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**An Investigation of ‘Teacher Identity’ Development in Teachers of
Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (CSOL): A Case Study of
Five Teachers in a Confucius Institute in the UK**

By:

Junmin Xiao

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ABSTRACT

This longitudinal qualitative research explored the developmental process of teacher identity (TI) in five teachers of Chinese to speakers of other languages (CSOL) in a Confucius Institute (CI) in the UK, including the factors which influenced TI formation and change. With teacher identity as a lens, the study also makes recommendations to help promote the professional development (PD) of such teachers. Having conceptualised identity as an ongoing and constantly evolving process (Beijaard et al., 2004), the study adopted participant interviews, both concurrent and retrospective, as the main method for investigating the CSOL teachers' experiences during the study period and earlier in their lives. The TIs were found to have three main components, namely professional, instructional and cultural identities. Different theoretical frameworks were combined in order to analyse the different facets of CSOL teachers' identities: the frames perspective (Pennington, 2015; Pennington and Richards, 2016), community of practice theory (Wenger, 1998), the sociocultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986, 1987; Holland and Lachicotte, 2007) and the three-stage model of ethnic/cultural identity development (Phinney, 1990, 1993; Lustig and Koester, 2010).

The findings on the CSOL teachers' professional identities were that individuals' attachments to the teaching profession differed, but there were broadly three kinds of trajectories: 1) a dual connection to teaching and another profession; 2) a strong and sustained commitment to the teaching profession, but punctuated by shifts between fields (e.g. teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages (TCSOL), teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), early childhood education); and 3) a sustained commitment to TCSOL specifically, with the caveat that across these three profiles teachers were not immune to certain extrinsic forces dampening their commitment. The evolution of the CSOL teachers' instructional identities was closely linked to changes in their cultural identities, with an observed shift from homogeneity and conformity to Chinese educational traditions to a phase of acculturation (to different extents). Many

contextual and individual factors were found to have impacted on CSOL teachers' identity development and these were classified into four strata: socio-cultural context, institutional, interpersonal and personal factors. The study's conclusions inform recommendations for identity-focused strategies to improve the education and professional development of CSOL teachers and how they are employed and managed. These include provision for active reflection on cultural identity as part of professional training, ways to build up community and collegiality in order to increase the teachers' sense of belonging, removing bureaucratic barriers and improving contractual terms.

Key Words: Teacher identity, Teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages (TCSOL), Confucius Institute

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ABBREVIATIONS

CoP	-	Communities of Practice
CI	-	Confucius Institute
CPD	-	Continued Professional Development
ESL/EFL/EIL	-	English as a Second/Foreign/International Language
FL	-	Foreign Language
HL	-	Heritage Language
ISLT	-	In-Service Language Teacher
LTI	-	Language Teacher Identity
LT	-	Language Teacher
MOFCOM	-	Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China
MOE	-	Ministry of Education
NCEE	-	National College Entrance Examination
NPEE	-	National Postgraduate Entrance Examination
PSLT	-	Pre-Service Language Teacher
PST	-	Pre-Service Teacher
PD	-	Professional Development
SLA	-	Second Language Acquisition
L2	-	Second Language
SCLT	-	Second-Career Language Teacher
SCT	-	Second-Career Teacher
S-TCSOL	-	Student Majoring in TCSOL
ST	-	Student Teacher
SU	-	Student Union
TE	-	Teacher Education

TI	-	Teacher Identity
TCFL	-	Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language
TCSL	-	Teaching Chinese as a Second Language
TCSOL	-	Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages
TEFL	-	Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This longitudinal qualitative research examines the process of teacher identity (TI) formation in teachers of Chinese to speakers of other languages (CSOL) in the context of a Confucius Institute (CI) in the UK. Narrative inquiry and case study are the approaches used to investigate five participant CSOL teachers' identities. For this study, I selected interview as the main data collection method and thematic analysis as the data analysis method. This chapter begins with an overview of the background and problem statement of the present research and goes on to state the research aims and questions. Then I explain the significance of the study, its originality and my positionality in the research. The chapter concludes with an outline of how this thesis is organised.

1.2 Background and problem statement

Since the Chinese economic reforms and 'opening up' of the late 1970s, China has attracted global interest particularly in its language and culture. This interest has intensified since the 2000s when China became one of the fastest growing economies in the world (Lyu, 1999; Zhao and Huang, 2010; Ye, 2017). With such rapid development, there was a growing necessity for China to promote its language and culture overseas in order to overcome the inhospitable outlook on China and the Chinese people (Lo and Pan, 2016), reduce the international concerns about the "China threat" (Cho and Jeong, 2008; Lo and Pan, 2016; Roy, 1996), and enhance China's soft power (Paradise, 2009; Yang, 2010). Teaching Chinese to speakers of other languages (TCSOL) gradually gained importance as an effective means to help the world better understand China and allow the voice of China to be heard around the globe.

Currently, TCSOL takes place mainly in two contexts (Xu, 2019). The first kind is teaching Chinese language to speakers of other languages who are situated in China (Xu, 2019). By the end of 2017, CSOL teaching had been provided in 292 universities

in China, educating 489,200 foreign students (Xu, 2019). The second kind is CSOL teaching outside of China, primarily through the Confucius Institutes (CIs) established in countries and regions around the world (Xu, 2019). The CI is a non-profit educational organisation affiliated with the Ministry of Education (MOE) of the People's Republic of China under the leadership of the Chinese National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (also the headquarters of the CI, and colloquially referred to as "Hanban"), with the formal aim of promoting Chinese language and culture worldwide (Hanban, 2013; Ye, 2017). Since its launch in 2004, a total of 548 Confucius Institutes, 1,193 Confucius Classrooms (CCs, which are local hubs in primary and secondary schools) and 5,665 teaching sites have been established in 154 countries (regions) worldwide (Hanban, 2018, p.10). The research focus of the present study is mainly on TCSOL in China's overseas CI context.

Teachers are at the core of TCSOL and play a central role in influencing the development of TCSOL around the world (Huang and Liu, 2017). There is growth in academic research investigating CSOL teachers, but most of the existing studies are concerned with CSOL teachers who are teaching in China. Research into CSOL teachers in overseas CIs is relatively scarce, due to challenges in accessing these groups of teachers (Huang and Liu, 2017; Xu, 2019). Hence, the present study aims to help fill this gap in the literature by focusing on CSOL teachers in the international context. CIs typically have four types of CSOL teachers. Three of these kinds are dispatched by Hanban from China, i.e. Hanban-assigned directors, CSOL teachers and volunteers. The fourth category is comprised of local CSOL teachers already based in the host countries. The present study is concerned with the three types of CSOL teachers, excluding Hanban-assigned directors because the directors are mainly responsible for administrative work in the CIs, while the other three categories of staff are deployed for practical teaching.

