like they have a major, which qualifies them to do what they do. And they think that just because I speak the language, I can teach. Maybe that made sense in the past because people who spoke the language were considered teachers. But now, today, are you an English teacher because you speak the language, or are you an English teacher because you have a degree?

Leonor considers the degree to be essential in order to teach English, and considers herself to be a professional because of her education as an English teacher. Her idea of a professional standard goes beyond obtaining a degree.

> To me, being a professional means I fulfill the standards that I have in my head, like having a degree, being committed to the profession, being prepared in every single class, being on time, continuing to learn, and contributing to education. And I try to portray that in my classroom.

> Sometimes I don't do that in every single class, but I try to be prepared, to be professional.

After teaching English for seven years, including six years at the University, Leonor believes teaching English is important. "By accident or by choice, we teach. And that's a very humanistic thing." Leonor has experienced both teaching by accident and by choice.

> I started to teach without any education, and it was by accident. Later on, it was my choice to close that gap. When I started to teach, I didn't even dare say I was a teacher because that is a title I didn't obtain at school.

Now, Leonor not only has a BA, she is getting a Master in *Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés* at the University.

> That is something really important to me because I realized that I was in charge of education in Mexico. I love Mexico, I love being Mexican, and I thought, "I need to be serious about this profession if I'm going to do it.

Leonor's strong intrinsic motivation to develop professionally as a teacher seems to have stemmed not only from her sense of pride about her country, but also from her initial "tragic experience" as an English teacher who fell into the job because of her ability with the language. She has taken steps to develop professionally, and her sense of "professionalism" is apparent. It stands in striking contrast to her perception of how her profession is perceived.

4.2.6 Luke, the Noble Teacher

Luke came to Mexico from Ireland by happenstance: because he was interested in pyramids.

> It was kind of crazy because I was doing language, literature, and film in my BA. I was studying Japanese for two years at the University of Limerick. I applied to teach English in Japan as part of my co-op. I was waiting for ages to get a response and I didn't get a place, it was full up. So, I was really disheartened at the time because I really wanted to go to Japan and learn Japanese and all these different things. But then I had to change my mindset. They said, "Okay, you can go to China or Mexico." And I thought, "I'm learning Japanese for God's sake!" So, I chose

> Mexico because I was always interested in pyramids when I was a kid, and I knew they had pyramids here and I wanted to go to see them. It's kind of a cultural reason I suppose.

Luke came to Mexico, and had a not unusual experience: he fell in love. "I was working at a school in Irapuato for six months. I ended up falling in love with the coordinator, and we ended up getting married."

Luke had "not necessarily planned on becoming a teacher" because he had studied "lots of different things." When he started teaching English in Irapuato, Luke felt like he was "really, thrown into the deep end. It was like, 'Oh, this is how you do a lesson plan?' (laughing)." Luke says, "I didn't plan on being a teacher, not really. No." His degree was in literature. He had studied many different areas: theology, criminal and child psychology, criminology, video and sound processing, a radio course to be a radio DJ, creative writing, and academic writing, to name a few. But not English teaching. He was understandably uneasy about teaching English at the beginning.

> Well I was kind of nervous about it. But I had done lots of acting, so I didn't really care about being in front of people. And I had the personality that's very approachable anyway, kind of down to earth. So, I knew I'd be okay in that aspect. But really, it was just: give you a book, go in there, and teach it. It was crazy because I had never formally been taught as a teacher. I just had a kind of roundabout learning experience about it.

While he was teaching in Irapuato, Luke says, "I realized very quickly that this is what I probably should do because I'm good at it. And a lot of people were complementing me: students and teachers or administrators." He says he was also inspired by his mother, who is a teacher. His mother managed a fine Irish handcrafts shop for fifteen years, "but she always wanted to go back to university… She went back to a night course to study women's studies, and she loved it." When Luke was already in university himself, his mother eventually finished a BA in history and a Master in genealogy. "When I saw her doing that… her spirit was kind of enlivened again. It was great to see someone really and truly happy about their job, really positive and upbeat. She always says, 'I'm paid from the neck up.' So, it's like she's paid for her brain."

Luke continued to teach languages when he and his new bride returned to Ireland, where he still needed to finish his degree. Once back in Ireland, Luke taught Spanish to some students who were moving to Spain, privately tutored students learning English, and also worked in a local college teaching English to immigrants. The college English teaching classes proved to be disappointing to Luke.

> It was a horrible environment. Really robotic. It was just, "Get asses in the seats, and just feed the information to them." No being creative. Just use this book. Don't skip anything. Don't do anything. They literally had, point by point, "This is what you do." So, it was very boring. Anyone could have done it. It was really, how would you say it, stoic? A horrible way to try to teach people, and I really didn't like it.

But Luke had fallen in love, and not just with the school coordinator. He decided to return to Mexico and continue as an English teacher.

> I really liked living in Mexico: the culture, the environment, the weather, the people, the food. So, I really had an inkling to come back here and I knew that I could kick work out of the way when I got here, as opposed to in Ireland where you're really fighting just to get five hours a week… It's really, really difficult to find a job there. And if you are trying to teach English, you're up against people with Masters and Ph.Ds. Jobs are really, really tight. Difficult to get.

When Luke applied for a job at the University campus in a nearby town, he was sent to the main campus in Guanajuato for a second interview. While there, he learned that there was an opening in the English Department in Guanajuato as well. He met with the coordinators in Guanajuato, and says, "I assume they liked the look of me, and they asked me to come back the next day and gave me an interview. Looking at my qualifications, my experience, and speaking to me for a few minutes, they offered me the job." Luke says, "I had to take it. I couldn't say no. Especially when everyone – teachers from different schools, teachers in Irapuato and everything – was kind of jealous when I said I had got the job here." Luke was drawn to the idea of working in Guanajuato, even though he lives about one-hour's drive away in Irapuato.

> Guanajuato is a very special place for me because this is where me and my wife came the first month after we were seeing each other. We did the whole *Callejón del Beso* thing. And then when we came back, I proposed to her in *Callejón del Beso*. I love being around here. Just the air of the place. It's beautiful.

To work in Guanajuato while living in Irapuato, Luke spends twenty hours traveling each week while teaching thirty-three hours. That means he prepares his classes on Sundays, "the only day I have free."

Luke feels it is worth it. He enjoys teaching at the Guanajuato campus because he feels like he is treated as a professional there. "It's a different attitude. It's nice and laid-back, but really, it's different. It's worlds apart." He appreciates that the students are not "kind of half asleep." Luke feels that the students are "all really happy, and they all have really good enthusiasm about the class." Primarily, though, he appreciates the freedom he is given by the coordinators to teach, including that he is allowed to choose whether or not to use a textbook.

> They have a kind of hands off approach, and that really does help. It lets you be creative. To be honest, they treat you like a professional. I mean you have a degree. You should be able to teach. If the students are giving terrible reviews, or they observe you and they see a major problem, then obviously, there's a problem or an issue. But really, why cause a problem if there isn't one there? It's hands-off, and it's a lot healthier atmosphere. You're kind of told, "Look, this is how we do it. This is our course. You kind of should stick to it. But we want you to be creative. We don't want you to just do this 'I am the teacher. Listen to me' kind of stuff."

Luke would like to study a Master in English teaching, and eventually, "I'd love to do a Ph.D. at the end of the day" because, he feels, "I'm worth it… I feel like I should have a Ph.D. because I always think the smartest person in the room is the person asking the question. Like, 'Why are we doing this?' And I always felt like that as well." For Luke, he believes getting an advanced degree would help him in his career as a teacher as well.

> I haven't actually had any formal training in teaching, so obviously, it would help. But if I wanted to get a better position in the University or something like that, it would really help. And I'm kind of ambitious to climb the chain, if you want to say.

But Luke does not feel he is in a position to pursue higher education in his field quite yet.

> At the moment, I'm starting a family, and I'm starting a new life here. I'm one of those poor immigrants. So, I have to work a lot. I have a very, very, intensive and heavy time schedule. But what makes it easier is I really do love to work. So, that kind of takes the edge off.

Luke has not had any formal training to be an English teacher. He says he feels like a professional, however.

> I'm quite confident anyway, and I know what I'm doing. I can see the results for myself. I feel like a professional because I act like a professional. I know if a person doesn't understand then I can explain it to them in a variety of ways. And I am very professional about it as well, just my attitude to work. I do put a lot of time in. A lot of thought, really, is the major thing behind my activities: what are they actually getting out of this?

In addition to "not showing up with stains on your clothes," Luke believes being a professional means "speaking to them like human beings, and treating them with respect to get it back. A lot of students at the start were kind of like, 'Oh Jesus, this is the teacher.' But now it's like, well I'm not a friend, but I'm very approachable. And that's very important, because if you're not approachable as a teacher, it's a big issue." Luke believes that students' respect is important. "We've all been students before, and you have that attitude that you'll work harder for a teacher that you respect and you like." He also feels that "humility" is important, that a teacher needs to be "kind of humble about yourself, and take the teacher off his pedestal in the classroom."

For Luke, "especially in Mexico," teaching English is a profession. The realization hit Luke a few weeks after he started teaching. "I thought, 'Why are all these people coming to a class an hour and a half before they start work? Or to a two-hour class after a ten-hour day in an office?' It's because it's so important to have another

language, especially in Mexico, a developing country." Because of this, Luke feels a great responsibility to his students.

> I feel it's a very noble profession to be teaching English because, if you're teaching someone how to drive, then they learn how to drive and that's it. If you're teaching engineering, or whatever, they'll do it. But if you're teaching someone a second language, it's really a noble profession because you're improving their life. You're making sure that their kids have a better education and a better outlook on life anyway. Think about it as you've got someone's profession in your hands.

Luke conveys a sense of ambition within his chosen career, and expresses a desire to develop professionally as a teacher. He appears to have a strong sense of identity and sense of pride in being an English language teacher, and views his role as an English language teacher not only as something important to society in Mexico, but as something for which he can be recognized professionally, provided he obtains further academic qualifications.

4.2.7 Yoda, the Reluctant Teacher

"Teaching was not my thing," explains Yoda. He did not start out to be an English teacher.

> I remembered my old teachers, and sometimes I said when I was younger that I never wanted to be a teacher because they are boring. They don't have a life because they're always giving us homework, and they're always wanting to grade. So, they don't have a life.

Yoda's impressions about teaching did not come just from watching his own teachers, however. "I felt teaching was not a well-respected career by the students because my mother is actually a cosmetology teacher, and I always heard, growing up, about her problems at school." Growing up, Yoda listened to his mother talk about how "her students didn't pay attention, they didn't care, they wanted the easy way out, for the teachers to give the answers for the tests."

Yoda moved to Mexico from Chicago seven years ago with his younger brother. He describes that his family in Mexico began to encourage him to start teaching English because he is a native English speaker:

> My family members were telling me, "You should be an English teacher. Just teach. Just ask somebody to let you borrow a class, and show everybody that you can do it. And that's it. You don't even need a document that says you know how to teach."

But that idea did not appeal to Yoda and he resisted. "That wasn't my mindset at that time. I felt like teaching wasn't my thing, at the time."

Yoda had other life plans. "Why do I want to come home every day with problems? This person said this to me, this person was bored, or something like that. Nah, why do something like that? That's why I went to tourism at first." Yoda entered university to study cultural tourism. "I started at the *Universidad de Morelia* because I felt, I have English, I like to help people, and I would like to travel." He finished the coursework, but has not yet finished the thesis requirement for him to receive a degree. Yoda says he did not feel ready to enter the workforce.

> I guess a bit of laziness got the best of me. I thought at the time, "Well, I finished my career in Morelia, what should I do? Should I start working right away?" I still wanted to rest a while before starting work. I thought, "Why not study something else?" Because I do not want to be a son who is receiving money from his parents and not doing anything. What's the second-best thing, other than working? Studying another career! So, I decided to study something that I felt I was good at, but that I needed to be polished at.

When Yoda came to Guanajuato to be close to his brother who was studying history at the University, he decided to enter the *BA en la Enseñanza de Inglés*. As he explains, he was motivated to obtain education in language teaching:

> I felt that if you're going to teach something, you have to be good at it, and actually have the knowledge and background that supports what you are going to do… I did not want to start off teaching English just for the hell of it, and learning from there.

Yoda did not plan to start teaching until he finished his BA, but eventually says he felt "pushed to teach" by the program while he was still studying. Even with some training and education in English teaching, Yoda was not sure he was ready.

> When I started teaching here, I was scared because I felt that I needed the other years in the program, to finish the BA, in order for me to know everything there is for me to know about teaching. But I found that was the wrong way of thinking.

Yoda discovered that as part of his studies in the BA, he was expected to teach. "I think we learn more with practice than with theory… You are expected to put those theories into practice, and learn from the practice, the mistakes, and the adjustments you have to make as a teacher."

For Yoda, teaching English is "more than a profession." He still worries about taking the problems associated with being a teacher home with him, but that type of dedication holds special meaning for Yoda.

> I think it's a way of life because you take home all the problems, you take home all the mental problems you've had, all the things you saw in class that you liked or didn't like. You have to bring it home and sometimes you have to talk about it with your girlfriend or whatever person you have next to you. And we take it home. We sometimes have to take it home.

What does the future hold for Yoda? He still pictures himself working in tourism at some point. But he has caught the education bug. "I still want to learn more stuff, different stuff." His "dream is to study computers next," once he finishes the BA *en la Enseñanza del Inglés*.

> I just want to open my door to different things. I know I don't want to be a teacher forever. I also know I don't want to be in the tourism business forever. Nor in the computer business forever. I'll stay in Mexico, that's what I'm sure about so far. But I don't know what to say regarding my future. I envision myself wearing a suit and tie, working in an office where my English is needed, and also some other skills that I possess. But that's later on. Right now, I want to see what I have to offer here as a teacher, and eventually check what else I can do.

Yoda is the only participant in this study who started academic studies related to being an English language teacher before becoming a teacher, and explains his motivation to "actually have the knowledge and background" before starting to teach.

He views English language teaching as "a way of life," but nonetheless, Yoda does not appear to have committed himself to the profession and does not plan to be a teacher "forever."

4.3 Discussion

How English teachers arrive at their profession, and the effects the changes in the profession have had on teachers, piqued my interest when colleagues spoke about their varied paths to English language teaching in Mexico. Life rarely hands us a straight path, but it is what we do with our life events that both are a result of who we are and shape who we will become. The participants in this study agreed to share their stories and their own, uniquely circuitous routes to becoming English teachers, permitting their lives to be examined in the process as a means of discovering who they are and what has shaped them along the way.

Some common threads were pulled and plucked at in the telling and re-telling of these teachers' stories, revealing pieces of the fabric woven from their experiences teaching English at a University in central Mexico. These teachers come from varying backgrounds, have varying education, varied work experience prior to becoming English teachers, and varied years of experience teaching. Even with such variety in their personal circumstances, in telling their stories, some common ideas were expressed: their prior perceptions about English teaching as a career path; falling into the job; feeling unprepared to teach; motivation and teacher development; teacher identity; perceptions about respect for English teaching as a profession; and perceptions that teaching English is important. These common threads are discussed below, and ultimately, they are examined in light of changes that have taken place in the English teaching profession generally, in Mexico, and at this University in particular.