CSOL teachers have been attracting greater attention in academic research in recent years. According to Xu's (2019) inspection of the literature in the Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index (CSSCI) Database, the most frequent topics appearing in studies of CSOL teachers from 2004 to 2018 have been CSOL teachers' professional development, reflection, intercultural competence, and personal practical knowledge. CSOL teachers' identities did not emerge as a main topic of interest in Xu's (2019)

survey of the literature. However, teacher identity has been recognised to be at the heart of language teaching (Miller, 2009) and constitutes a significant element in the landscape of the classroom as well as in teacher development (Tsui, 2007; Crandall and Christison, 2016). Empirical studies of CSOL teachers' identities in the context of CIs were rather limited (e.g. Zheng, 2012; Wang, 2017; Ye, 2017; Xiang, 2019). Only one (Ye, 2017) has been concerned with the ways that Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers' identities develop. Therefore, this empirical study steps into this under-explored terrain and specifically investigates the process of TI formation of CSOL teachers – encompassing Hanban-assigned teachers and volunteers as well as local teachers – in the context of a CI in the UK.

1.3 Research aim and questions

This study investigates the stories of five CSOL teachers in a Confucius Institute in the UK, including Coco, a Hanban-assigned volunteer, Leo, a Hanban-assigned CSOL teacher, and three local CSOL teachers, namely Lily, Mary and Rose (names of the five participants have been anonymised), with the aim of describing and understanding the developmental process of their teacher identities, determining the factors which influenced this process and exploring the implications for Hanban and CI to improve the education and management of CSOL teachers, and for CSOL teachers to promote their professional development. These aims are linked to four research questions. Before stating these concrete research questions, one thing needs to be clarified. The main data collection method of this study was the interview owing to its unparalleled advantages in inquiring into participant CSOL teachers' past and newly occurred experiences through which the process of their teacher identity formation became explicit. Therefore, the information gathered about participants' teacher identities mainly took the form of self-reports, serving as one of the most remarkable characteristics of this study (the limitations of this approach will be detailed later in the following Chapter 4). Due to the nature of the data which was self-reported, I draft my research questions as follows:

Research Question 1: What kinds of identities do CSOL teachers develop, based on their *self-report*?

Research Question 2: How do CSOL teachers develop these identities, based on their *self-report*?

Research Question 3: What kinds of factors influence the process of CSOL teachers' identity formation, based on their *self-report*?

Research Question 4: What are the implications of the findings for facilitating CSOL teachers' professional development?

1.4 Significance and originality of the study

This longitudinal case study of the TI formation of CSOL teachers in a UK CI offers several potentially significant contributions. Firstly, existing studies of CSOL teachers' identities in the context of CIs have usually placed their focus on Hanban-assigned volunteers (e.g. Zheng, 2012; Wang, 2017) and teachers (e.g. Ye, 2017; Xiang, 2019). So far, no empirical study has been found concerning the TI formation of *local* CSOL teachers in the CI, due to the restrictions in approaching this group of teachers (Xu, 2019). This scenario created a research niche for me. Therefore, in addition to research insights into Hanban-dispatched CSOL teachers and volunteers, one of the major contributions of the present study is a detailed analysis of the process of TI formation particularly of three locally-based CSOL teachers.

Secondly, most of the existing research about CSOL teachers' identity development in the CI context has recruited participants who were Hanban-assigned teachers or volunteers, but the researchers studied only the teachers' working experiences during their assignments in overseas CIs. However, it is asserted that identity is an ongoing and constantly evolving process (Volkman and Anderson, 1998; Coldron and Smith, 1999; Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop, 2004; Olsen, 2010, Pillen, Den Brok and Beijaard, 2013). Attention to participants' experiences only during the study period is not sufficient. Scrutiny of earlier experiences is relevant too, especially in the case of the locally-based CSOL teachers. According to Hanban's regulations, Hanban-assigned teachers and volunteers generally were selected from ranks of in-service teachers and university students specialised in language and education-related fields (detailed in Chapter 4). This approach to enlistment yielded less diversity in educational background and vocational experience compared to the pool of local CSOL teachers.

The educational and working experiences of local CSOL teachers were much more complex and varied, so the factors which significantly influenced their identity as CSOL teachers were not all directly related to their teaching experiences during the research period. Instead, certain key elements tended to be submerged in phenomena occurring long before the teachers joined the CI being studied, such as their long-held philosophies about education, their attitudes towards the teaching profession and indeed other professions since their childhoods, and their own educational biographies and cultural identities shaped by the sociocultural context in China. Therefore, to probe these phenomena, the study employed two kinds of interview techniques – concurrent and retrospective interviewing – to explore not only the participants’ new and recent CSOL teaching experiences during the research period, but also to trace back over their whole life histories to reveal learning and working experiences that influenced their becoming and being CSOL teachers. With these richer profiles, the study aimed to generate more relevant and targeted suggestions of ways to help these teachers to facilitate their professional development.

Thirdly, drawing on an investigation by Martel and Wang (2015), it is apparent that the cultural dimension of teacher identity (or discrete cultural identity) has barely been addressed in TI research, especially in empirical studies of CSOL teachers (the only cases are Ennser-Kananen and Wang, 2016, and Zheng, 2012). Cultural identity, however, was found to play a significant part in the present study. To some extent then, the research bridges a gap to provide insights into not only the evolution of cultural identity itself over time and through changes of sociocultural contexts, but also the dynamics in the interaction between cultural identity and the other developing dimensions of CSOL teachers’ professional identities.

Last but not least, one of the key features of this study is its unique way to conceptualise and organise the components of CSOL teacher identity, drawing on the empirical findings (see below Figure 1.1).

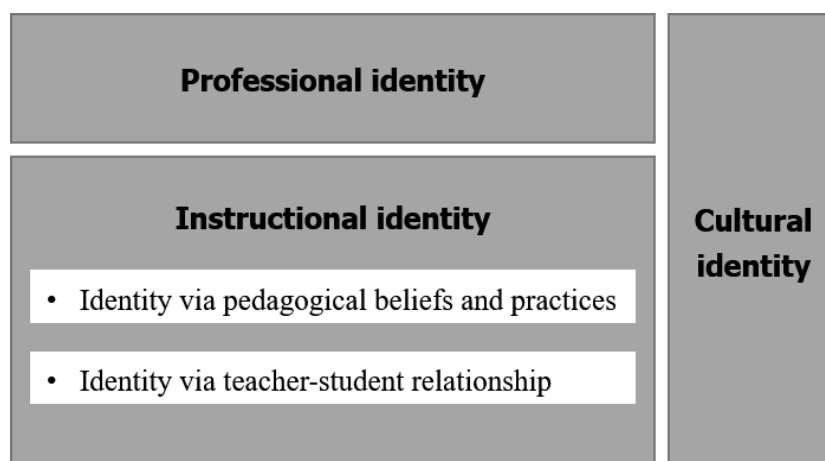


Figure 1.1: Components of CSOL teachers' identities

Thematic analysis of the interview data identified three key aspects of CSOL teachers' identities, namely professional identity, instructional identity and cultural identity. Professional identity and instructional identity have been allocated discrete sections in this thesis (and appear in the table of contents), whereas the discussion of cultural identity has been integrated into the analysis of professional and instructional identities because it permeated the other components of the teachers' identity formation. This accords with the argument of Lustig and Koester (2010) that cultural identity is a central component of one's self-concept. Here, it was found to play a fundamental role in shaping other dimensions of identity.

1.5 My positionality

As a student who majored in TCSOL at undergraduate and postgraduate level, I had easy access to and communication with CSOL teachers and volunteers dispatched by the Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban) in CIs over the world. Their experiences of alien cultural contexts and different educational traditions and their own responses to these situations had triggered a lot of in-depth professional and personal reflections which they shared with me. These reflections and ideas were of great interest to me and I grew very keen to learn more about CSOL teachers particularly in the CI context, so early in my research planning I intended to study the reflective practices of such teachers. After commencing my PhD programme, I took a part-time job as a CSOL teacher in the CI being studied, which gave me more insights into how the CSOL teachers' diverse backgrounds and personal perspectives have influenced their ways of

thinking and responding to Chinese language teaching. I could fully appreciate how the puzzles and problems that CSOL teachers encounter when teaching would prompt them to reflect on their own shortcomings and strive for improvement in their classroom practice. Thus, there was the prospect of rich material in a systematic study of CSOL teacher reflections, and ethical approval was granted for this topic focus (see Appendix 1).

After my first round of participant interviews during which I invited them to narrate their past education and teaching experiences so that I could examine the impact of these experiences on their reflective practices, I came to realise that the emerging data were even richer than the intended scope of the study. Through talking about their shifts in perceptions and practices over time and under the influence of certain people and contexts, the participants illuminated the ways they had developed to become CSOL teachers. To capture the full potential from the valuable data, I revised my research focus to study the TI formation of CSOL teachers, rather than stick to the original topic of teacher reflection.

It is well understood that the researcher's identity will influence the way s/he collects, interprets and presents the data (Madge, 1993; Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee, Kee, Ntseane and Muhamad, 2001). I am fully aware that my educational background and my CSOL teaching experiences will inevitably affect the ways I conduct the research, organise the data and give structure to the knowledge gained. Therefore, it is important that I state my positionality explicitly first. As stated by Merriam et al. (2001) "[the] researcher was predominately an insider or an outsider" and "each status carried with it certain advantages and disadvantages" (p.405). In the present study, my positionality is predominantly that of an insider. Growing up and spending my life in China before undertaking doctoral study, I shared a similar cultural and language background with my participants, making it easy to access and recruit CSOL teachers for the study (Merriam et al., 2001). Meanwhile, as stated above, my educational background and working experiences in TCSOL were similar to those of the participants which further bolstered my insider role and gave me insights which helped me to understand their views and the factors contributing to their ideas and beliefs with more depth. As suggested by Merriam et al. (2001), when an investigation is conducted between researchers and participants who share a common background, "the mutually perceived

homogeneity can create a sense of community which can enhance trust and openness throughout the research process” (p.407). My status as a cultural and vocational insider provided me with favourable conditions to establish a strong and enduring rapport with my participants.

However, the insider status also brought disadvantages in conducting the study, especially concerning the interpretation of the data (Merriam et al., 2001, p.407). Sharing a common cultural background meant that I might have similar cultural values, thinking and behavioural patterns to my participants, and might even carry similar biases and stereotypes. The commonalities between us turned out to be a problem for me during the data analysis, making me less sensitive especially to the cultural dimension of participants’ identities and less perceptive about the implicit role of cultural heritage in shaping CSOL teachers’ instructional identities. Therefore, during the analysis, I tried to be critical, especially in examining and reflecting on my participants’ descriptions of their teacher identities. Moreover, I consulted with individuals with different backgrounds to me as well as people with personal contexts similar to mine, to help me discern stereotypes I had been unaware of and to help produce a more objective interpretation.

1.6 Organisation of this thesis

In this chapter, I have introduced the background to this study and its problem statement. I have specified my research aims and questions, outlined the significance of the study and its originality and stated my positionality. Chapter 2 will give a more detailed description of relevant background information and contexts for the study. In Chapter 3, the literature review, I address the concept of identity first and then review studies relevant to teacher identity in the domains of general education, language education and TCSOL, in order to position the current study in the existing body of literature. The research methodology and the rationale for my choice of research approaches and methods are discussed in Chapter 4. The next five chapters (5, 6, 7, 8, 9) describe and discuss the developmental processes of the teacher identities of five participant CSOL teachers in turn, including the factors which influenced those processes. In the last chapter, I revisit and respond to the research questions and summarise the study’s

findings. Finally, I address the limitations of the study and give my personal reflections as the researcher.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the contexts in which this research took place, with the aim of framing a better understanding of the study. The first section briefly introduces the Confucius Institute including its development and operation around the world and in the UK, and provides background information about the different categories of CSOL teachers. The second section describes the Chinese national context because certain socio-cultural and economic factors in China are highly relevant to the formation and development of the CSOL teachers' identities in this study.

2.2 Confucius Institutes and classrooms

As stated, this empirical study focuses on the identity formation of CSOL teachers based in a Confucius Institute in the UK. This section addresses the broader context first, by outlining the development of CIs across the world, followed by background information about the specific CI context in the UK including the different types of CSOL teachers.

2.2.1 Development and operation of CIs and CCs

With the rapid development of China's economy and the increase in international work and education exchanges, the demand for classes in Chinese language and Chinese culture has grown dramatically (Hanban, 2018). Inspired by the cultural diplomacy of European countries which has involved the establishment of institutions worldwide such as the British Council, the Goethe-Institut, the Alliance Française and the Instituto Cervantes in order to promote their national languages and cultures, the Confucius Institute (CI) project was launched in 2004 in Seoul (the capital of South Korea). It was established with the support of the Chinese National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (also the headquarters of the CI, and colloquially abbreviated as "Hanban") (Ye, 2017), a non-profit educational organisation affiliated with the Ministry

of Education (MOE) of the People's Republic of China (Ye, 2017, p.7). The CIs were established for the purpose of “developing Chinese language and culture teaching resources and making its services available worldwide, meeting the demands of overseas Chinese learners to the utmost degree, and to contributing to global cultural diversity and harmony” (Hanban, 2013; Ye, 2017, p.7).