It is important to note, however, that, as described by Kohler Riessman (1993), "A personal narrative is not meant to be read as an exact record of what happened nor is it a mirror of a world 'out there.' Our readings of data are themselves located in discourses" (p. 64). The "trustworthiness" of data in narrative inquiry must be considered, as the data relies on people's memories, personal perspectives, and personal agendas. As discussed above when describing the narrative inquiry methodology used here, the individual stories of the participants has been "member checked" (Ibid., p. 66)

by each participant to increase the validity and credibility of their narratives. By now examining the "recurrent themes that unify the text" (Ibid., p. 67), trustworthiness is further enhanced by discussing "themal coherence" (Ibid.) in the data. The goal, therefore is to provide what Barkhuizen (Wilson, 2017, p. 6) calls "the bigger story." The common threads of the participants' stories about who they are and what has shaped them along the way are what can be woven together to create the tapestry of that bigger story.

4.3.1 Prior Perceptions About English Teaching as a Career Path

What motivates someone to become an English teacher has not been widely studied. Such motivation might include a person's perception about the opportunities open to him or her within a particular field, how meaningful or rewarding the work may be, and the value placed by society on a field of work. As noted by Hayes (2008), "[L]iterature on the motivation of language teachers… to *enter* teaching… [is] not represented at all" (p. 471). Although teachers' prior perceptions about teaching as a potential career before entering the field has not been the subject of much research either in Mexico or elsewhere in the world, it emerged as a common thread among the participants here. In this study, many of the participants described their perceptions about teaching prior to entering the field, as well as their motivations for becoming teachers.

In describing their initial perceptions about teaching as a potential career before entering the field, the teachers who have shared their stories as part of this study describe varying preconceptions about English language teaching. Both Megan and Yoda held strong opinions about teaching as a profession that appear to have stemmed from childhood. As a schoolgirl, Megan had negative feelings about teaching as a possible career path for herself. As she explained, being a teacher was the only option available to girls in the rural Mexican town where she grew up, but she rejected that path for herself: "All my childhood, I felt like, 'Teacher? No. Teacher? No, never. Never. Never!'"

Yoda similarly expressed a negative perception of teaching and teachers. Growing up with a teacher-mother in the U.S., Yoda was exposed to her experiences as a teacher, as well as his observations of his own teachers. With his lived experiences before becoming a teacher, he expressed his perception that teachers are "boring," and that teaching seems to consume teachers' lives to the point "they don't have a life." He also observed that "teaching is not a well-respected career," explaining that he heard from

his mother about her problems at school and with her students. Yoda rejected his family's suggestions that he teach English, and began his studies in tourism instead. Now, as a beginner-teacher, Yoda says he still has other plans for his future. "I know I don't want to be a teacher forever." For both Megan and Yoda, their negative perceptions about teaching appear to have stemmed from childhood perceptions related to negative societal views of teaching as a profession. Neither wanted to identify as a teacher. Factors identified by Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004), such as childhood experience with teachers and cultural archetypes, appear to have greatly influenced their feelings about teaching as a profession, and may have generated their lack of any desire to join that profession. Both recognized the "low pay and low status" of the teaching profession described by Cohen and Scheer (2013) in their own experiences and contexts. The contextual influences on identity coming from their communities (Clandinin, et al., 2006; Norton Peirce, 1995) colored their feelings about the profession to such an extent that they perceived it as a low-status profession, and rejected the idea for themselves. As a result, both began their lives as young adults by studying different fields, far removed from teaching.

While other participants may not have expressed such strong negative preconceptions about teaching, like Megan and Yoda, they too described having other career plans as young adults that did not contemplate teaching. If asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" neither Grace nor Lilly would have answered, "A teacher." Neither perceived teaching as a profession they wanted to be a part of. Grace clearly declared that she never intended to be a teacher: "No way!" Her plan after moving to Mexico was to use teaching as a means to learn Spanish so that she could go back to her initial career plan and work in fashion, which is what she was trained for at university. Similarly, once Lilly moved to Mexico, she planned to continue with her studies as a history major after teaching English for a while. Like Grace, she thought she would "teach English for a while until my Spanish improves and then I'll do something in history." For both Lilly and Grace, speaking English was their entry into a field neither had previously contemplated. As Lilly explained, however, "The rest *is* history." Once they entered the teaching profession, both continued to teach despite their prior career plans and stated intentions to escape English language teaching as soon as they could

manage to do so. Although their life goals may not have initially included teaching, neither Lilly nor Grace returned to their original career plans, and both have since pursued higher education in English language teaching over the course of their careers as teachers. Neither Lilly nor Grace appear to have been affected by a societal perception about teaching as a low status profession to the extent both Megan and Yoda were.

Like Lilly and Grace, Vanessa similarly never planned on becoming a teacher. In fact, she says she "did not want to become a teacher." Unlike Lilly and Grace, however, who had envisioned certain career paths for themselves prior to being waylaid into English teaching, Vanessa came to language teaching after working in another field for a number of years. Vanessa arrived at English language teaching as a true backpacker teacher, whose "only claim to [teaching] competence is that [she] grew up in an English speaking country" (Farmer, 2005, p. 3). Although Vanessa worked at a University in the U.S. prior to moving to Mexico, she was not a teacher there and had never considered teaching—until she decided to come to Mexico. Even then, she says, "I did not plan to stay," but just wanted to see if "I liked it." Although Vanessa did not express the same negative opinion about teaching and teachers as other participants, she had not considered that as a career until she "fell into the job" based on her ability with the language (Lengeling, 2010). When Vanessa began teaching at the University twenty-three years before participating in this study, that was the usual path for becoming an English teacher. That reality for entering the field has changed over the years, so that now the University hires language teachers with relevant education in language teaching, and offers a BA in TESOL and MA in applied linguistics. Given this new reality, Vanessa was surprised to learn that other participants similarly had not planned on becoming teachers. Her view, as apparently influenced by the evolving community at her University, was that teaching English had become a more sought-after profession than it had been when she started teaching.

Luke, like Yoda, also has a mother who is a teacher. His mother, however, is a teacher in Ireland. Luke had not "necessarily planned on becoming a teacher," but unlike Yoda, he had a different perception of the profession before he started teaching, based at least in part on his observations of his teacher-mother. Luke's mother entered the profession when Luke was already an adult. His lived experience has been of "someone

really and truly happy about their job, really positive and upbeat." It impresses Luke that "she's paid for her brain." For Luke, the factors identified by Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004), such as family and teaching traditions, positively influenced his perception of teaching as a profession. Luke studied "lots of different things" before landing serendipitously in English teaching because of his love of pyramids. After gaining some experience teaching English in Mexico, he returned to Ireland where he found it difficult to find a job teaching. In comparing teaching in Mexico with teaching in Ireland, Luke explains, "It's really, really difficult to find a job there. And if you are trying to teach English, you're up against people with Masters and Ph.Ds." Luke returned to Mexico to teach because he believed it would be easier to find work given his level of education and experience. He came to Mexico to take advantage of the lower English language teaching requirements described in other studies (Farmer, Llaven Nucamendi, & Chuc Piña, 2012; Hubbard, 1995; Lengeling, 2007, 2010; Mora Vazquez, Trejo Guzmán & Roux, 2013). Although Luke may not have planned on becoming a teacher himself, he did not resist the opportunity when it was before him. Luke did not come to the profession with a negative perception about teaching, as Yoda did. The contextual influences on identity for Luke were very different, and he was not hindered by a societal perception of teaching as a low status profession. To the contrary, Luke's perception of teaching prior to becoming a teacher was positive.

Of the teachers who participated in this study, only Leonor did not have other career plans prior to becoming an English teacher. Of the rest, none planned on becoming teachers, wanted to be teachers, or thought of teaching as a viable career path prior to entering the profession. Other than Leonor, none of these teachers chose English teaching as their first career path. Vanessa was a program administrator at a U.S. University, Lilly studied history, Megan studied business administration, Grace studied fashion, Luke studied literature, and Yoda studied tourism. As Vanessa explained, "I really did not plan to stay. I just thought I would see if I liked it." English teaching was never imagined by any of these teachers as a viable career option until after they entered the field.

Amongst the participants here, it is only with Luke's experience growing up in Ireland with a teacher-mother that we see a positive prior perception of teaching and teachers. Some of the participants express strong negative preconceived perceptions

about teaching as a profession, while others simply had not considered it as a potential professional career path. No participant in this study mentioned a childhood dream of pursuing a career in teaching, or described plans of becoming a teacher. The opinions about teaching expressed by the participants here indicate that, prior to entering the profession and becoming English language teachers, most did not perceive it as a field of work that offered good opportunities for them personally, nor did they describe it as meaningful or rewarding work. Teaching was not valued by society in their contexts, and was not a profession to which they aspired. This last factor, the value placed within an individual's context, appears to have been singularly important.

What is it about English teaching that does not attract people to it as a profession? My mother and paternal grandmother were both teachers, which is part of my own story of becoming an English teacher in Mexico. I grew up, however, hearing the expression, "He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches" (Shaw, 1903, p. 334). Based on the stories of these teachers, teaching has long enjoyed a position in society as a low-status profession in the U.S. as well as in Mexico. As Ripley (2013) observes, in many parts of the world, teaching is not a difficult profession to enter, and for some, it is merely an entry to something else. She describes a math teacher in the U.S. who "decided to become a teacher mostly so that he could become a football coach. In America, this made sense" (Ibid., p. 87). He could become a math teacher without "taking the more rigorous mathematics classes offered to other students" because "education majors tended to take special math classes designed for students who did not like math" (Ibid.). Teaching generally has not been perceived as a rigorous field of study, and as discussed next, English teaching historically has not been a difficult profession to enter in Mexico. Given that many of these participants expressed not being motivated to become teachers prior to entering the field, how then, did they become teachers?

4.3.2 Falling into the Job

In sharing their stories, each of the participants in this study relates how they became English language teachers due to their ability to speak the language. This phenomenon of "falling into the job" has previously been documented in Mexico, as discussed above, where people entered the field and "no questions arose as to credentials, teaching experience, or background. The only qualification was to speak the language"

(Lengeling, 2007, p. 91). The participants here shared their own experiences becoming teachers in accordance with this phenomenon, which has historically been a common path of entry for English language teachers in Mexico.

Vanessa's lived experience was being invited to become an English teacher at a Mexican University because she spoke the language and was "going to be there next semester." As she explains, she was retiring from a position as a program administrator in the U.S., and was visiting Guanajuato as a tourist. When she was approached about teaching English at the University, she says, "I had no teaching background at all." It was her ability with the language that "qualified" her for the job. Vanessa's experience was that she could teach English simply because of her ability to speak the language, and as she explains, "In those days, that was what it was like." This sentiment was echoed by Lilly and Grace as well. As Lilly summarizes, "If you had any reasonable general education, and you were a native speaker, you could get a job teaching." What was true in the 1990s appears to have been true a couple of decades later. As a native speaker with a degree in literature, Luke also was offered a language teaching position without any prior education or training in teaching a language. For Megan and Leonor, although they are not "native speakers," it was similarly their ability with the language that provided them the entry into English language teaching. Both were invited to teach English because of their ability to speak English. Each of these teachers "fell into the job" because they spoke the language.

Of the teachers who participated in this study, only Yoda entered the profession as a beginner-teacher, while he was in the process of receiving education specific to TESOL. However, Yoda also describes how his family told him when he moved to Mexico from the U.S., that as a native speaker, "you don't even need a document that says you know how to teach." It was only Yoda's personal belief that you needed to "actually have the knowledge and background that supports what you are going to do" that led him to seek a BA in TESOL prior to obtaining a position as an English language teacher. This belief may have come from his experience growing up with a teacher-mother, although he also attributes "a bit of laziness" to his decision to delay his entry into the working world.

This mode of entry into English teaching seen among the participants here has not been uncommon in Mexico. Traditionally in Mexico, people could become English teachers without any education in teaching a language, but simply based on their ability to speak the language. Language teaching in general has only recently been considered distinct from other types of teaching, and English language teaching in Mexico is young. Historically, people have started teaching English in Meixco based on their ability to speak the language, without any training or education in teaching a language, and without any special skills or experience as language teachers. The teachers in this study share that same experience, and as their lived experiences illustrate, they have suffered the ramifications for language teachers who have entered the profession without any prior training or experience, as discussed next.

4.3.3 Feeling Unprepared to Teach

When describing their early teaching days, uncertainty is a common emotion expressed by the teachers who participated in this study. They express feelings of hesitancy and nervousness, and several report feeling as though they had been "thrown into it." This appears to have been a result of their "unfledged entry" into English language teaching, as previously described in other research in Mexico. For some, it has also meant feeling unqualified to teach, which some have described as feeling as though they were lying about being teachers. As Hamilton (2012) describes, their stories reveal the impact this has had on their teacher identities.

As Vanessa recounts, once she accepted an English teaching job, she was worried about her ability to actually teach. She had audited an introductory teaching course prior to moving to Guanajuato in anticipation that teaching English might be something she could do in Mexico, but when she started teaching and the reality of what she was doing hit, it was a different matter. As she says, "I had no teaching background at all." It was then that Vanessa began wondering, "Can I really do this?" and feeling like she did not want to "mess up." Similar feelings of hesitancy and nervousness about her new venture were also described by Grace. She too had obtained a teaching certificate before coming to Mexico, and even had some experience teaching English. As Grace describes, however, she felt as though she had "landed in it" when she started teaching at the University. She felt unprepared to teach. Luke similarly describes feeling "kind of

nervous," and as if he had been "thrown into the deep end" when he started teaching. Lilly says that about a week after she started teaching, she started thinking, "I can't do this! I can't do this!" She also felt "just thrown into it." These participants experienced a common thread in feeling unprepared to teach.

Lortie (2002) identified the significant anxiety student-teachers face as they begin to teach as "sink or swim" (p. 60). With the possible exception of Yoda, who was enrolled in a BA in TESOL when he started to teach, the participants here had no prior education or training in language teaching. They became English teachers based solely on their ability with the language. Unlike Lortie's student-teachers, these participants began teaching without even knowing how to swim. This "unfledged entry" may explain the analogy repeated amongst the participants of being thrown into something. As student-teachers are recognized as having significant anxiety as they start to teach, even with training and education specific to their roles as teachers, it is not surprising, therefore, that the participants here might feel as though they were drowning when they began teaching.

For Megan, how she became a teacher also affected her socialization into the teaching community. A teacher's teaching environment as well as the individuality of the teacher are critical in the socialization process (Tahir, Quadir, & Malik, 2014). Becoming a teacher without any prior training or education left Megan feeling as though she was "a fake" and "a liar" when she started teaching. Her self-perception was that she was not really an English teacher when she was in front of a classroom, but was pretending to be something she was not. Around the time Megan started teaching English, a case study of English teachers was conducted which described how public and private schools placed importance on their teachers' abilities to speak the language, not teacher training or education, and therefore regarded English teachers as easily replaceable (Hubbard, 1995, p. 11). Entering the profession this way for Megan meant that she did not feel like a teacher and did not feel qualified to teach. Similarly, teaching without any prior training or education was a "tragic experience" for Leonor, and she says she "suffered a lot" when she started to teach: "Can you imagine that? All of the sudden to be there? I didn't have any idea what I was doing. I didn't have any training." She now says, "It was really irresponsible of me to take that position only because I was learning

English, because there are so many things behind being an English teacher." Lortie (2002) recognized that the "conditions of entry" into teaching are important factors in a teacher's ability to socialize into the teaching community. Megan and Leonor's "unfledged entry" into English language teaching left them not only feeling unqualified to teach, but caused them to suffer personally.