By the end of 2018, a total of 548 Confucius Institutes, 1,193 Confucius Classrooms (CCs, which are local hubs in primary and secondary schools) and 5,665 teaching sites in 154 countries (regions) had been established (Hanban, 2018, p.10). CIs are managed in three modes: “wholly operated by China; joint ventures with twinning arrangements between host and Chinese universities; and locally run offices licensed by the CI headquarters in Beijing” (Ye, 2017, p. 9). Most CIs are operated as joint ventures, with local partners taking care of physical and operational matters, thus minimising set-up and maintenance costs (Lo and Pan, 2016; Starr, 2009; Ye, 2017). CI directors are usually appointed by both partners (Hartig, 2012); CIs work out their own rules and regulations to strengthen the management of their teaching and financial affairs (Ye, 2017). The present study concerns mainly the CSOL teachers in CIs and CCs, so a more detailed account of the nature of CSOL teacher deployment is provided in the following section.

2.2.2 CSOL Teachers in the CIs and CCs

CSOL teachers working in the CIs across the world can be categorised into four types – three types are dispatched by Hanban, i.e. Hanban-assigned directors, CSOL teachers and CSOL volunteers, and the fourth type is local CSOL teachers (Hanban, 2018). According to Hanban's *Annual Development Report (2018)*, by the end of that year Hanban had sent a total of 105,000 directors, teachers and volunteers to the CIs globally and trained 460,000 local teachers (see Figures 2.1, 2.2; Hanban, 2018, p.16). This research focuses mainly on the teacher identities of Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers and volunteers and local CSOL teachers. The next section describes these three kinds of CSOL teachers.

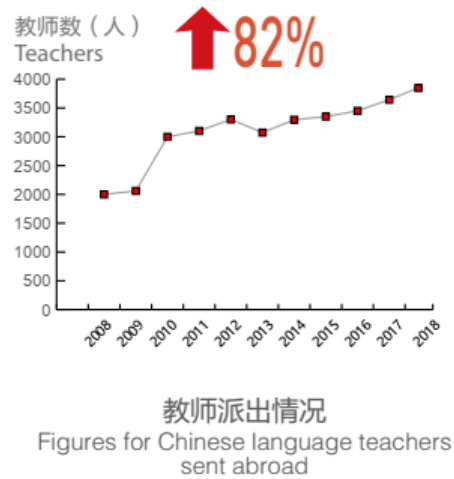


Figure 2.1: Number of CSOL teachers sent by Hanban to CIs around the world



Figure 2.2: Number of local CSOL teachers trained by Hanban

2.2.2.1 Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers

Based on the *Hanban-assigned CSOL Teachers Administration Regulations (2017)*, Hanban-assigned teachers must have a bachelor's degree (or higher) and, in principle, be no older than 55 years of age. Hanban-assigned teachers must have no less than two years' experience in TCSOL or teaching Chinese or foreign languages, or doing education-related work, and those who have once served as CSOL volunteers are preferred. Hanban-assigned teachers must have a good command of at least one foreign language and must have gained a Mandarin Proficiency Test Certificate at 2nd grade, A

level (or above). The dispatch period of Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers is usually two years but can be extended to four years (at most) depending on the local needs and teachers' own willingness. Some of these teachers may return to China prematurely because of health issues, homesickness or other reasons (Hanban, 2018; Ye, 2017). The teaching hours for Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers should be no less than 20 hours per week. The amount of time spent on office work varies according to the requirements of the local CIs. Other than tasks assigned by the local CIs, teachers are obliged to complete work (if there is any) assigned by the Chinese embassies, consulates and Hanban. Salaries vary from United States Dollar (USD) \$1500 to \$2100 per month, based on teachers' professional ranks and titles when they worked in China; they may also enjoy different levels of subsidies (USD\$180-\$1500) according to the districts in which they work. While they work abroad, Hanban-assigned teachers retain the right to return to their original staff posts in China.

2.2.2.2 Hanban-assigned CSOL volunteers

Based on the *Hanban-assigned CSOL Volunteers Administration Regulations (2008)*, the CSOL volunteers are generally selected from the ranks of in-service teachers, postgraduate students (including recent master's graduates) and new bachelor's degree graduates, aged 22-50 years old. A College English Test (CET) Band 4 Certificate and a Mandarin Proficiency Test Certificate with 2nd grade, A level (or above) are necessary for the volunteers. Their dispatch period usually lasts for one year and can be extended to three years at most. Although they are called volunteers, they do receive remuneration (monthly pay of around USD\$800-1000) from Hanban (Zheng, 2012). During their dispatch period, the volunteers who are graduating students are permitted to keep their archives in the Chinese universities/colleges where they studied. When they return to China, they retain their identity as newly-graduating students for job-seeking purposes, as graduating students in China usually enjoy some favourable terms when applying for jobs. Volunteers who are in-service teachers retain their posts in their educational institutions back in China. To be eligible to teach abroad, both Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers and volunteers must first pass the selection tests and undertake professional training organised by Hanban. Only those individuals who successfully complete the training programmes become officially qualified for dispatch to the target CIs.

2.2.2.3 Local CSOL teachers

The rules governing enlistment and deployment of local CSOL teachers are rather complex and differ greatly according to the different contexts of local CIs. Basically, local CSOL teachers are native and non-native speakers of Chinese living and working in non-Chinese speaking countries. So far, there is no official document specifying the recruitment and regulation of local CSOL teachers. There are scattered studies concerning the deployment or experience of local CSOL teachers, including those in Indonesia, the United States of America (USA), Singapore, Japan, Thailand, South America, France and Pakistan, but they are limited in scope (Huang and Liu, 2017). For example, in Pakistan, there are three types of local CSOL teachers: 1) regular government teachers, who are elected by the university's board of directors and who have secure tenures, relatively high salaries and medical subsidies; 2) contract teachers, who work in universities or schools for a limited period of time (usually six months to one year) and receive low remuneration; and 3) visiting professors (Liu, 2016). To date, there appears to be no research addressing the experience of local CSOL teachers in the UK, and this is exactly the gap where the present study seeks to contribute knowledge. The local CSOL teachers engaged in this study, who were based in a CI in England, will be profiled and described in more detail in Chapter 4.

2.2.3 CIs, CCs and CSOL teachers in the UK

In the UK, there are 29 CIs (based on the Hanban official website) and 92 CCs (based on a survey conducted by Ye, 2014) providing various types of courses for students in local universities and schools, and for the general public in the local communities (Ye, 2017). The classes are usually offered on weekdays during the school/university term, but in order to accommodate the needs of different groups of people (e.g. people who work during the day, or children who attend English mainstream schools on weekdays and want extra Chinese language classes), some classes take place in the evenings or weekends (as is the case with the CI where this research was conducted) (Ye, 2017). The CCs are financially supported by Hanban but are generally based in the local schools which also handle the physical and operational matters (Ye, 2017). The CIs are encouraged to establish their own CCs in local schools, when conditions permit this, and are responsible for providing CSOL teachers in CCs affiliated with the CI (as is the case with the CI and some of the CSOL teachers in this study) (Ye, 2017).

According to Ye's (2014) survey of 178 CSOL teachers working in the UK in 2013, the majority of those teachers were female and under 40 years old (73.14%). Most of them were very well educated, with 10.5% having a doctoral degree, and more than half having a master's degree. Most of the participants had specialised in language-related majors, such as TCSOL, Chinese literature and English language. The overwhelming majority of these teachers had prior teaching experiences and had received professional training in TCSOL (Ye, 2017).

2.3 The Chinese national context

This section seeks to provide essential background information about the Chinese national context experienced by the CSOL teachers who participated in this study. As the five participants varied greatly in age, education, professional and life experiences, the contextual factors in China which influenced their teacher identity trajectories also differed.

2.3.1 The social status of teachers in China

Teacher identity in China is mediated in profound ways, and to some extent constrained by, the cultural traditions and dominant societal discourses (Gao, 2017). Beliefs about the social status of teachers ingrained in Chinese culture are shown to have a remarkable influence on the teacher identity formation of the participants in the present study, hence it is important to elaborate these cultural norms first.

“In ancient China, teachers unexceptionally possessed prestigious social stature owing to Confucianism, social customs, laws, traditional ethics, personality and knowledge of the teachers” (Shi, 2019, p.9). China is a typical Confucian heritage society where the influence of Confucianism runs deep. One of the most influential ideas about education advocated in Confucianism was “*zun shi zhong jiao*” (尊师重教, a saying that came from *Analects of Confucius*, which means respecting teachers and valuing teaching). This principle is deeply rooted in Chinese people's minds (Hao, 2019). The idea was initially proposed in *Quan xue* (<劝学>, an article titled *Encouraging Learning*, written in the Warring States period in Chinese history, 475-221B.C.E), which is one of the earliest scripts in China discussing education and teaching. Since that time, there

has been abundant literature in Confucianism in Chinese ancient history which has continued to highlight and strengthen the tenet of respecting teachers. Respecting and valuing teachers, therefore, has gradually become part of the fabric of Chinese society, spanning ancient times and the contemporary era, and finding expression in official statements (Xi, 2015; Hu, 2004) and documents as well as the conscious and unconscious behaviour of ordinary people in China.

Since about 1800-1050 B.C.E, the power to establish and run schools has been in the exclusive remit of the Chinese government. Thus, teachers in schools were also officials in the government (Shi, 2019; Hao, 2019). The prestige and dignity of teachers were guaranteed by the administrative system as well as the law, so in Chinese society being a teacher has traditionally been regarded as a good and stable job (Shi, 2019; Wang, 2007). The law has also secured and legalised teachers' rights to administer punishments (including physical punishment) to students (Shi, 2019). Moreover, the nature of the teacher-student relationship has been viewed since ancient times, according to feudal ethics, as one of the most important human relationships. Its significance is comparable to the connection between father and son, as expressed in a Chinese idiom which says, “*yi ri wei shi, zhong shen wei fu*” (一日为师, 终身为父, which means day as a teacher, life for the father) (Shi, 2019; Hao, 2019; Wang, 2007). In terms of social hierarchy, teachers are ranked at a higher level than students, hence should be respected by students ‘by the light of nature’. As a Chinese idiom says, “*shi dao zun yan*” (师道尊严, which means teachers are naturally dignified) (Shi, 2019; Wang, 2007).

In the present day, although teachers in China are experiencing a gradual weakening in their prestige because of national political developments and reforms in the education system, they still enjoy a relatively high social status owing to the ingrained cultural traditions of valuing teachers. According to the *Global Teacher Status Index* issued in 2013 and 2018, China maintained its place at the top of the list, with 81% of respondents to the 2018 survey appreciating the importance of “respecting teachers”, far ahead of the average level internationally which was just 36%.

2.3.2 English language education in China

This section gives an account of the evolution of English language education in China, which is like a microcosm of Chinese education generally. The current study found that the participants' English language education shaped their educational biographies to a large extent and exerted strong influences on the formation of their teacher identities.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education was once included in the secondary education curriculum in China and was one of the subjects in the Chinese National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) from 1951 (soon after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949) until 1965. However, the ten-year Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) had a devastating impact on Chinese education, ceasing the NCEE and paralysing EFL education nationwide. With the end of the Cultural Revolution, the NCEE resumed in 1977 and EFL education gradually revived in China. The development of EFL teaching during a young person's basic education (primary and lower secondary) in China during the period 1978 to 2008 can be divided into four stages (Yi, 2009):

- **Stage 1 (1978~1984):** Seizing the opportunity of Chinese economic reform, and resuming EFL education;
- **Stage 2 (1985~1991):** Popularising nine-year compulsory education and developing EFL education;
- **Stage 3 (1992~2000):** Transition from test-oriented education to education for all-round development of the person, and adjusting EFL education accordingly;
- **Stage 4 (1999~2008):** Advancing education for all-round development, and comprehensive reform in EFL education.

English has been specified as one of the required courses in primary and secondary education in China since 1978. According to the *Full-time Ten-year Primary and Secondary School English Syllabus (trial draft) (1978)*, EFL courses should be provided from the third grade in primary education (around nine years old). Due to the imbalance in the economic development of different regions in China, in some areas and in some schools, the EFL courses can be established from the first year of secondary education (about 12 years old) (Yi, 2009). Therefore, all of the participants in the current study, who were born during or after the 1970s, were taught EFL during their primary or

secondary education period. According to several versions of the national EFL teaching curricula issued by the Ministry of Education (MOE) of China during the 1980s, the focus of EFL teaching was on “educating students’ reading ability” (Yi, 2009; Wu, 2009).

In 1993, the Chinese government published the *Chinese Education Reform and Development Outline*, underscoring that “primary and secondary schools should transit from test-oriented education to education for all-round development” (Yi, 2009, p.127). In this context, EFL education underwent adjustments to reduce the burdens on students (Yi, 2009). While education for all-round development began to be advocated in China in the early 1990s, by the end of the 1990s “the negative influences of the traditional test-oriented education on Chinese education were still great, and the primary and secondary education in China have not yet got rid of the restrictions of test-oriented education” (Yi, 2009, p.177). In these circumstances, the Chinese MOE decided to advance the comprehensive reform of education (including EFL education) in China.