As discussed above, how teachers learn to teach has been the subject of much research. With the exception of Yoda, none of the teachers in this study had more than a little training or education in teaching English prior to entering the field. They all had experience being students, however, as Luke reflects: "We've all been students before." Unlike the other participants, Luke still has not obtained any specific education or training in teaching a language. It may be for this reason that he appears to have embraced what Lortie (2002) has described as the "apprenticeship of observation" (p. 62). Although not explicitly addressed by other participants, it would not be surprising if they also called on their "apprenticeships of observation" to help them cope with their new positions as English teachers.

With little or no training or education as teachers when they entered the field, much less as English teachers, some participants also describe relying heavily on a textbook when they were new teachers. As Vanessa explains, "They handed me a book and said, 'Just follow the teacher's book.'" Similarly, Lilly says the text book provided her with "some kind of structure or some kind of guide" when she began teaching. Leonor also describes relying on the textbook as her principle guide: "I followed the book one hundred percent." In Ireland as well as in Mexico, Luke used a textbook when he first started teaching. "Just use this book, don't skip anything," he says he was told.

Each of these participants describes feeling unprepared to teach as a result of "falling into the job," as well as feeling hesitant and nervous when they began working as English teachers. Their "apprenticeship of observation" as students undoubtedly was something they relied on as new teachers, and it appears that they were also encouraged by their various teaching institutions to rely on a textbook. With those strategies, they appear to have reduced their suffering and felt less like they were drowning as new teachers. When teachers "fall into the job" without any training, and as a result feel unprepared to teach, in addition to relying on a textbook or their own "apprenticeship of

observation," they may also seek other ways to develop as teachers. What motivates this development is discussed next.

4.3.4 Motivation and Teacher Development

In telling their stories, as discussed above, some of these participants describe "falling into the job," and as a result, feeling unprepared for the job. These teachers also talk about their subsequent motivation to develop as teachers. While only one participant began teaching while he was simultaneously studying a BA in TESOL, others tell of the steps they have taken to develop as teachers after they had already started teaching English. As Johnson (2007) and others have noted, what motivates a teacher to develop professionally comes both from within the teacher as well as from external forces. Some of the measures taken were intrinsically motivated, while others were the result of outside pressures to develop as teachers.

The motives for some of these teachers to become English teachers were highly personal ones. Vanessa began teaching English in Mexico because she "fell in love" with Guanajuato, and wanted to live in Mexico. She thought she would eventually return to the U.S. and did not plan to stay in Mexico, but simply wanted to "see if I liked it." In anticipation of that move, Vanessa audited a graduate level introduction to teaching class "out of curiosity." She thought, "Well, maybe I could do that in Mexico." Vanessa ended up staying, however. She had a boyfriend and other friends, and found she "actually really started liking teaching."

Luke also initially came to Mexico for personal reasons: simply because of his interest in the country, and in particular, the pyramids. Once there, he "ended up falling in love with the coordinator" of the English program where he was teaching. After studying many different areas, Luke says, in teaching English, he felt he had found something "I'm good at." As a result, he explains that he realized "this is what I probably should do." Luke was also motivated to teach for another reason: he was inspired by his mother, who went to university and became a teacher after Luke was already a university student. Although he returned to Ireland so he could finish his undergraduate degree in literature, Mexico called him back. He was finding it difficult to find work as a language teacher in Ireland, "where you're up against people with Masters and PhDs" and "jobs are really, really tight. Difficult to get." He liked the culture, environment, weather,

people, and the food in Mexico. And for him, Guanajuato "is a very special place" because he proposed to his wife there. For Luke, his decision to become an English teacher in Mexico was entirely personal.

As with Luke, the stories of both Lilly and Grace also include "love" as a motivating factor. Both Lilly and Grace came to Mexico for romantic reasons. They each followed someone to Mexico after meeting in England. It was because they ended up in Mexico under these circumstances that they were motivated to become English teachers. As with Luke's story, neither Lilly nor Grace had anticipated becoming English teachers before moving to Mexico. Both had already embarked on different career paths when love intervened: Lilly was studying history, and Grace had finished a degree in fashion design. Like Vanessa, Grace had anticipated that teaching English "might well come in handy one day," and so obtained an English teaching certificate after she returned from teaching in Brazil. It was merely a "backup plan" in her view. Neither Lilly nor Grace planned on continuing to teach once they had learned enough Spanish to carry on with their chosen areas of study in Mexico. According to Grace, "It wasn't my long-term goal. I didn't want to be a teacher. No way!" But, things do not always turn out as expected, and as Lilly, the former history student now says, "The rest *is* history." These participants describe very personal motivations for moving to Mexico, and for each of them, their reasons for entering the English teaching profession were a matter of circumstances: being in the right place at the right time. Having found themselves in this profession after "falling into the job," they also describe feeling unqualified to teach English, as discussed above. How they coped with those feelings after they began teaching provides another common thread among the participants.

After being yelled at by the Coordinator for making a grammar mistake, Vanessa describes how she, "picked a grammar book up, and I would read stuff, and prepare myself." Vanessa may have been motivated by the external pressure, as discussed by Johnson (2006), that she perceived to be coming from the Coordinator. It was her internal desire to learn how to teach English, however, and perhaps a feeling of embarrassment as a "native speaker" who nonetheless made grammar mistakes, that may have motivated her to take her initial step toward developing as a teacher. Leonor's "tragic experience" as a new teacher without any training or education in teaching similarly motivated her to

take steps to develop as a teacher, and she found ways on her own to "build up teacher knowledge, little by little." Like Vanessa, the motivation coming from within Leonor appears to have been the dominant force in her desire to develop as a teacher. She attended training sessions held by textbook publishers, and reflected about what she was seeing in her classes. With this, Leonor "started to learn a little bit about the profession." Both Vanessa and Leonor were intrinsically motivated to develop as English teachers, and both took measures on their own to help them overcome the feelings of being unqualified to teach, as described above.

In addition to what the teachers were doing on their own to develop as teachers, Vanessa describes the measures taken during the 1990s by her University to help English teachers develop professionally: "They wanted everybody to improve. They wanted us to become educated." Lortie (1998) notes that it has been the pressure on teachers from their employers to obtain teacher training and education, and the recognition of degrees and credits by their employers that has provided a powerful extrinsic motivation for teacher development. Because of the University's interest in training its English teachers when Vanessa began teaching English, teachers attended the "Best of British Council" once each year. Lilly similarly describes internal workshops during those years which were put on by the Language Department "at the end of the semester and the beginning of the semester," given both by colleagues as well as visitors from outside the University. Lengeling, Crawford, and Mora Pablo (2016) also describe this early environment at the University, acknowledging that during those early years, English language teachers were given "professional opportunities" (p. 61) to develop as English language teachers. During this period, it appears that English teachers were primarily extrinsically motivated to obtain training, as it was at the behest of the University employing them.

The academic reality of university teachers has seen an increased pressure to have ever-higher levels of educational degrees (Muñoz de Cote, Lengeling, & Armenta, 2014, p. 18). This is perhaps a reaction against the negative reputation of teaching in general. At the University where this study took place, following the early period of teacher training described above, this mindset of higher educational degrees also began to be adopted, and has now evolved to include the professional development of language teachers as well (Ibid.). As Lilly explains, "Everything was becoming more academic,

with more demands on everybody for formal education, and training, and all the rest of it." As a result of this push toward higher academic standards, in addition to training courses, the University also encouraged teachers to get advanced education in teaching a language. Consequently, and with the financial help of their University, Vanessa enrolled in a distance Master in TESOL through the Institute of Education, University of London, and Lilly enrolled in a distance Master in TESOL at Canterbury. Grace chose to enter a distance Master program in education management through Southern Oregon University with a scholarship from the University. The steps taken by these teachers to develop professionally were perhaps the result of a combination of both their own intrinsic motivation to develop personally as teachers together with an extrinsic motivation coming from the University's recognition of the value of having professionally educated language teachers.

Because of life circumstances, neither Vanessa nor Lilly completed their Master's work. Vanessa explains that she was having "boyfriend problems," which made studying the Masters more difficult. As Day (2007) acknowledges, "Complications in personal lives can become bound up with problems at work" (p. 602). That was not the deciding factor for Vanessa, however, as she explains that ultimately she did not want to obtain the degree because she felt pressure to move from teaching English to teaching theory in the BA *en la Enseñanza del Inglés,* which she says did not interest her as much as teaching the language. "I want to *teach*," she says. "To me it's very different." Although her motivation in not completing the Master's program may have been partially extrinsic, stemming from outside pressures she was feeling from her boyfriend, ultimately it appears to have been her intrinsic motivation to avoid moving into the BA program which prevented her from obtaining a Master's degree. Lilly similarly did not complete her Masters studies because of what was happening in her personal life. She had gone through a divorce and so, "emotionally, I wasn't in a very good place for it." She also describes not feeling "connected enough" with the distance program. That lack of engagement together with her personal situation resulted in her not finishing the program, even though she now says, "It was, in theory, the best time to become more professional about everything." Lilly's decision to quit the Master's program appears then to have

been motivated by her personal feelings about her lack of connection with the program, perhaps colored by what was happening in her private life at the time.

Megan's story may be illustrative of what was taking place at the University during the early stages covered by the participants' stories here. Megan's self-doubts about her ability to teach led her to look for teacher training opportunities because she felt "if I'm going to do this, I need to know what I'm doing, or how I'm doing it." Without any type of training or preparation to teach, many English teachers in Megan's situation might have based their teaching style on their observations of their own teachers, their "apprenticeship of observation" while students. But Megan never formally learned a second language. She was instead exposed to both English and Spanish in her environment growing up. Without that language learning background to help her as she began teaching, Megan looked for other ways to help her feel more like a teacher. She first obtained an English teaching certificate, and then later, completed the *Diplomado en Enseñanza del Inglés* with the encouragement of her father. Megan claims she felt "pushed" to then complete the COTE, BA, and MA, which were all done with financial assistance from the University. For Megan, her teacher development has been extrinsically motivated more than due to her own personal desires. Although Megan acknowledges that she was intrinsically motivated to develop professionally in order to feel more qualified to teach, and that she specifically obtained a BA in order to feel like she was "part of a group" of professionals, she still perceives that "all the major decisions in my life have been made by someone else." Whether Megan's professional development has resulted from her own intrinsic motivation or extrinsic motivation from her father and others, it is fair to say that, at the very least, she benefited from the University's early policy of providing English language teachers with "professional opportunities" (Lengeling, Crawford, & Mora Pablo, 2016, p. 61).

As the academic reality has continued to evolve at this University, however, along with a change in placing value on teacher training to finding more benefit from teacher development, the University's involvement in teacher training and development has become perhaps more limited. This parallels the change in perspective of teacher training compared to teacher development taking place elsewhere in the world (Avalos, 2011; Head & Taylor, 1997; Mann, 2005). Currently, teacher development is generally

recognized to be the responsibility of the individual teacher, and may not result in any professional advancement or financial recognition by the University. As Johnston (2003) described, "in ELT at least, teacher development is something that teachers themselves undertake and that is guided by the teachers concerned" (p. 95; see also Wallace, 1991). What has motivated Leonor to develop professionally, then, has been purely personal to her. Because she didn't have a degree in teaching when Leonor started teaching English, she says, "I didn't even dare say I was a teacher." Once she decided "to be a real teacher, a qualified teacher," she decided to get a BA *en la Enseñanza del Inglés.* Leonor chose to "close the gap" noted by Borg (2011), between what is observed as a student and a fuller view of the role as a teacher, through more formalized teacher education. Although she started to teach without any teacher training or education, she says then "it was my choice to close that gap." For Leonor, that meant formal education as an English teacher. As she explains, "I just knew that was what I wanted in life." Leonor completed a BA in TESOL, and is currently enrolled in a *Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés*. In addition to getting an education in English teaching, Leonor also joined a professional organization because she believed it would help her understand what she was learning in the BA. She has also published professionally because she thinks it is her "responsibility" and would like to "contribute with a little something." All of these steps have been taken by Leonor without financial assistance from the University, or professional advancement or recognition by the University. Leonor's motivation to develop professionally as an English teacher appears to be purely intrinsic.

While Luke has, as of yet, had no formal training in teaching, he says that he would like to pursue both a Master in English teaching and a Ph.D. Luke's motivation to develop professionally appears to be purely extrinsic. He describes his perception that "obviously, it would help" his career at the University to have some education in English teaching. As he explains, "If I wanted to get a better position in the University or something like that, it would really help." But Luke does not feel he is in a position to pursue higher education quite yet. "I'm starting a family, and I'm starting a new life here." Luke's intrinsic motivation to support his family is at this point stronger than any motivation to develop professionally.

The only participant in this study to have pursued formal education in English teaching prior to entering the field is Yoda. He explains that he decided to obtain a teaching degree so he could stay in school a little longer as he "didn't feel ready to enter the workforce," and because it would give him the opportunity to live closer to his brother. He was further motivated to pursue a degree in English teaching because he "did not want to start off teaching English just for the hell of it, and learning from there." For Yoda, it was important to "actually have the knowledge and background that supports what you are going to do." Although Yoda's family encouraged him to start teaching English because of his ability with the language, without first obtaining any prior education or training, he has been guided by his own intrinsic motivation to develop professionally as a teacher first. His motivation appears to be a combination of both his personal feelings related to family as well as what he describes as "laziness," and perhaps more importantly, an expressed desire to feel prepared to enter the English language teaching profession.

As we have seen here, the professional development of these teachers has generally taken place after they started teaching English, which has been a common path for English teachers in Mexico generally. Some of their development has been because of external forces coming from the University (Lortie, 1998), while other motivation for developing as teachers has come from within the teachers themselves (Johnson, 2006). Their professional development has, however, come after they have begun teaching, and one of the consequences of this pattern of obtaining teacher training and developing professionally only after starting a teaching career may be to effect the way teachers develop their professional identity, which is discussed next.

4.3.5 Teacher Identity

Understanding teachers, and the individual identities they claim as teachers as well as those assigned to them in their communities, is important if we are to understand language teaching and how teachers function (Korthagen, 2004; Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005). Our personal beliefs, values, and histories are reflected in our personal identities, making them something unique and individual to each of us. But our context is also important in the formation of our identities as they are also recognized to be a function of our environment and our experiences within that environment

(Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Clandinin, et al., 2006; Day, 2007; Norton Peirce, 1995). Through the stories told here, we begin to recognize Edstam's (2001) explanation that "where they work, who they work with, who they teach, and what they teach" (p. 213) are important factors affecting teachers and their sense of identity as professionals. The interplay of the personal and contextual is evident from the way the participants here discuss themselves as "teacher" and as "professional."

Megan and Lilly both reject the traditional role of teacher in the classroom. The word "teacher" itself causes Megan some discomfort. As a child, she did not want to be a teacher, and felt like a "fake" and a "liar" once she had started teaching. Even after finishing the *Diplomado*, COTE, and both a BA and MA in TESOL, Megan still does not feel like a teacher. She says she feels more like a "guide" who is helping her students "in this process of learning." Megan's "observable activity of a teacher engaged in classroom practice occurs not simply on the basis of the activity… but it is also being simultaneously shaped by [her] background, experience, and history" (Cross, 2010, p. 440). Megan's sense that becoming an English teacher was an accident appears to persist, despite the academic qualifications she achieved after she started to teach. Understanding her history permits an understanding of the effect that history continues to have on how Megan's identity as a teacher has developed.