One of the measures in these comprehensive reforms was to replace “syllabus” with “course standards”, meaning that “there are clear requirements for the basic skills and abilities that students should develop, but no rigid rules are imposed on the means and process of achieving this skills” (Yi, 2009, p.189). This created freedom to choose and use a greater variety of teaching materials, including EFL textbooks. In China, “teaching materials” have long been narrowly understood as synonymous with “textbooks” which are “the carriers of subject knowledge and classical culture, and the basis for teachers to instill knowledge; the content of the textbooks must be commonly recognised principles, laws and theorems with absolute authority requiring students to passively understand and master; the teaching methods are mainly analysing and interpreting the content in the textbooks” (Wu, 2009, p.35). Primary and secondary education in China have long been influenced by these principles; teaching and learning have been mainly carried out via textbooks, even to the point of following textbooks step by step, and this kind of approach has had a significant negative impact on Chinese education (Wu, 2009). EFL education relied particularly heavily on textbooks because of the non-English speaking environment in China. Textbook compilation and publishing were conducted by only a few publishers by commission of the MOE (e.g. The People’s Education Press, which published most of the school textbooks in China)

(Wu, 2009, p.156). However, since the reform in EFL education, textbooks began to be commissioned and published locally. For example, Shanghai, Guangdong Province and Sichuan Province all developed their own English textbooks and other teaching materials (Wu, 2009, p.158-159).

2.3.3 The discipline of TCSOL in China

This section gives a brief introduction to the development of the discipline of TCSOL in China including certain problems which emerged in the field. This contextual information will help readers understand more fully the circumstances encountered by many Hanban-assigned CSOL volunteers including Coco (pseudonym), one of the participants in the present study.

Currently in China, the TCSOL programme is offered at different academic levels and kinds of degrees in the universities: bachelor's degrees in TCSOL, postgraduate taught MAs and research MAs in TCSOL, and doctoral degrees in TCSOL (Zhao, 2017). The discipline in China was originally called Teaching Chinese as a Foreign language (TCFL) and was established for undergraduate students in 1981 in Beijing Language and Culture University (BLCU) (Lyu, 1999; Zhao, 2017). In 2012, it was renamed TCSOL at the undergraduate level according to the *Catalogue of Undergraduate Subjects of Regular Colleges and Universities (2012)* issued by the MOE of China¹. BLCU was also the first institution to provide a TCFL programme at postgraduate level, in 1986 (Jia, 2008; Zhao, 2017). According to the *Disciplines Catalogue of Master and PhD Degree Awarding and Talent Cultivation (1997)* issued by the MOE², many other universities in China started to offer TCFL programmes at postgraduate level. From 1986 to 2007, there were only postgraduate research TCFL programmes in China, and MA students completing these programmes are referred to as “academic MAs” (i.e. MAs in research), recognising that research skills are a focus of their postgraduate study (Jia, 2008). In 2007, the discipline TCFL was renamed as TCSOL at postgraduate level,

¹ In China, the establishment of majors and subjects at undergraduate level is regulated by the Ministry of Education (MOE) of China, on the basis of the officially issued document *Catalogue of Undergraduate Subjects of Regular Colleges and Universities* (the current version was issued in 2012).

² In China, the establishment of disciplines and the award of degrees at postgraduate level is regulated by the Ministry of Education (MOE) of China, on the basis of the officially issued document *Disciplines Catalogue of Master and PhD Degree Awarding and Talent Cultivation* (the current version was issued in 2018).

and postgraduate taught MA programmes started to become available. MAs graduating from these programmes are known as “professional MAs” (as is the case with participant Coco), signalling that skills in professional practice are a focus of their learning (Jia, 2018). At doctoral level, in 2015 the TCSOL doctoral programme was officially established and started to enrol students (Zhao, 2017).

Since its beginnings, the discipline of TCSOL in China has educated a large number of students, making up for the shortage of CSOL teachers and promoting the dissemination of Chinese language and culture around the world (Zhao, 2017; Jiang et al., 2019). However, due to its fairly high rate of growth, particularly in the number of bachelor’s degrees and professional MAs, problems have gradually emerged. These include a lack of awareness or familiarity with the TCSOL major and therefore widespread puzzlement and job application difficulties (Zhao, 2017; Jiang et al., 2019). According to recent surveys, less than 5% of graduates with bachelor’s degrees majoring in TCSOL were engaged in jobs related to their undergraduate specialism, and only 10%-20% of people with MAs in TCSOL were doing Chinese teaching related jobs (Zhao, 2017). This unfortunate phenomenon also affected one of the participants in the present study (‘Coco’) and her story will be discussed in Chapter 5.

2.3.4 The economic environment in China

The Chinese economic context is addressed here, as it was found to be a significant factor influencing participant Rose’s (pseudonym) professional identity trajectory towards TCSOL (detailed later in Chapter 9). Economic forces are also arguably part of the backdrop of many individuals’ career prospects, choices and experiences.

Since the implementation of Reform and Opening-up policy (also known as Chinese economic reform) in 1979, China’s economy has grown rapidly and so has the amount of foreign direct investment (FDI) and the number of foreign companies in China during the past 40 years (MOFCOM, 2018a). According to the *Report on Foreign Investment in China (2018)* published by the Ministry of Commerce of the People’s Republic of China (MOFCOM) (see Figure 2.3, cited from MOFCOM, 2018b, p.154), the number of newly-added foreign-invested enterprises reached 83,000 in 1993, hitting a record high. Since the beginning of the 21st century, the scale of foreign-invested enterprise has rapidly enlarged. Soon after China acceding to the WTO in 2001, there emerged a

peak period from 2002 to 2007 for foreign businesses to set up enterprises in China (MOFCOM, 2018b). With China’s integration into economic globalisation and the related increase in foreign companies in China, there came a large number of foreign employees, most of whom were not speakers of Chinese. In these circumstances, there was an increasing demand for CSOL teachers particularly in the business sector to help those non-Chinese speaking staff learn the language and better adapt to the cultural environment in China (Guo, 2018). This scenario opened up work opportunities in CSOL and thus new career options became apparent to many, including the participants in this study (particularly Rose). The burgeoning of business CSOL teaching and related research since 1999 also serves as evidence of this trend (Deng, 2018).

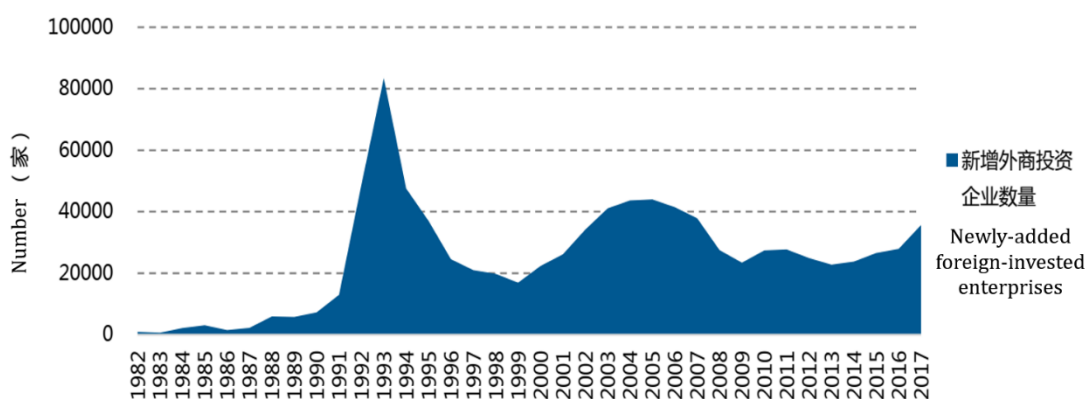


图 1982 年以来中国外商投资企业数量

数据来源：商务部外资统计
Source of data: MOFCOM

Figure 2.3: Number of foreign-invested enterprises in China since 1982

2.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have provided relevant background information about the development of CIs around the world and in the UK, followed by a detailed description of three categories of CSOL teachers in the CI context, namely Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers and volunteers, and local CSOL teachers, addressing their educational pathways, the nature of their work and how they are typically deployed by the CI. Additionally, I have reported essential information about the Chinese national context. This section addressed the social status of teachers in China, the development of English language education in China, the origins and development of TCSOL as a discipline, and finally

(and relatedly) the significant economic changes in China over recent decades. All of these contextual factors have jointly shaped CSOL teachers' personal, educational and professional biographies, and are an important frame for understanding how the sociocultural context in China influenced CSOL teachers' identity formation. The next chapter will review the relevant research literature on the subject of language teachers' identities.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to provide an overview of the research relevant to teacher identity in order to position my study within the existing body of literature and to inform the theoretical framework of this study. Theoretically, the present study is grounded in the domain of inquiry into identity in the field of education. The chapter addresses the conceptual issues first by considering the notions of identity, teacher identity and language identity and their characteristics. Then the chapter reviews studies of teacher identity in general education, language teacher education and in TCSOL and indicates their connection and relevance to the present study.

3.2 Identity

The word identity derives from the Latin root *idem*, meaning “the same”, and its use in English dates back to the sixteenth century (Gleason, 1983, p.911). The study of *identity* in the social sciences can be traced back to the 1950s and attributed to Erik Erikson, a key figure in the field who put the term into wide circulation (Gleason, 1983; Holland and Lachicotte, 2007; Martel and Wang, 2015). Since then, the term *identity* has been used extensively across several disciplines, including psychology (Erikson, 1968), anthropology and sociology (Mead, 1934; Tajfel, 1974), linguistics and cultural studies (Hall and Gay, 1996) and education (Norton, 2013; Duff and Uchida, 1997). Before moving on to the discussion of teacher identity in the field of general education and language education, I would like to introduce several strands of theories which influenced the current study in the interpretation of the concept of identity and the shaping of the connotation of teacher identity (TI) and language teacher identity (LTI), including the ideas of the psychologist Erik Erikson and the sociologist George Mead.

3.2.1 Definition of identity

3.2.1.1 Eriksonian identity

The first strand of identity theory is Erik Erikson's set of ideas. In his early studies, he was concerned with the identity formation particularly of adolescents in social environments (Erikson, 1968) and pointed out that "identity formation neither begins nor ends with adolescence: it is a lifelong development" (Erikson, 1994, p.124). Later, he expanded his research in collaboration with Joan Erikson and identified a series of eight developmental stages that an individual would pass through in his or her life span from infancy to late adulthood, highlighting that each stage is characterised by a different crisis due to the two conflicting biological and sociocultural forces which must be resolved by the individual (Erikson and Erikson, 1998).

Erikson's research informed the present study in two main respects. First of all, his concept of changing identity and his research focus on the development of one's identity inspired my conceptualisation of CSOL teachers' identity as a chronological phenomenon, i.e. viewing the TI in CSOL teachers as a constantly evolving process which could be traced back to their childhoods, and continued until the time they were interviewed and would probably carry on through their whole lives. Therefore, the research encompassed participants' life histories, particularly the past experiences that they thought were connected to their becoming and being a (CSOL) teacher, rather than just focusing on their TI development during a certain life stage (e.g. the Hanban-assigned teachers' overseas teaching period). Moreover, I chose to report the participant CSOL teachers' experiences in a chronologically ordered way in order to show how their teacher identity progressively developed.

Secondly, Erikson's examination of adolescents' identity formation suggested that an individual's exploration of his or her abilities, interests and options contributes to the creation of his/her personal identity early in life and which may lead to a particular decision or a commitment to a certain area, such as an occupation, and will serve as a guide to future action (Erikson, 1968; Phinney, 1990, 1993). This well explains some of the personal profiles emerging in my research where the participants' genuine aspirations and love for teaching developed during childhood or adolescence were based on their self-perceived compatibility with this profession and exerted a lasting

influence on their teacher identity and their sustained commitment to teaching (participants Lily and Rose; see Chapter 7 and Chapter 9).

3.2.1.2 Meadian identity

The second branch of research that contributed to the theorisation of identity in early 20th century social science is the work of George Herbert Mead. He approached the concept of identity within the notion of self (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2004). According to Mead (1934), identities should be viewed as both *aspects of self* and *social and cultural objects* (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007). In his early works, Mead (1934) proposed a dichotomy of “I” and “me” which constitute two active components of “self”. The “I” is “an evolving yet coherent being” (Rodgers and Scott, 2008, p.739) which articulates thoughts through reflection or self-awareness (Nias, 1989), and the “me” is the identity that the self develops (Beijaard et al., 2004) which owns those thoughts articulated by “I” (Miller, 1973). Thus, identity mainly refers to the senses people have of themselves, i.e. self-understandings. These senses of self are formed originally in relation to social roles and positions, and are later expanded to include status and cultural persona and they also inform an individual’s behaviours (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007). Based on the Meadian concept, Holland et al. (1998) proposed their definition of identity:

“People tell others who they are, but even more important, they tell themselves who they are and then try to act as though they are who they say they are. These self-understandings are what we...refer to as identities (p.3)”.

From the above description we can see that Holland et al. (1998) considered that identity mainly consists of a person’s self-representation (what a person thinks or says about themselves) and his or her actions informed by such self-understandings. This interpretation, however, is arguably somewhat vague, implying that self-representation is only internal and “wholly contained in the person’s own mind” (Baumeister, 1997, p.682). Therefore, in order to produce a fuller picture of identity which involves not only “navel-gazing introspection” (Baumeister, 2011, p.49) but also a socially and culturally constructed facet, in their later work Holland and Lachicotte (2007) explicitly said that identity should also be seen from an external perspective. They explained that this was because self-understandings “in relation to roles, statuses and cultural persona” (p.104) could “organize affect, motivation, action and agency” (p.104). Van Lier (2007)

further refined the connotation of identity by asserting that identity is shaped not only by self-perceptions (both internal and external) but also by other-perceptions (p.58), i.e. what others think or say about us. Therefore, identity can be defined with the following three components:

- 1) What we think or say about ourselves (self-perceptions from both internal and external perspectives);
- 2) What others think or say about us (other-perceptions); and
- 3) How we practise day to day.

Such an understanding of “identity” serves as the basis for the interpretation of the concepts of teacher identity and language teacher identity in the present study.