Just as Megan does not want her students to call her "teacher," Lilly also rebuffs the "role of 'teacher.'" As Lilly explains, "I've always had this general outlook that what I do is basically cooperative. I feel like I'm helping people along." When she started teaching, Lilly says, "The idea of being a controller and all that, never sat very well with me. That was never very comfortable to me." She thinks of herself as a "facilitator" rather than a traditional teacher, and prefers "feel[ing] that you're one of the team… not like you're the teacher and they're the students." Again, understanding Lilly's history in entering the profession as a stop-gap while she learned Spanish so she could continue her intended studies, and her experience with unfinished graduate studies in ELT, perhaps help explain her reluctance to identify as a teacher. As Beijard, Meijer, & Verloop (2004) recognize, how a teacher views him or herself within not only the teaching context, but also within the teacher's broader society, help form that teacher's identity. An important aspect of that view of self is also reflected in the expectations and judgments a teacher

perceives about their place within his or her context. Although Lilly states that she "learned a lot" while studying a Masters in TESOL, she also expresses some disappointment in herself for not completing her Master's studies. She perceives that it was a mistake not to finish, especially given the changes in the University that have taken place over the course of her teaching career. As a result, her identity as a teacher appears to have been influenced by her self-perception of the effect her decision not to finish the Master's studies may have had on her position and advancement at the University. Lilly also describes not feeling "connected" while studying the Masters. In addition, her work at the University has focused in large part on a self-access center for students, which may add to her feelings of detachment from the other teachers. It is an environment where Lilly feels comfortable, where students work more autonomously and she can feel that what she is doing is "cooperative." It may have had the effect, however, of keeping her at a distance from the teaching community.

Megan describes her failed efforts to "belong to a group" in her teaching environment. Feeling like "part of the group" of her fellow-teachers is something that Megan felt was important. One of the reasons she pursued a BA was because she thought it would make her feel part of a community, but because the teachers in the BA were also her co-workers, she explains, "In the end, I wasn't part of any group. I'm here by myself." Megan expressed similar frustrations with her role as mentor to new teachers, who she says do not "even know my name." Megan does not identify herself as a "teacher," and also does not identify with other teachers in the Language Department. She does not identify as a teacher, and has failed to socialize into the teaching community. Both Megan and Lilly reject the identity of a "teacher" in favor of something they view as less controlling and authoritarian. Both also mention not feeling like they are part of the community of teachers, and both appear not to have fully socialized into that community. As Edstam (2001) describes, the work environment for both Megan and Lilly appears to have had a significant impact on their ability to socialize into the teaching community and accept the identity of a teacher.

While Grace does not reject the identity of "teacher" to the extent Megan and Lilly do, she also mentions feeling "separate" because of her work environment and the structure of the University. Grace did not originally intend to be an English teacher, and

now describes herself as a "vagabond" because "I like to have my fingers in all kinds of pies." She is involved in different areas: administrative, research, and English teaching. Grace explains how she believes she has changed as she has developed as a teacher. While she started as a "very traditional" teacher, she now considers herself to be "a lot freer. A lot more relaxed. A lot more student-centered." Although Grace may have given up on her plan to start her own fashion business when her son was born, that continues to hold a place of importance for her. To Grace, people recognize that she has "a talent" when they learn what she studied before becoming an English teacher. Because of what she perceives as a more positive societal response to her former profession, and perhaps related to her feelings of being "separate" within her teaching environment, Grace seems to continue to identify with her undergraduate studies in fashion design. Although Grace is able to discuss what kind of teacher she is, like Megan and Lilly, she appears to have been reluctant to socialize into the teaching community.

In the process of talking about themselves as teachers, some of these participants also discussed what it means to them to be a teacher, and how they view themselves within the "profession." Vanessa believes that teaching English is a profession because it is "something that you dedicate… a good part of your life to." She has a sense of satisfaction from her work because she believes that "teaching is a way of… helping someone else." Although Vanessa did not want to be a teacher, after she started to take steps to feel more prepared, she says, "Then I guess I felt like a teacher. People were calling me teacher on the street (laughing)." Despite her years teaching in the COTE/ICELT, she appears to identify most with being a language teacher. Although Vanessa "enjoyed the practical side" of being a teacher trainer, she says she does not enjoy pure theory. For Vanessa, teaching language and teaching theory are "very different." Her identity as a language teacher rather than a researcher was, as described above, one of the motivating factors that contributed to her not completing her Master's studies. Vanessa's identity as a language teacher appears to have been influenced by the external factors related to pressure she perceived to move more into teacher training, and her resistance to that idea.

Some participants appear to identify with the "profession" perhaps even more than with being a teacher. Luke states that he feels "like a professional because I act like a

professional." For Luke, that means he "put[s] a lot of time in. A lot of thought," and can explain the language "in a variety of ways." He also describes factors that would appear to be part of his teacher identity. Luke believes it is important for teachers to treat their students with respect, and as he explains, he also feels "humility" in a teacher is important. Although Luke acknowledges that he has not "actually had any formal training in teaching," he feels "confident" as a language teacher because, he says, "I know what I'm doing. I can see the results for myself." Luke's position as an English teacher without formal training has not prevented him from socializing into his community of teachers, accepting an identity as a teacher, or identifying as a "professional." Throughout his discussion, Luke's focus was on himself and his role as a teacher more than on his working environment, coworkers, or students (Edstam, 2001). For Luke, the personal component of his identity formation appears to be the stronger influence, rather than the contextual.

Like Vanessa, Yoda similarly describes teaching as "a way of life" and appears to see it as a "profession." Although he originally did not want to teach, Yoda now admits that for him, it has become "a way of life because you take home all the problems." It is perhaps because of this perception that Yoda states, "I know I don't want to be a teacher forever." At this point, he is still considering other plans for his future. Although Yoda feels that teaching is a "profession," he has not accepted himself as part of that profession or the society of teachers in his teaching community, and he does not fully identify himself as a teacher. Yoda is keeping his options open.

The importance of context becomes evident when analyzing why some of the participants here still do not see themselves as "teachers," even though they have pursued advanced degrees in language teaching. In contrast, however, most do see themselves as "professionals" or at least recognize teaching English to be a "profession," which is perhaps a function of the personal aspect of their teacher identity formation. There appears to be a conflict between teacher's self-perceptions about their careers compared to societal perceptions of language teaching and teachers, and this contradiction is discussed next.

4.3.6 Perceptions About English Teaching as a Profession

The distinction made earlier in this thesis between "professionalism" and "professionalization" is important to understanding the impact these twin concepts have on English language teachers. For purposes of this study, I define "professionalism" to include education, competence, and integrity on the part of teachers, while professional associations, journals, conferences, and professional qualification requirements are understood to be indicative of the "professionalization" of teaching (Breshears, 2004; Crandall, 1993; Englund, 1996). While some teachers in this study voiced frustration with how they feel they are treated as English teachers, others expressed feeling fortunate to have chosen English language teaching as their profession.

Despite personal efforts to develop as teachers, as discussed above, some of the participants here describe a sense of frustration with how they see English language teaching to be perceived by their community. Grace feels that being an English teacher requires special qualities and skills, elaborating, "You need to know what you are doing." Her impression, however, is that English language teaching is not treated as a "profession." For Grace, there is no societal recognition of the qualifications necessary to be an English language teacher. As she notes, "They don't take it seriously. They think, 'You're an English teacher? You don't need qualifications to do that.'" That sentiment was echoed by others. Leonor similarly describes the reaction she perceives people have to her as an English language teacher. She says she sees it with her boyfriend and other peers. "They don't say it, but…" As she explains, people who have studied a specific major in order "to do what they do" think that simply being able to speak the language is the only qualification necessary to be an English language teacher. Because of this perception, Leonor now admits, "I didn't even dare say I was a teacher" before obtaining a degree in TESOL. For Yoda, this lack of respect is not limited to English language teaching. Listening to his teacher-mother, he noticed as a child that "teaching was not a well-respected career."

Such negative perceptions about a teacher's "profession" coming from the community have been noted by Johnston (2003), who found that "the views of others" exist inside the teacher as well, creating a "clash of values represented by the two views of teacher identity" (p. 86): striving to be a professional while their work is not respected

by those around them. Grace, Leonor, and Yoda's stories substantiate this internal conflict as noted previously by Johnston, each having sought out and obtained education specific to English language teaching, but nonetheless failing to be recognized as being qualified for the work they do. Even with their education and experience, the perception in their community is that they are not "professionals." This clash is reflected by the struggle a teacher exhibits "convincing *herself* that she really is a professional, so that others will also be convinced" (Ibid., emphasis in original), and can be seen to result in self-marginalization by the teacher caught in such a dilemma. For these teachers, there is a clear recognition that they have been marginalized within their community, and although they do not state explicitly that they accept the views of others about their chosen profession, they seem not to know how to combat it. They are simply caught in this dilemma previously documented by Johnston. What happens in a teacher's community outside of the classroom provides only one perspective of a teacher's context. For a fuller view of the interplay between the "professionalism" of teachers and the "professionalization" of teaching, it is necessary to also consider the teacher's workplace.

Vanessa has noted changes in the treatment of English teachers during the twenty-three years she has been at the University. The fact that paid preparation time was taken away from language teachers left her feeling "like they were pressuring us, the administration, above whoever was here." As a result of not being paid for the time it takes to prepare classes caused Vanessa to be "stressed out" and "tired all the time," and ultimately led to her decision to retire from teaching. Leonor also describes feeling as though teachers are not always well supported or treated like professionals within the University. Despite her belief that English language teaching "was what I wanted in life," she describes the effect not being paid "for almost the entire semester" had on her when she first started teaching at the University. As she explains, "My motivation was under the ground." Although she continued to teach even while she was not being paid, she says that sometimes she did not plan her classes as a result. In addition to lack of pay, teaching conditions and lack of equipment have also affected her, making her feel as though she was not respected as a teacher. As discussed above, the impact on a teacher's sense of "professionalism" resulting from such negative perceptions in the teacher's work community further contributes to the clash of values described by Johnston (2003).

Vanessa's decision to retire and Leonor's failure to prepare classes evidence the struggle each of these teachers' experiences working in an environment where they do not feel they are recognized as "professionals."

On the other hand, Lilly's perception is different. She describes a change in status for language teachers at the University that has taken place over the years, during which time she believes the profession has become "more established." Lilly's experience acknowledges a "professionalization" of English language teaching in Mexico that she believes has led to a "kind of prestige" for language teachers at the University as more "emphasis [has been] put on learning a language." Lilly also feels fortunate to teach where "we are given the flexibility to be able to adapt" to what the teachers individually believe is best for their students. Part of that adaptability for Lilly is the ability to teach students in a way that makes sense to her. Luke echoes that sentiment, saying his experience at the University is that "they treat you like a professional." He shares Lilly's perception about the autonomous relationship teachers have within their classrooms, explaining that he appreciates the "hands off approach" of the English coordinators which allows him to "be creative." Both Lilly and Luke share a perception that they are treated as professionals within their work environment, and they do not appear to suffer the same clash of values described by other participants here.

Many of the teachers in this study exhibit what Overbeek (2014) describes as "innate professionalism" (para. 7), as evidenced by their efforts to develop professionally as teachers. Their stories, however, are also illustrative of outside factors which may be hindering the "professionalization" of ELT (Breshears, 2004, p. 24; Johnston, 1997, p. 203). As other studies have described:

> [ELT] has no proper career structure and… [English language] teachers suffer from low morale and low status, lack opportunities for study leave, have high rates of attrition from the field, frequently lack a power base within their institution, and may be treated as an underclass by colleagues and superiors. (McKnight, 1992, p. 30)

In thinking specifically about English language teaching, Overbeek (2014) recognizes the need "to somehow have all [English language] teachers themselves become professionals… and then to be treated as such" (para. 13). The participants here

describe a sense of "professionalism" which has led them to develop professionally as teachers, including by seeking education specific to English language teaching, as well as exhibiting a dedication and sense of integrity in their work. That innate professionalism may be explained by their own perceptions of the importance of what they do, as discussed next.

4.3.7 Perceptions About the Importance of English Teaching

Although none of the teachers in this study planned on becoming English teachers, after starting to teach, they not only stuck with it, they now talk about how much they love what they do. This sense of dedication to the profession has been conveyed by several of the participants. As Vanessa says, teaching is "something that you dedicate your… I don't want to say 'your life,' but a good part of your life to." Yoda expresses his view toward teaching similarly, as "more than a profession… it's a way of life." For Leonor, it "is something really important… because I realized that I was in charge of education in Mexico. I love Mexico, I love being Mexican, and I thought, 'I need to be serious about this profession if I'm going to do it.'" The importance of teaching was further described by Vanessa as a way of helping "the world – maybe not the world – but helping someone else."

The responsibility inherent in teaching English is a common idea expressed by several of the participants in this study. Lilly notes that English has developed so that it now has "a fundamental role in students' education." Grace articulates a similar sentiment when she says English "helps [our students] get along their way." She feels there is a great responsibility on the part of the teacher to motivate students because, as she explains, if someone does not complete the English requirements for graduation, "that's it. Sometimes they don't graduate." Luke also talks about the importance of English and his perception that having another language is key to students' futures, "especially in Mexico, a developing country." For Luke, teaching English is "a very noble profession" because "it's a big responsibility." He believes teachers should "think about it as you've got someone's profession in your hands." Mann (2005) recognized this sentiment when he described teaching as "having "an inherent personal, ethical and moral dimension" (p. 105). As Leonor says, "By accident or by choice, we teach. And that's a very humanistic thing."

These shared perceptions about the importance of teaching English to students in Mexico may, at least in part, explain the "professionalism" of the teachers who participated in this study and their desire to develop as teachers, even within a community that they generally feel neither supports them nor recognizes them as professionals. As discussed next, this increase in importance in Mexico of learning English is also creating changes within the teaching profession itself.

4.3.8 Changes in the Profession

Mexico has experienced a revolution within the English language teaching profession in recent years. This professionalization revolution has been described as going from "total chaos" fifty years ago to "academization" today (Wilson, 2015, paras. 5-6, 22-23). As an organization, TESOL claims to be a professional society for English teachers, and states its mission is to "advance professional expertise in English language teaching and learning for speakers of other languages worldwide" (TESOL International Association, Mission and Values, n.d., para. 1). TESOL is a relatively new organization, being founded in 1966 (Anderson, 1967, p. 173). MEXTESOL was established even more recently, in 1973. As one of the MEXTESOL founders Paul Davies explains, English teaching had become a profession in Mexico by the early 1970s.

> [There was] this feeling that English language teaching is *de facto* a profession now, even though a lot of people doing it are not professionals. But it is a profession. It's established in Mexico, and it's growing in Mexico, both in the public and private sectors. And if you have a profession, you really need a professional organization to push things, promote things. (Wilson, 2016, para. 26)

Davies goes on to describe the changes that have continued to take place in ELT in Mexico since MEXTESOL's founding in 1973:

> [W]hat you see is a whole lot of substantial impacts, which together change the thing radically. Before MEXTESOL, you had the *Anglo* and *Relaciones Culturales* offering English language teaching courses to the general public. Then *licenciaturas* began opening up in the universities in the 1980s. Then you had the British Council and its agreements with the SEP from the 1990s, with the Cambridge COTE course, and other courses,

> including open BAs. One thing is not more important than anything else. It is lots of flowers in the garden. (Ibid., para. 29)

Those flowers in the garden have changed ELT as a profession in Mexico, and those changes have been recognized by the teachers in this study as taking place at their University as well. Lilly describes how "programs throughout the University" have become "more formal," and how she has seen the Language Department grow and become more professional, with more connections to international programs and "the outside world." As the University began to establish its place in the international academic world, so too did its Language Department.

One of the changes recognized by the teachers in this study has been the adoption of education and training requirements for hiring new English language teachers. Lilly describes this change in teacher hiring from "rough and ready" to a "more established" process. As Vanessa noted, she was invited to teach English because she spoke English and would "be here" in Mexico. There were no questions about her education or experience in teaching a language. Lilly says that when she started, "We were just thrown into it. And probably we weren't great teachers at the beginning. We worked our way through the process." She explains that as things have become "more academic," there have been "more demands on everybody for formal education, and training, and all the rest of it." Vanessa describes these changes in hiring practices from when she started teaching, and "native speakers" were hired to teach English, to now, when more teachers are being hired with BAs in teaching English. Vanessa notes that had those standards existed when she moved to Guanajuato, "I wouldn't have been hired!"

In addition to changes in the University and the Language Department, Lilly also describes a general change in attitude toward learning English. When she started teaching, Lilly says, English "was kind of an extra. And now, it's really got a fundamental role in students' education." She also has noticed a change in the make-up of the students, and their motivation for learning English. There as well, Lilly believes things have become more serious. She notes there are more women university students than men now, and these women students no longer "seem to be studying languages for fun with the intention of going shopping in Houston and things like that." As English has become part of the University graduation requirements, and students have begun to accept its

positive role in their future work plans, the study of the language has gained a new status within the University. That change is trickling down to affect the status of teachers, what Lilly recognized to be a "kind of prestige."

Not all of the changes have been perceived as positive, however. Both Vanessa and Grace believe things have become more bureaucratic, affecting the ability of the teachers to affect change. Grace feels that as the Language Department has become larger and gone through the process of several reorganizations, it has become more separate. Vanessa also expresses a feeling that the changes in hiring requirements have not been entirely positive. Her belief is that having a degree in English teaching does not guarantee proficiency with the language, which she feels is "the most important thing," along with knowing how to teach. Lilly shares the feeling that something may have "been lost, as well as gained," as the type of teacher coming into teaching has changed. It is "not because they're not native speakers. It's not that," she explains. To Lilly, the fact that in the past, English teachers "came in with world experiences of different kinds" brought a lot to their teaching. As English teaching becomes "more professional," Lilly's perception is that something is lost because new teachers entering the field do not have "life experience."

As English teaching in Mexico is becoming professionalized, there appears to be a gap between words and deeds within academic institutions. This gap was documented by Farmer, Llaven Nucamendi, and Chuc Piña (2012) who noted that obtaining "the Mexican government's desirable standards for university lecturers" certainly "brings benefits to both staff and institutions… so the low level of recognition of ELT practitioners within their universities and at [a] national level must be due to other factors" (p. 63). This marginalization of ELT is not unique to Mexico, but is widely acknowledged (Johnston, 1999, 255). Along with Breshears (2004), who has studied "the marginalization of [English language] teachers among other teaching communities" (p. 23) there are other studies and stories discussing this sense of disregard. Johnston (1997), for example, found that "[t]eachers in many national contexts—some would say in most—tend to be underpaid and overworked, often operating in difficult physical and psychological conditions" (p. 682). He describes English language teachers in Poland, among whom "prospects for professionalization are… seen to be limited because,

although teachers act professionally in the day-to-day sense of working conscientiously and responsibly, the socioeconomic conditions make it impossible (or at least extremely unwise) for them to make a long-term commitment [to ELT]" (Johnston, 1997, p. 707). For example, when asked if she considered herself a professional, he describes how one of the participant teachers in his study responded, "I think I could be; but I'm not, at school, because I don't have time to organize my classes in such a way that they would look like, as if, well, they are organized by a professional person" (Ibid., p. 705).

When listening to the stories of English language teachers who participated in this study, and their descriptions of their perceptions of English teaching as a profession and as a career path, it is striking how those stories resonate with the stories of other ELT teachers around the world. The gap identified by Farmer, Llaven Nucamendi, and Chuc Piña (2012), between government standards for university lecturers and the marginalization of ELT practitioners within their universities may continue to contribute to a negative societal perception of English language teaching as a career in Mexico. The saying which plagued my youth, "Those who can, do. Those who cannot, teach" (Shaw, 1903), seems to be dying a slow death.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter, the stories of seven English teachers who agreed to re-live and tell, and then re-tell and share their experiences as part of this study, provide a means of examining their lived experiences. In that re-living, telling, re-telling, and checking, recurrent themes or common threads emerge that, at least to some extent, unify their experiences. This "themal coherence," along with member checking, lends trustworthiness to the study.

Common threads of experience were revealed by the participants in their individual and unique stories. The perceptions they carried prior to entering the teaching profession provide part of the fabric of their experiences. Their preconceptions about English teaching as a career path ranged from simply not considering it as an option, to having rather negative reactions to the idea of teaching as a career. Some of the more negative reactions appeared to have had their roots in experiences observing their own teachers, as well as observing teacher-mothers.

Most of these participants also described the phenomenon of "falling into the job," simply based on their ability with the English language. Only one participant began studying to be an English teacher prior to entering the field, but he also describes hearing that as a native-English speaker, he needed no "document that says you know how to teach." This lack of prior training and education left teachers feeling unprepared to teach and unsure as new teachers. While some may have relied on "the apprenticeship of observation" to help them negotiate through those beginning experiences as teachers, others were motivated to develop within their profession.

The motives these participants describe for becoming teachers range from personal reasons such as love and relationship, to love of the area of Mexico in which they found themselves, to opportunity and the prospect for earning money. The idea of developing as a teacher after entering the field provides another common thread among these stories. The motivation for such teacher development has been at times intrinsic, stemming from feelings of self-doubt and a desire to "close the gap" between what they might have observed as students and their developing view of their role as a teacher. The motives described also included extrinsic motives. A powerful motivator mentioned by several of these teachers was the "academic reality" of university professors requiring them to obtain more formal education.

Many of these teachers also told about their perceptions of themselves as teachers. Teacher identity was a recurrent issue, with some participants expressing their reluctance to identify as "a teacher," preferring instead to think of themselves as guides, facilitators, and part of the team. The idea of being part of the teaching community, however, presented a different issue. One participant reports feeling that she is "alone," despite her extensive education as a teacher and number of years teaching at the same institution.

Frustration with how the English teaching profession is perceived as not requiring any special talent or ability, other than an ability with the language, is another common thread binding these stories. That point of view was somewhat offset by other teachers who feel that the freedom they are given to teach in the way they believe to be best is proof that they are treated as professionals. Whether or not a teacher feels that they are perceived by others to be "professional," all of these teachers expressed the idea that what

they do is important. This appears to be the principle thread which binds all of them together, and may be one of the primary factors motivating them as teachers.

These common threads are illustrative of the "flowers in the garden" which have led to changes in English language teaching as a profession in Mexico. The participants in this study describe the world they found when they entered the profession, mostly with no prior training or education, and the steps taken along their various paths to develop as teachers. Their experiences have not occurred in a vacuum, but are reflective of changes that have taken place in the profession generally in Mexico.

Chapter Five: Concluding Remarks

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study has been to explore the effect on teacher development and identity resulting from the "professionalization" of English language teaching at a public University in central Mexico. For that reason, this study began perhaps more with an eye toward the status of English language teaching as a "profession," and I initially began interviewing the participant teachers in this study with that as a focus. After listening to the participants' stories about their experiences and the journeys that brought them to this place and occupation, their individual stories about how they have developed as teachers and how their identity as teachers has formed in this context became the central point of this investigation. What I had initially noticed was the "professionalization" of English language teaching in Mexico; what I found, however, was the "professionalism" of teachers, as illustrated through teacher development and professional identity formation. This was what ultimately evolved into the emphasis for this study.

In this chapter, I begin with a discussion of what has been discovered through this narrative process and the implications for the study of teacher development and teacher identity in ELT in Mexico. I consider limitations of this study next, and finally, propose recommendations for future research in this area.

5.2 Findings

An evolution in English language teaching in Mexico provides the backdrop for this story of teacher development and professional identity formation, as viewed through teachers whose experiences span the past twenty-three years of English language teaching at a public University in central Mexico. The question explored by this study is:

> How has teacher development and professional identity formation been impacted by the evolution of ELT at a public University in central Mexico?

The narrative approach "is based on the premise that the ways in which teachers think about education is embedded in the stories they tell each other and themselves" (Korthagen, 2004, p. 81). Some common threads of experience were revealed by the participants in the living, re-living, telling, and re-telling of their individual and unique stories, and as Barkhuizen explains, these are what provide an understanding of "the bigger picture" (Wilson, 2017, p. 6). These threads form part of the tapestry of their professional development and identity formation as teachers, exposing a piece of the fabric created by the evolution taking place in ELT.

5.2.1 "Contextual" Influences on Teacher Development and Identity Formation

Teacher development and teacher identity formation are inextricably intertwined with the twin concepts of the "personal" facet of those processes, or the "professionalism" of teachers, and the "contextual" component of the equation, which this study recognizes to involve the "professionalization" of teaching which is taking place in ELT in Mexico. Although development and identity are shaped by the individuality of the participants, or the "personal" aspect, the "contextual" also plays a significant role (Avalos, 2011; Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Clandinin, et al., 2006; Day, 2007; Johnson & Golombek, 2003). Outside influences on teacher development and teacher identity formation are, at least in part, representative of the evolution in English language teaching that has taken place in Mexico over the course of these participants' years of experience working as language teachers: the "professionalization" of English language teaching. This is an area that has been explored in some contexts, but little research has been done which is specific to Mexico.

The "contextual" aspect of what influences teacher development and identity includes not only what happens inside the classroom, but outside as well, including the "broader social, cultural, and historical context" (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 121). That idea was borne out by the narratives of these teachers, as the perceptions they carried prior to entering the profession provided part of the fabric of their experiences, and was reflected both in their professional development and identity formation as teachers. Their feelings about English language teaching prior to entering the career ranged from simply not considering it as an option, to having rather negative reactions to teaching as a career. Society's judgments about teachers and teaching, and their

perceptions of those judgments, continued to have a significant influence on their teacher identity. For some of these participants, recognizing the broader societal perception about English language teaching appears to have provided motivation for them to develop professionally, perhaps as a way of proving that perception wrong.

Contrary to the findings from some studies which revealed that a low opinion in the broader social context of the career leads teachers to suffer feelings of inferiority about their work (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 119), some of the participants here exhibited pride and a sense of importance in their work. This distinction is perhaps related to their teaching context as well as the time at which they entered the profession. For their English language students in Mexico, English is now often viewed as a key to opening the door to greater job opportunities. Some of the participants here appear to have experienced a change in their own perceptions regarding the importance of English language teaching, a change which may be attributed to their perceptions about the role they play in helping to open those doors. It may perhaps also be related to their own professional development as teachers.

While some participants developed a more positive self-perception and teacher identity, and talk now about the importance of their chosen career, others appear not to have fully socialized into the profession, and are still somewhat reluctant to identify as "a teacher," preferring instead to think of themselves as guides or facilitators. Socializing into the teaching community has been recognized to be the means by which teachers begin to develop their own teacher identity (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). This lack of teacher identity here may be a reflection of these participants' "unfledged entry" into the profession, as discussed next.

5.2.2 The Impact on Teacher Development and Identity from "Falling Into the Job"

The phenomenon of "falling into the job" is another common thread linking these participants' stories. Historically, becoming an English language teacher without any prior training or education was common in Mexico. Although not unusual, the path these "unfledged" teachers have taken does not replicate that followed by the majority of subjects in studies regarding teacher development and teacher identity, as most studies focus on these concepts from the perspective of student-teachers (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Lortie, 2002). The path taken by these participants, therefore, is not

necessarily illuminated by studies related to the path taken by student-teachers. The lack of prior training and education by the participants in this study appears to have left some of these teachers feeling unprepared to teach and unsure as new teachers, corroborating Lengeling's (2007, 2010) findings. For some, this may have served as motivation for them to develop professionally as teachers and fully socialize into their community of teachers. For others, even after pursuing some of the hallmarks of professional development, such as postgraduate study, their teacher identity may have been somewhat stunted.

As has been documented in other parts of the world, over the course of the twenty-three years of experience covered by these participants, there has also been a noticeable shift at this Mexican University away from institutionally-provided teacher training and toward self-motivated teacher development. This change appears to be an outcome of the "professionalization" of English language teaching that occurred during this time period, as discussed next.

5.2.3 The Impact on Teacher Development and "Professionalism" from the "Professionalization" of English Teaching

Some of the participants in this study describe an early interest by their University in providing teacher training and later, encouraging graduate work through financial assistance, and how that has interest changed over time. They also describe a subsequent shift in policy within their University, and a move away from providing training and education to English language teachers, as has been documented in other parts of the language-teaching world (Avalos, 2011; Head & Taylor, 1997; Johnston, 2003; Lortie, 1998; Mann, 2005; Wallace, 1991). As a result, some of the participants found that their own self-interest in teacher development seemed to grow. Others, however, seem to have lost the impetus to develop professionally. The implications of this shift are notable for teacher professional identity, as teachers have reacted by either taking on the responsibility for their own professional development, or shied away from continuing development.

As the responsibility for teacher training and development transferred from the institution to the teacher, there appears to have been what might be seen as a growing sense of teacher "professionalism" among some teachers. For purposes of this study, "professionalism" has been defined as the actions and feelings of English language

teachers as they relate to education, competence, and integrity on the part of the teachers. Education, and a teacher's perception of its importance to their own professional development, then, is an important aspect of "professionalism," and one that is perhaps more easily recognized and appraised.

As with Johnson and Golombek's (2003) study of student-teachers, the participants here demonstrated "evidence of transformation" (p. 734) in their development process. The participants here included a beginner-teacher who is simultaneously studying a BA in TESOL. The beginner-teacher entered the BA program based on his own sense of the importance of preparation and teacher education, and not as part of any university-provided teacher training. Of the other six participants, two completed graduate work related to education with the financial assistance and encouragement of the University, and one of those is now in the process of pursuing a Ph.D. based on her own interest in developing professionally. One participant is currently studying an M.A. in Applied Linguistics, also based on her own interest in professional development, and one relatively new teacher has expressed interest in pursuing graduate studies in English language teaching. The two remaining participant teachers, however, studied a Masters with the support and financial assistance of the University, but without completing their programs. Their decisions not to finish their Masters studies appear to have been related to their personal contexts, more than the "contextual" aspect reflected by the "professionalization" of the field within their University. Although they both expressed feelings of contentment with the niches they have found, they simultaneously conveyed sentiments of regret and marginalization within the profession. The process involved with becoming a member of the society of teachers noted by Zeichner and Gore (1990), is an on-going process covering an entire professional career (Tahir, Qadir, & Malik (2014). The teachers who did not complete their Master's studies describe emotions which may be attributed to failing to socialize into either their teaching community or the wider English language teaching "profession."

Simultaneous with the change in emphasis from institutionally-provided teacher training and education to more self-motivated teacher development has been a growing "academic reality" requiring university professors to obtain more formal education (Muñoz de Cote, Lengeling, & Armenta, 2014, p. 18). "Professionalization" of English

language teaching, for purposes of this study, is reflected by the existence of professional associations, journals, conferences, and professional qualifications. Heightened job qualifications are indicative of such "professionalization," and it is a factor the participants here identify as taking place over the course of their years working in the University. The escalation in teaching qualifications at the University focused on in this study has also been documented by Lengeling, Crawford, and Mora Pablo (2016), and this factor appears to have provided another powerful motivator for professional development and the resulting growth in "professionalism" for some of the English language teachers participating in this study.

Ironically, concurrent with the growing "professionalism" among the English language teachers in this study and an inflation in teaching qualifications, the marginalization of English language teaching in Mexico does not appear to have abated. That reality has impacted both the participants' professional development and identity, as discussed next.

5.2.4 Marginalization of English Language Teaching and Self-Marginalization by English Language Teachers

The marginalization of English language teaching, which has been previously discussed by authors in many parts of the world (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Breshears, 2004; Cohen & Scheer, 2013; Day, 2007; Johnston, 1997, 1999, 2003; McKnight, 1992; Overbeek, 2014), has been found to exist in Mexico, as well (Davies, 2009; Farmer, Llaven Nucamendi, & Chuck Piña, 2012; Hubbard, 1995; Mora Vazquez, Trejo Guzmán, & Roux, 2013). Marginalization of English teaching, and consequently English teachers, has influenced both teacher development and teacher professional identity, and continues to lead to severe consequences for both. One of these consequences is self-marginalization by the teachers. Frustration with the perception that teaching English does not require any special talent or ability other than an ability with the language has caused some teachers to strive to develop professionally. Others, however, responded with feelings of self-marginalization. Their response to the "contextual" has been to either reject or feel rejected by the professional teaching community, and fail to form an identity as a teacher.

Paradoxically, whether or not teachers felt they were perceived by others as "professional," many of the teachers in this study expressed the idea that what they do is

important. Their perceptions about a societal marginalization of English language teaching and desire to push back against that may have been one of the primary motivating factors for some of them to develop professionally. Their growing sense of "professionalism," however, stands in stark contrast to the on-going societal perception about English language teaching as a "profession." This chasm between their own "professionalism" and the "professionalization" of English language teaching is something teachers struggle to negotiate, and appears to be a principal thread which binds all of the participants together.

These common threads are illustrative of Davies' "flowers in the garden" (Wilson, 2015, para. 29) which have led to changes in English language teaching in Mexico. Participants in this study describe the world they found when they entered the profession, most with no prior training or education, and the steps taken along their path to either develop as teachers and socialize into the professional community, or their feelings of rejection by or rejection of that community. These experiences have not occurred in a vacuum, but are reflective of changes that have taken place in the profession generally in Mexico. What that means for English language teaching as a "profession" and the "professionalism" of English language teachers is discussed next.

5.3 Implications

It is through teachers' stories, and their own meaning-making of those stories, that we gain an insight into the effect the evolution of English language teaching in Mexico has had on them as teachers, and on their professional development and identity. This glimpse into the impact of the "professionalization" of ELT on the development of English language teachers and their identities as teacher, their "professionalism," may indicate a path away from the current marginalization of ELT and self-marginalization by English language teachers through the recognition of the role the "professionalization" of English language teaching plays in both teacher development and teacher professional identity formation.

5.3.1 The Importance of the "Professionalization" of ELT to the "Professionalism" of English Language Teachers in Mexico

The "professionalism" of English language teachers and the "professionalization" of English language teaching are current and relevant issues world-wide, likely due to the current global culture and status of English as an international language. The idea of

English language teaching as a "profession," however, is relatively recent. While studies related to the "professionalization" of English language teaching have been conducted in other parts of the world, research specific to Mexico is limited. Within the Mexican context, research has focused more on the "professionalism" of English teachers, looking at concepts such as teacher development and teacher identity, and similar ideas related to the "professionalism" of English language teachers (Hubbard, 1995; Lengeling, 2007, 2010; Ramirez R. & Moreno Glockner, 2007). The broader social and economic context in Mexico, as well as both the cause and effect related to the "professionalization" of ELT, have not been explored in any depth. This study perhaps provides a stepping stone along the path by recognizing the importance of the "professionalization" of English language teaching to teacher development and teacher professional identity and the "professionalism" of teachers in Mexico, and how the evolution in English language teaching has affected English language teachers. This open question is not limited to the Mexican context, however.

How the "contextual" affects teacher identity has previously been recognized as needing further research to fully understand its importance in the process of identity formation. "[I]n most of the studies on professional identity formation, the emphasis was on the 'personal side' and less on the context and how the 'professional side' is seen in and by this context" (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004, p. 125). This appears to be related to Lortie's (1998) recognition of the importance of "social psychological considerations" and the affect intrinsic rewards have on a teacher's "psychic income," which he also identified as an area for further study (p. 146). The stories of the teachers here, whose accumulated experiences span a quarter of a century at a single public University in Mexico, have provided a view of how the evolution of English language teaching has motivated their development as teachers, left them feeling marginalized, led to feelings of self-marginalization, and simultaneously generated feelings of pride and importance about their profession and role as English language teachers.

This research has further provided a glimpse into the socialization process for teachers who "fall into the job." Much of the prior research regarding teacher identity has focused on a traditional model in which student-teachers begin to teach after formal training has been completed. Within this model, the anxieties and uncertainties

experienced by student-teachers are well established. While this model helps explain the beginning process of teacher identity development as student-teachers join the community of teachers, it does not address the process for those who enter the profession by "falling into the job," without any formal training or education. The participants here revealed feeling a lack of competence, and described their efforts to develop professionally as a result. They also described how this "unfledged entry" affected their socialization into the teaching community, with the result that some may never feel they are part of that community. This study provided some additional data, building on prior research by Lengeling (2007, 2010), in the exploration of how teachers in this context begin to form their identities as teachers and the development process they experience. It hopefully added further insight into how the "contextual" affects teacher development and teacher identity.

5.3.2 The Meaning of "Professionalization" in the Context of the Marginalization of ELT in Mexico

Recognizing the distinct views about the meanings of the terms reveals an apparent gap in the literature regarding their definitions. This study has provided an overview of the range of definitions, and proposes a "middle ground" definition, arguing that this position best represents the status of ELT today. From this middle ground perspective, "professionalism" can be seen as the actions and feelings of English language teachers as they relate to education, competence, and integrity on the part of teachers, while professional associations, journals, conferences, and professional qualifications reflect the "professionalization" of teaching.

There also appears to be a gap between words and deeds when it comes to "professionalism" and "professionalization," as manifested by a marginalization of English teaching in Mexico (Farmer, Llaven Nucamendi, & Chuc Piña, 2012, p. 63). Although the marginalization of English language teaching and teachers has been recognized in Mexico, this study has broached the subject from a different perspective by looking at the "professionalization" of ELT itself, and how that has impacted teacher "professionalism."

5.3.3 The Chicken and the Egg: "Professionalization" of ELT and "Professionalism" of English Language Teachers in Mexico

There are gaps related to the definitions for "professionalism" and "professionalization," and how those terms have been manifested in ELT in Mexico as revealed through the stories of the teachers who participated in this study about their experiences during the past twenty-three years working at a public University in Mexico. While some teachers strive for their own "professionalism" and development as English language teachers, others continue to feel marginalized. Meanwhile, ELT continues to grow and evolve although it is still considered a marginalized profession. In considering this dilemma, although teachers play a role in the development of the profession, it appears that even when teachers do what is within their control to develop professionally, the "contextual" influences outside of their control continue to have a strong impact on their development as teachers and professional identity formation, as well as on the "profession." This begs the question: where does the responsibility for the "professionalization" of ELT belong, on the teachers themselves, or on the broader social and economic context in which they work?

An important aspect of the "contextual" is the teaching institution. The participants here described how their public University had encouraged and even required teacher training for teachers who, at that time, had "fallen into the job." In this evolving profession, teachers and teaching institutions would appear to be natural allies. As Cohen (2002) advocates:

> For a school to be an intellectual center, for it to have the ethos, the sense of community, and the "spirit" that so many parents and administrators seek, it must celebrate the work of its teachers in a way that is rarely seen in public schools. It must attend to the needs of teachers, it must accommodate their sensibilities, and it must treat the teachers' contributions with as much genuine concern as it does those of any other constituency—maybe more. (p. 533)

Perhaps teachers and their teaching institutions could revive the same type of partnership described by these participants as it existed early in their careers, and together build the "ethos" Cohen advocates for the mutual benefit of teachers and teaching institutions, and for the advancement of the ELT profession. This type of partnership would require a

respect for the "professionalism" of English language teachers both by their institutions and their general communities.

This study shows correlations with other studies, both in the effect on teacher development and on teacher identity. As with other narrative inquiries, it was not intended to provide generalizations about English teachers in Mexico or even at the particular institution where the participants in this study teach, but instead "aim[ed] for *transferability*" (Johnston, 1997, p. 688, emphasis in original). Perhaps English teachers in other locations may recognize something in what they read here and be able to add to the conversation about their own professionalism in developing as teachers within this evolving profession.

5.4 Limitations

This study has been impacted by two major factors: time constraints and limited prior research related to the "professionalization" of English language teaching, specifically in Mexico.

5.4.1 Time Limitations

Time constraints limited the number and scope of participants who could participate in this study, as well as the depth of participation by those who were involved in the study. Although a fair sampling of approximately one-third of the total number of English teachers at this particular public University was represented in this study, the study was restricted to one University setting. The data collection process was also limited because of time constraints to interviews, a few observations, and participant review and input regarding each of their individual final stories.

This study focused on the stories and experiences of teachers in one public university. Because of time constraints, it did not include other perspectives beyond those of the teachers who participated by sharing their individual experiences. Further, it did not consider other perhaps important points of view, for example, those of the teaching institution, the community, and students. Although this study was intended as a discussion of these participants' experiences, this perhaps provided a somewhat narrow perspective.

5.4.2 Limited Availability of Prior Studies for Comparison of Results

While studies have been conducted in other parts of the world regarding the conundrum of the simultaneous "professionalization" and marginalization of English teaching (Breshears, 2004; Johnston, 1999; McKnight, 1992; Overbeek, 2014), research specific to Mexico has not yet been fully developed. While teacher development and teacher identity and similar concepts related to the "professionalism" of English teachers have been the focus of some research in Mexico, the broader social and economic context, the "professionalization" of English teaching and how this has affected English teachers, has not been specifically researched in Mexico in any depth. Without other research in this area specific to Mexico, it has been difficult to place the findings of this study with respect to others to evaluate whether there are any correlations or differences. As discussed next, future research in this area would be useful to expand our understanding of the impact the "contextual" has on teacher development and professional identity formation, especially as these topics relate to ELT in Mexico.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

From my current perspective now at the end of this process of the living and re-living, and telling and re-telling of these teachers' stories, I can now recognize some things which I believe could make future research in this area stronger. These are related to increasing the involvement of the participants, and expanding the scope of participants in future studies.

To increase the reliability of this study, the participants were involved in the re-telling of their stories by reviewing what was written to ensure that it reflected their life experiences. I must recognize, however, that in addition to their own subjectivity in choosing what to include and how to re-tell their stories, this process has been equally marked by my own subjectivity in this process, my own values, histories, attitudes, and beliefs. That subjectivity could be diminished by involving future participants to an even greater extent. Future studies might well benefit from involving the participants in the actual writing of their own stories, making the process that much more transparent.

This study has focused on the impact on teacher development and professional identity formation from the "professionalization" of English teaching by looking exclusively at this from the perspective of the teacher. Further research could approach

this from a different vantage point, focusing on how teacher "professionalism" has impacted the teaching profession. For example, in the area of teacher professional identity, influences on identity from broader societal and cultural forces has been recognized as needing further research (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p. 340). Broadening the picture to include the point of view of a teaching institution, the community, and students could provide a perspective of how the "professionalism" of English teachers has influenced the "professionalization" of English teaching.

5.6 Summary

This has been an exploration into the "personal" aspect of teacher "professionalism" juxtaposed with the "contextual" as a way of viewing what happens to teacher professional development and professional identity formation in the context of the "professionalization" of ELT through the stories of teachers at a public University in central Mexico. The participants reviewed their stories in order to increase the reliability of the re-telling of their stories.

Through that re-telling, some common threads were revealed. At the start of their careers, the development as teachers and professional identity formation of the participants' perceptions was greatly influenced by their perceptions of societal judgments about the value of English language teaching, as well as their "unfledged" entry into the profession. For some, that changed with their own teacher development and professional identity formation, and as a result of their growing recognition of the importance of what they provide their students and their country. Others, however, expressed persistent feelings of self-marginalization, despite their own professional development. For those teachers, despite their own teacher development and continuing education, it appears they may never socialize into the professional community of English language teachers. Self-marginalization seems to continue as an obstacle for some teachers, as a result. Throughout this research, the tug and pull between "professionalism" of teachers and the "professionalization" of teaching has been evident.

Further research which broadens the scope to include the perspective of a teaching institution, the community, and students, and involves teacher participants to a greater extent in the writing of their stories, could provide a greater insight into the unanswered question raised by this research: does the responsibility for the "professionalization" of

ELT lay with the teachers themselves, or with the broader social and economic context in which they work?

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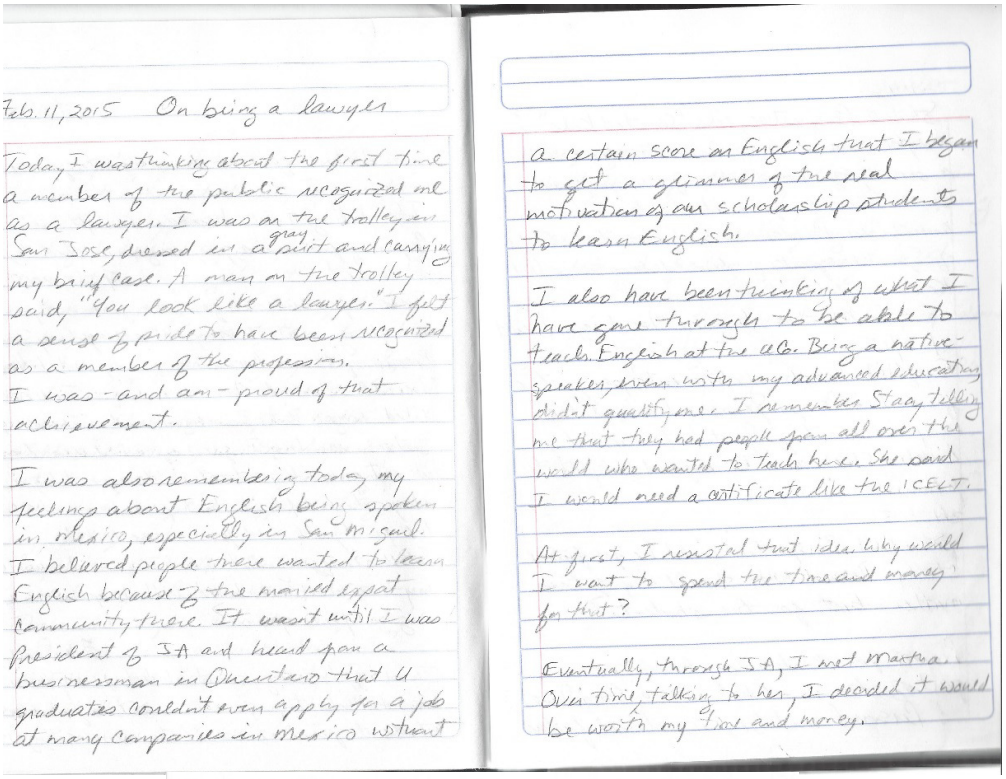
Appendices

Appendix A	**Selected Entries from Field Journal, JRN-Amanda (by date)**
Appendix B	**Selected Excerpts of Interview Transcripts**
Appendix C	**Classroom Observation, OBS-Megan**
Appendix D	**Permission Letter**
Appendix E	**Model Consent Form**

Appendix A

Selected Entries from Field Journal, JRN-AMANDA (by date)



Feb. 11, 2015 On being a lawyer

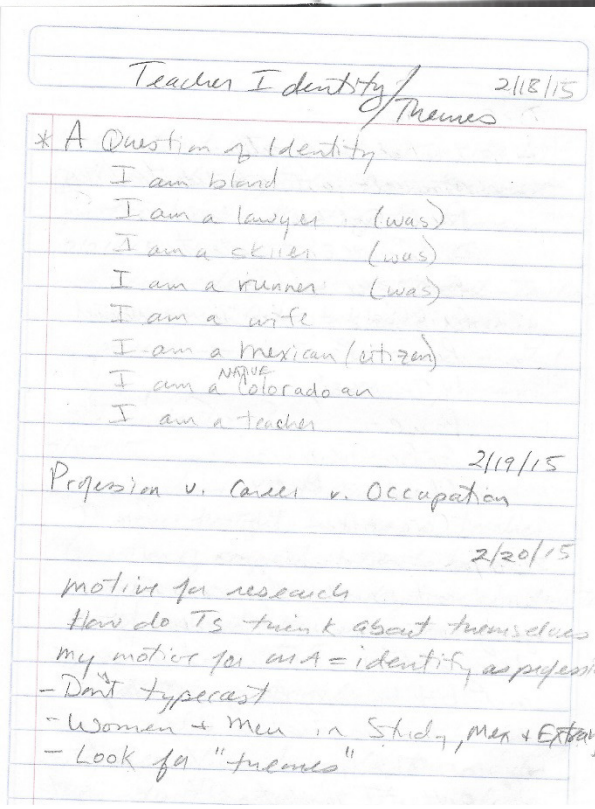
Today I was thinking about the first time a member of the public recognized me as a lawyer. I was on the trolley in San Jose, dressed in a gray suit and carrying my briefcase. A man on the trolley said, "You look like a lawyer." I felt a sense of pride to have been recognized as a member of the profession. I was - and am - proud of that achievement.

I was also remembering today my feelings about English being spoken in Mexico, especially in San Miguel. I believed people there wanted to learn English because of the monied expat community there. It wasn't until I was President of IA and heard from a businessman in Queretaro that U graduates couldn't even apply for a job at many companies in Mexico without a certain score on English that I began to get a glimmer of the real motivations of our scholarship students to learn English.

I also have been thinking of what I have gone through to be able to teach English at the UC. Being a native-speaker, even with my advanced education, didn't qualify me. I remember Stacy telling me that they had people from all over the world who wanted to teach here. She said I would need a certificate like the ICELT.

At first, I resisted that idea. Why would I want to spend the time and money for that?

Eventually, through IA, I met Martha. Over time, talking to her, I decided it would be worth my time and money.



Teacher Identity / Themes 2/18/15

* A Question of Identity
  - I am blond
  - I am a lawyer (was)
  - I am a skier (was)
  - I am a runner (was)
  - I am a wife
  - I am a Mexican (citizen)
  - I am a NATIVE Coloradoan
  - I am a teacher

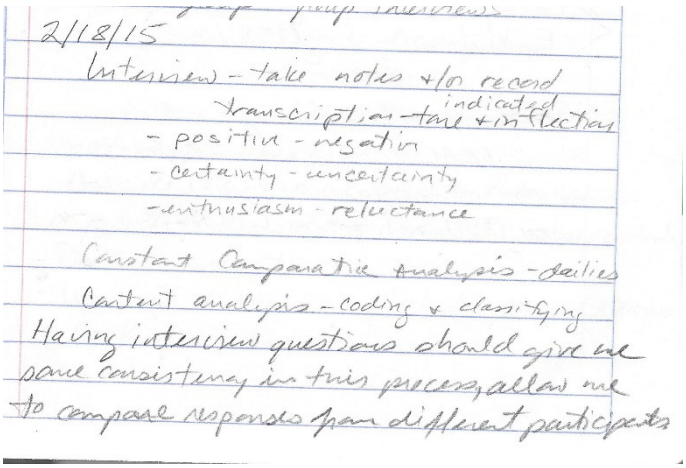
2/19/15

Profession v. Career v. Occupation

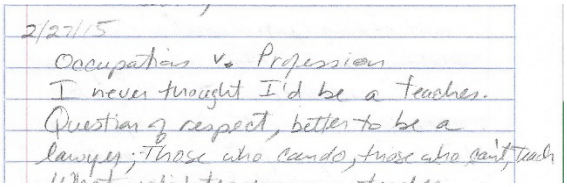
2/20/15

motive for research
How do Ts think about transitions
my motive for us A = identify as professional
- Don't typecast
- Women + Men in Study, Men + Extranjeros
- Look for "themes"

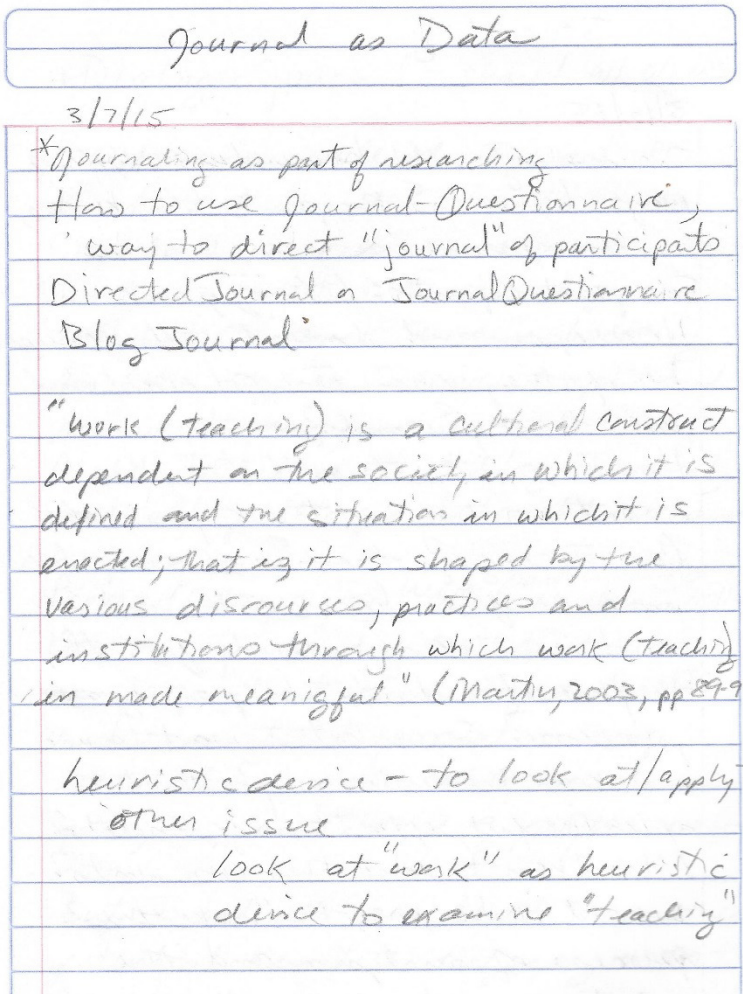
Appendix A (cont.)



2/18/15
Interview - take notes +/or record
transcription - tone + inflection indicated
- positive - negative
- certainty - uncertainty
- enthusiasm - reluctance
Constant Comparative analysis - dailies
Content analysis - coding + classifying
Having interview questions should give me some consistency in this process, allow me to compare responses from different participants



2/27/15
Occupation vs. Profession
I never thought I'd be a teacher.
Question of respect, better to be a lawyer; Those who can do, those who can't teach



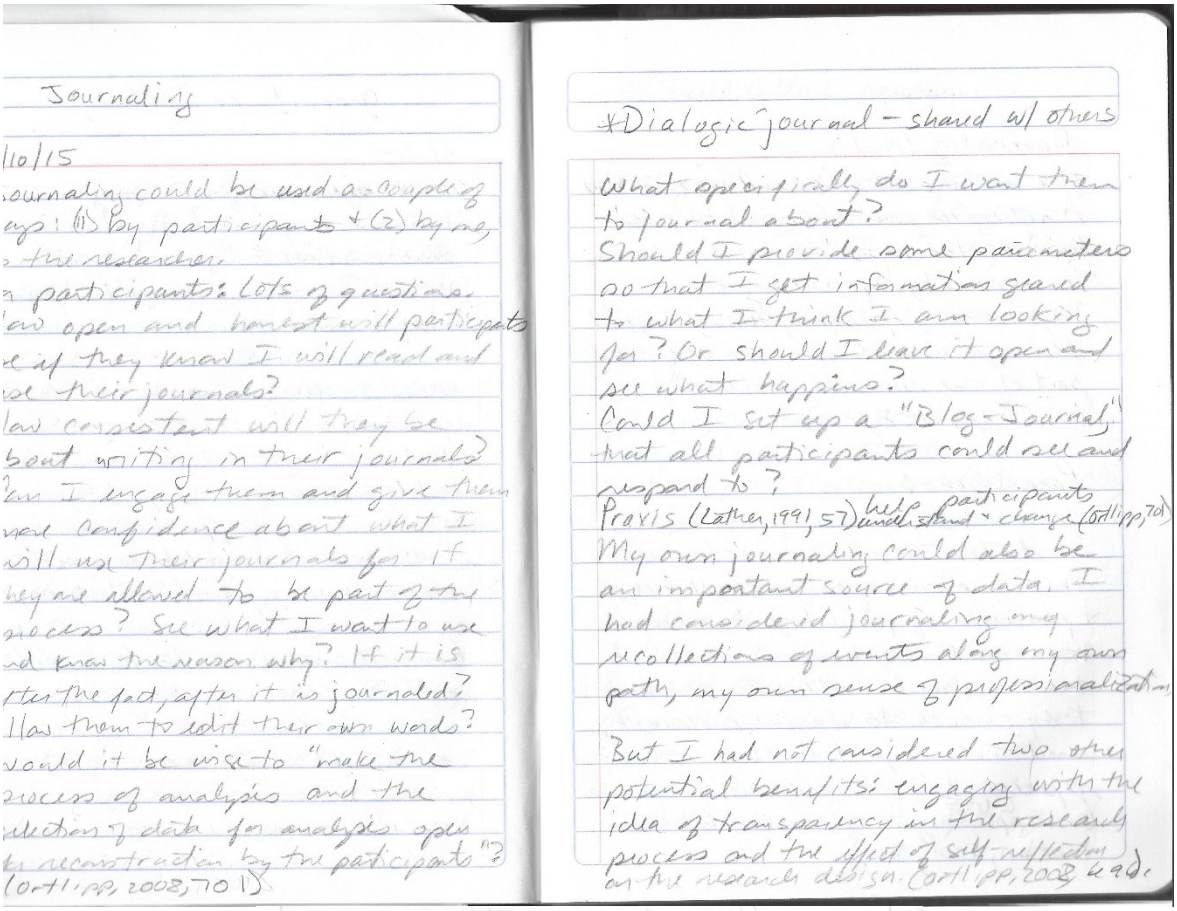
Journal as Data

3/7/15
*Journaling as part of researching
How to use Journal-Questionnaire,
way to direct "journal" of participants
Directed Journal or Journal Questionnaire
Blog Journal

"Work (teaching) is a cultural construct dependent on the society in which it is defined and the situation in which it is enacted; that is, it is shaped by the various discourses, practices and institutions through which work (teaching) is made meaningful" (Martin, 2003, pp 89-91).

heuristic device - to look at/apply to other issue
look at "work" as heuristic device to examine "teaching"

Appendix A (cont.)



Journaling

1/10/15

ournaling could be used a couple of ays: (1) by participants + (2) by me, the researcher.

participants: Lots of questions. ow open and honest will participants e if they know I will read and se their journals?

ow consistent will they be bout writing in their journals?

ow I engage them and give them more confidence about what I will use their journals for if hey are allowed to be part of the rocess? See what I want to use nd know the reason why? If it is fter the fact, after it is journaled? llow them to edit their own words?

ould it be wise to "make the rocess of analysis and the ollection of data for analysis open o reconstruction by the participants" (Ortlipp, 2008, 701).

+Dialogic journal - shared w/ others

What specifically do I want them to journal about?

Should I provide some parameters so that I get information geared to what I think I am looking for? Or should I leave it open and see what happens?

Could I set up a "Blog-Journal" that all participants could see and respond to?

Praxis (Lather, 1991, 57) help participants [illegible] + change (Ortlipp, 70)

My own journaling could also be an important source of data. I had considered journaling my recollections of events along my own path, my own sense of professionalization

But I had not considered two other potential benefits: engaging with the idea of transparency in the research process and the effect of self-reflection on the research design (Ortlipp, 2008, 498).

Journaling (cont.)

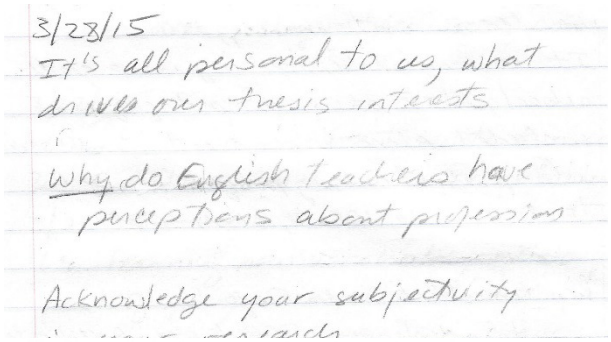
The interpretive crisis (Denzin, 1994, 501).

A reflective journal could be used to make the research process more transparent, by making my "experiences, opinions, thoughts, and feelings visible and an acknowledged part of the research process." (Ortlipp, 2008, 695)

Paradigms:

feminist, critical, and post structuralist - "include how the R's own experiences, values, + positions of privilege in various hierarchies have influenced their research interests, the way they choose to do their research, and the ways they choose to represent their research findings" (Ortlipp @ 695 citing Harrison, Mac Gibbon + Morton, 2001, 325)

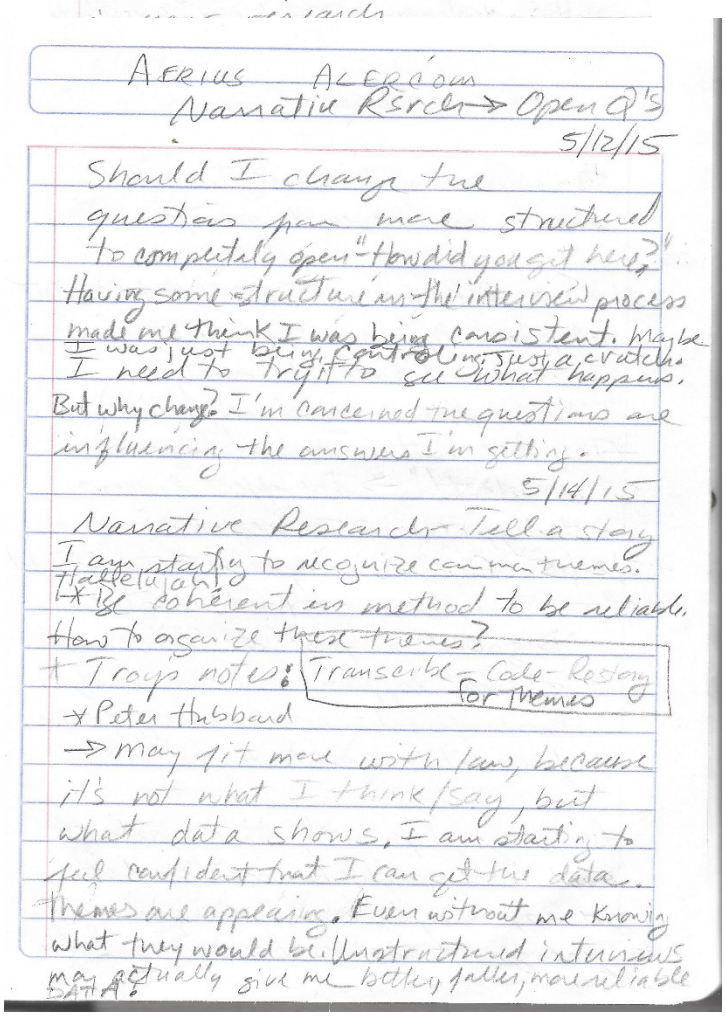
Appendix A (cont.)



3/28/15
It's all personal to us, what drives our thesis interests

Why do English teachers have perceptions about profession

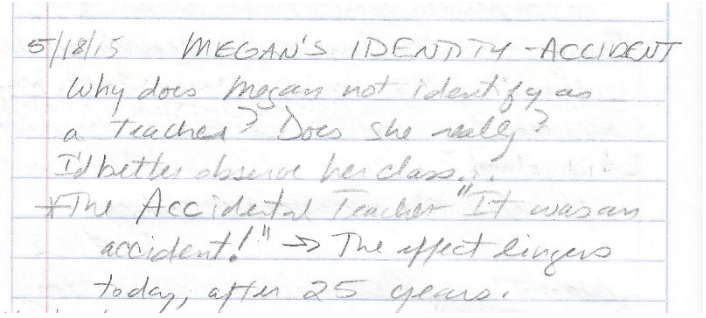
Acknowledge your subjectivity



AERIUS Accession
Narrative Rsrch → Open Q's

5/12/15
Should I change the questions from more structured to completely open "how did you get here?" Having some structure in the interview process made me think I was being consistent. Maybe I was just being controlling. I'm just a scratch. I need to try it to see what happens. But why change? I'm concerned the questions are influencing the answers I'm getting.

5/14/15
Narrative Research - Tell a story
I am starting to recognize common themes. Hallelujah!
+ Be coherent in method to be reliable.
How to organize these themes?
+ Trays notes: Transcribe - Code - Restory for themes
+ Peter Husband
→ may fit more with Iam, because it's not what I think/say, but what data shows. I am starting to feel confident that I can get the data. Themes are appearing. Even without me knowing what they would be. Unstructured interviews may actually give me better, fuller, more reliable DATA.



5/18/15 MEGAN'S IDENTITY - ACCIDENT
Why does Megan not identify as a Teacher? Does she rely?
I'd better observe her class.
+ The Accidental Teacher "It was an accident!" → The effect lingers today, after 25 years.

Appendix B

Selected Excerpts of Interview Transcripts

Interview with "Yoda", May 21, 2015

Amanda: Thank you for doing this. Is it okay if I record?
Yoda: No problem.
Amanda: I have a consent form for you to sign. I'm planning to do this as narrative inquiry, and the reason is it is your story then. As part of that I'm planning to use pseudonyms, and you get to pick your own name. Is there a name you wish your parents had named you, or a name you really like?
Yoda: Off the top of my head, no. (Reading consent form, signs on May 21, 2015, writes name YODA).
Amanda: Okay, Yoda. Tell me, why are you here?
Yoda: Where can I start? Why am I here in Mexico, or why am I here at the University teaching? Both? I think the easiest is why am I a teacher, that's what I'll answer first. Why am I a teacher? I was actually studying another career before being here in the BA... I decided, well, I finished my career in Morelia, what should I do? Should I start working right away? I still want to rest a while before starting work. So I actually thought, why not go with my brother and study something. Because I do not want to be a son who is receiving money from his parents and not doing anything. So I said, what's the second best thing other than working? Studying another career. So I decided to study something that I felt I was good at, but that I needed to be polished at. Once I came to Mexico, seven years ago, my family members were telling me, "You should be an English teacher. Just teach. Just ask somebody to let you borrow a class, and show everybody that you can do it. And that's it. You don't even need a document that says you know how to teach."
Amanda: Because you speak English?
Yoda: Yeah. But I felt that, that wasn't my mindset at that time. I felt that if you're going to teach something, you have to be good at it, and actually have the knowledge and background that supports what you are going to do. And I felt I wasn't ready, I felt like teaching was not my thing, at the time.

Interview with "Megan", March 12, 2015

Amanda: How did you decide to become an English teacher?
Megan: Well, I don't know I answered that in the questionnaire. It was an accident. I went to Guadalajara to study business administration. A teacher asked me if I spoke English. I said "I think so." Because at that time I didn't practice it or anything. I went to the States for a year to study my senior year there. And then came back to, well my parents were living in La Paz at that time, and then I went to Guadalajara. And it was two or three years later that a teacher asked me if I spoke English. And I said, "I think so." She said, "Wouldn't you like to be a teacher?" And I was like, "No! I can't!" And she said, "Yes, if you speak English you can be a teacher." And I was like, "No! It's the same with Spanish. I speak Spanish and I know I can't teach Spanish."

Appendix B (cont.)

Interview with "Leonor", May 9, 2015

Amanda: When did you decide to teach English?

Leonora: When I had the opportunity to teach in a private school. I was here in the eighth level, the eighth semester.

Amanda: Here at the University?

Leonor: Yes. Here in *Idiomas*. A friend who owned the school needed an English teacher. He asked me if I wanted to, he told me the salary, and I said, "Wow, of course." I didn't think twice, I just said yeah. I taught English to kindergarten kids and elementary kids. It was a peak experience… No, it wasn't really a peak experience, it was the opposite, it was a tragic experience because I didn't take into account many things like kindergarten kids are not able to read. It was really irresponsible of me to take that position only because I was learning English because there were too many things behind being an English teacher. I basically did it because of the money and I thought it was a wrong thing. I actually suffered a lot, because can you imagine that? All of the sudden to be there, I didn't have an idea, I didn't have any training. But there were publishers like MacMillan and views on education like giving workshops to buy the books, and somehow I went to those training sessions, and in them was everything I got. That was how, it was strange for that. And I learned a little bit about the profession, and while I was there, I decided to go observe, to see how the kids would react or behave. Using those sessions, helped me to grasp ideas like kids learn by moving around. So I started to build up teacher knowledge, I would say little by little. And I got support from the teachers, and I followed the book 100%. That was my planning, two minutes, two minutes, stand up, the teachers say hi… I followed that. From that moment, after a year, besides enjoying the payment, I realized I had fallen in love with the job. So I felt like okay, now I have to be a real teacher, a qualified teacher. That's why I studied the BA.

Interview with "Lilly", May 20, 2015

Amanda: You had a degree in history, and then you got additional education? What did you do?

Lily: In language teaching you mean? Or in general? In terms of language teaching, from what I remember we always used to have at the end of the semester and the beginning of the semester, we taught internal workshops and so on, of different kinds. Sometimes we'd have internal things with people who were already working there, or in terms of visitors, there was always something at the beginning in the end of the semester. For a long time, it was that really.

…Amanda: When you came back that time, had the University changed?

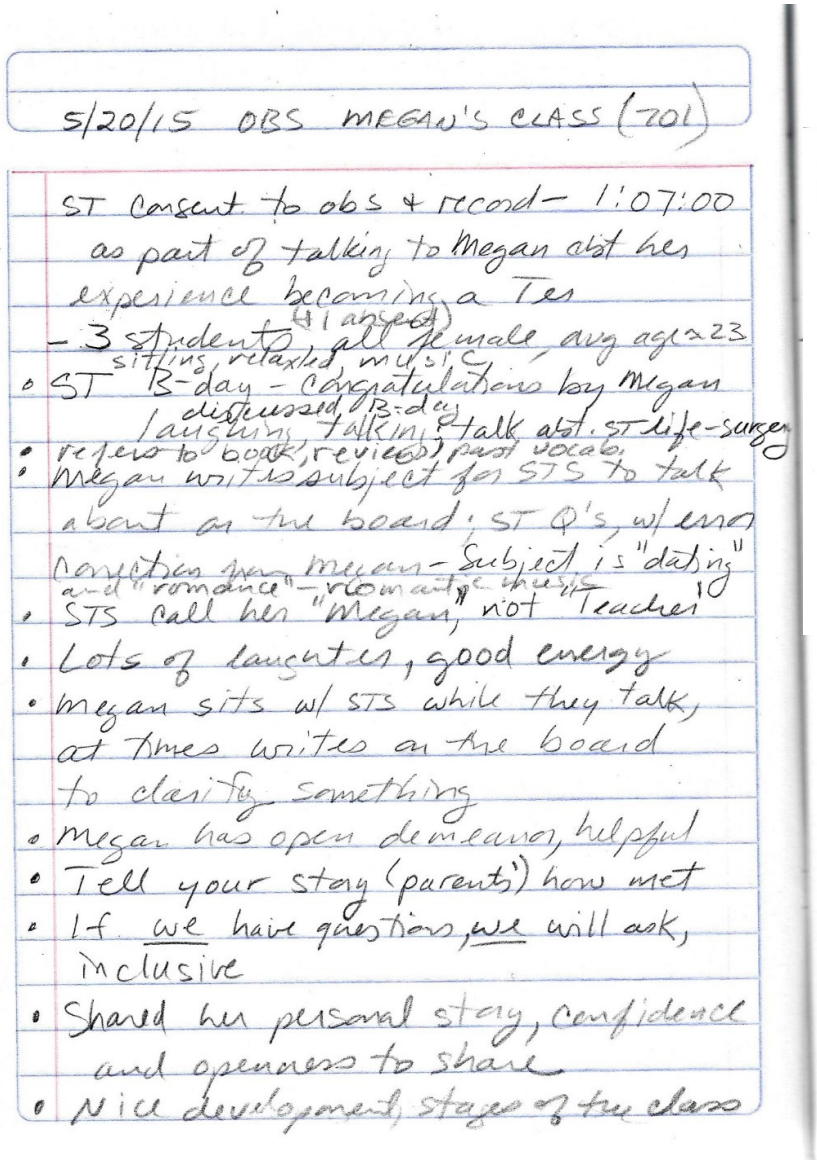
Lily: Yeah. The language department had grown a lot. It had become a lot more professional in a lot of ways. I think it was more connected to international programs and things like that, and other languages had grown somewhat. I think French was always, always had a fairly strong presence if I remember right, but by the time I came back, also German, and Italian had more presence as well.

Amanda: When you started, was English the only language being taught?

Lily: No, there was always French, I think. There may have been some Italian and German, but kind of very minor.

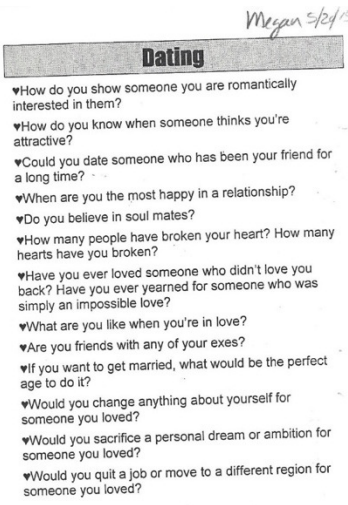
Appendix C

Selected Excerpts from Classroom Observations, OBS-MEGAN



5/20/15 OBS MEGAN'S CLASS (701)

- ST consent to obs + record – 1:07:00 as part of talking to Megan abt her experience becoming a Tes
- 3 students (4 arrived) all female, avg age ≈ 23
- ST sitting, relaxed music
- B-day – congratulations by Megan discussed B-day
- laughing, talking, talk abt. ST life-surge
- refers to book, reviews past vocab
- Megan writes subject for STS to talk about on the board; ST Q's, w/ error corrections by Megan – Subject is "dating" and "romance" – romantic phrases
- STS call her "Megan," not "Teacher"
- Lots of laughter, good energy
- Megan sits w/ STS while they talk, at times writes on the board to clarify something
- Megan has open demeanor, helpful
- Tell your story (parents') how met
- If we have questions, we will ask, inclusive
- Shared her personal story, confidence and openness to share
- Nice developmental stages of the class



Megan 5/21/15

Dating

- ♥How do you show someone you are romantically interested in them?
- ♥How do you know when someone thinks you're attractive?
- ♥Could you date someone who has been your friend for a long time?
- ♥When are you the most happy in a relationship?
- ♥Do you believe in soul mates?
- ♥How many people have broken your heart? How many hearts have you broken?
- ♥Have you ever loved someone who didn't love you back? Have you ever yearned for someone who was simply an impossible love?
- ♥What are you like when you're in love?
- ♥Are you friends with any of your exes?
- ♥If you want to get married, what would be the perfect age to do it?
- ♥Would you change anything about yourself for someone you loved?
- ♥Would you sacrifice a personal dream or ambition for someone you loved?
- ♥Would you quit a job or move to a different region for someone you loved?

Appendix D

Permission Letter

Universidad de Guanajuato

CAMPUS GUANAJUATO
DIVISIÓN DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANIDADES
DEPARTAMENTO DE LENGUAS

A QUIEN CORRESPONDA
PRESENTE.

Por la presente me permito presentar a usted a AMANDA KAY WILSON, estudiante de la Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés, en la División de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades de la Universidad de Guanajuato, quien actualmente cursa la materia de "Estancia Profesional I" bajo mi dirección, en el Departamento de Lenguas. Como parte de las exigencias del curso, los estudiantes deben realizar un proyecto de investigación profesional.

Por lo anterior, ruego a usted darle las facilidades para realizar algunas de las siguientes actividades:

- aplicar encuestas y/o cuestionarios, a alumnos y/o a maestros,
- entrevistar a estudiantes, maestros y/o a algunos miembros del personal de la Institución
- filmar clases

Cabe señalar que estas actividades tienen como único fin, el que los estudiantes apliquen en un proyecto de investigación, los conocimientos adquiridos durante el curso en las diferentes materias. Los datos recabados serán tratados con suma discreción y respetando los principios de ética que exige cualquier investigación de tipo cualitativo y en ningún momento serán utilizados con fines ajenos a los del proyecto mismo.

Agradeciendo de antemano su apoyo a nuestros estudiantes, aprovecho la ocasión para saludarle cordialmente.

ATENTAMENTE.
"LA VERDAD OS HARÁ LIBRES"
Guanajuato, Gto., 10 de febrero de 2015.

UNIVERSIDAD DE GUANAJUATO
CAMPUS GUANAJUATO
DIVISIÓN DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANIDADES
DEPARTAMENTO DE LENGUAS

Dra. Buenaventura Rubio Zenil
Responsable de la materia.

V°. B°. Dra. Irasema Mora Pablo
Coordinadora de la Maestría en Lingüística Aplicada a la Enseñanza del Inglés

V°. B°

Calzada de Guadalupe, Zona Centro. Guanajuato, Gto. México C.P. 36000
Teléfonos: (473) 73 200 06, ext. 8003, 8004, Fax: 73 272 53; e-mail: idiom@ugto.mx
www.dcsh.ugto.mx

18:06 / 02/15

Appendix E

Model Consent Form

I, the undersigned, hereby give my permission to Amanda K. Wilson to use information that has been gathered from interviews, journals, and/or observations for research use in her Masters studies at the Universidad de Guanajuato. Ms. Wilson's research is concerned with the professionalization of English teachers in Mexico. I understand that this information will be used purely for research purposes and will be kept confidential, but that it may be published in the future, in which case I give my consent to have my information included in any publication by Ms. Wilson.

☐ By placing a check ✓ here, I am requesting that my identity remain anonymous.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 20___, in Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Mexico

By: _____
(signature)

_____
(print name)