3.2.1.2.1 Role identity

One idea contributing to the connotation of identity which emerged out of Meadian theory was the notion of role identity. As suggested by Mead (1934), identity is one’s self-understandings in relation to his or her social roles and positions, therefore identity reflects how individuals perceive their roles in social settings, i.e. role identities, influenced by the labels expected, bestowed and thrust upon them (Farrell, 2011), as well as what people themselves found important based on their work and life experiences (Tickle, 2000; Beijaard et al., 2004). Role identity, however, is more than just self-perceptions – it also involves actions. As Burns and Richards (2009) asserted, identity “reflects how individuals see themselves and how they enact their roles within different settings” (p.5). It is exactly through enacting or assuming roles through the interaction with others in the worlds that people participate in, that individuals get recognition and reinforcement from others and other rewards, and “come to ‘figure’ who they are” (Urrieta, 2007, p.107). Therefore, role identity is also inseparable from others’ perceptions. As Holland et al. (1998) suggested, “people learn to recognise each other as a particular sort of actor through social interaction and these ways of interacting become like ‘roles’” (p.41) (Farrell, 2011, p.55, based on Holland et al., 1998). In this theory, role identity is comprised of the following aspects:

- 1) One’s self-perceptions in relation to his or her social roles;
- 2) Others’ perceptions of one’s roles;
- 3) One’s practices of enacting certain roles.

The concept of role identity is crucial in that teachers' (including language teachers') identities are usually inseparable from reference to the roles they assume in contexts (e.g. in the classrooms, in the schools or institutions where they teach, and in society). This was exactly the case in the present study, where participant CSOL teachers talked about the roles they undertook and how such roles had evolved with the passage of time.

3.2.2 Categories of identity

Identity is complex and multidimensional, therefore it is usually studied by researchers from different perspectives (e.g. Gee, 2001; Block, 2007; Lustig and Koester, 2010). Gee (2001) proposed four forms of identity:

- Nature-identity, developed from the natural state;
- Institution-identity, specified by the authority of a certain community based on the social positions individuals take;
- Discourse-identity, recognised in the dialogue of others about oneself; and
- Affinity-identity, based on one's practices and experiences with "affinity groups".

Block (2007) suggested that there are seven key dimensions of identity to consider in social science research, namely: 1) ethnic identity, 2) racial identity, 3) national identity, 4) migrant identity, 5) gender identity, 6) social class identity and 7) language identity. Lustig and Koester (2010), drawing on the concept of ingroup and outgroup membership, conceptualised identity as having three layers, namely cultural, social, and personal identities. Cultural identity is defined on the basis of membership in a particular culture; social identity develops as a consequence of memberships in particular groups *within* one's culture; and personal identity reflects people's unique characteristics, which may differ from those of others in their cultural and social groups (p.142-143). Among these theories, there are three aspects of identity that relate closely to the present study, namely cultural, ethnic and social class identity.

Ethnic identity is usually considered as a "cultural" rather than a "physical" marker (e.g. skin colour) (Pilkington, 2003, p.27), based on shared cultural beliefs and practices (Puri, 2004), hence there are similarities with cultural identity. Studies of ethnic identity have usually drawn on findings about cultural identity and vice versa. For example, the three-stage model which was initially proposed by Phinney (1990, 1993) to illustrate a person's ethnic identity development in adolescence was later adopted to explore the

evolution of one's cultural identity (such as in Lustig and Koester, 2010; Zheng, 2012). Next, I will make a synthetic overview of the research findings on ethnic and cultural identity, and specify their implications for the present study, especially for exploring the cultural dimension of participants' teacher identities. In addition, I will briefly address social class identity, but here the main focus is placed on the concept of "capital" proposed by Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1991) which is usually employed to explore social class issues.

3.2.2.1 Cultural and ethnic identity

Cultural identity, according to Lustig and Koester (2010), refers to "one's sense of belonging to a particular culture or ethnic group" (p.142) which involves "learning about and accepting the traditions, heritage, language, religion, ancestry, aesthetics, thinking patterns, and social structures of a culture" and "internalising the beliefs, values, norms and social practices of their culture, and identifying with that culture as part of their self-concept" (p.143). Cultural identity constitutes an important component of one's identity, but it usually remains tacit and implicit within a culturally homogeneous society unless it is activated by specific circumstances (Phinney, 1990; Lustig and Koester, 2010). Given the nature of the work of CSOL teachers which usually involves encounters and interactions in alien socio-cultural and educational contexts, cultural identity therefore becomes a salient aspect of their identities and warrants special attention.

Cultural identity is not an entity but a complex of processes, and it is dynamic and changing over time and context (Phinney, 1990; Lustig and Koester, 2010). As stated earlier, the process of cultural identity formation can be seen as having three stages (Lustig and Koester, 2010, detailed below), employing the developmental framework of ethnic identity proposed by Phinney (1990) with reference to an array of conceptual models of ego identity formation provided by a number of researchers (such as Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1966, 1980; Cross, 1978; Kim, 1981; Atkinson et al., 1983) (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Stages of ethnic identity development and ego identity statuses (Phinney, 1990)

Marcia (1966, 1980)	Identity diffusion	Identity foreclosure	Identity crisis ^a	Moratorium	Identity achievement
Cross (1978)		Pre-encounter	Encounter	Immersion/emersion	Internalization
Kim (1981)		White identified	Awakening to social political awareness	Redirection to Asian American consciousness	Incorporation
Atkinson et al. (1983)		Conformity: Preference for values of dominant culture	Dissonance: Questioning and challenging old attitudes	Resistance and immersion: Rejection of dominant culture	Synergetic articulation and awareness
Phinney (1989)	Unexamined ethnic identity: Lack of exploration of ethnicity. Possible subtypes: Diffusion: Lack of interest in or concern with ethnicity	Foreclosure: Views of ethnicity based on opinions of others	Ethnic identity search (Moratorium): Involvement in exploring and seeking to understand meaning of ethnicity for oneself	Achieved ethnic identity Clear, confident sense of own ethnicity	

^a Identity crisis is not one of Marcia's original four statuses.

- **Stage one: Unexamined cultural identity**

This stage is characterised by a lack of exploration of one's cultural membership, taking for granted and naturally accepting preconceived ideas embedded in the culture which have been obtained from interactions with the seniors in families, the social community and the mass media (Lustig and Koester, 2010). This stage can also be described as the conformity stage (Atkinson et al., 1983) in which individuals unquestioningly comply with and internalise the values and practices ingrained in the culture. Moreover, this "conformity" may also lead to internalisation of the prevailing stereotypes of their own culture.

- **Stage two: Cultural identity search**

In this stage, individuals may encounter a situation that triggers their cultural identity search, which is a process of exploring and questioning one's culture to learn more about it and understand the implications of membership of that culture (Lustig and Koester, 2010). Encountering a startling event may temporarily awaken a person's intercultural awareness (Kim, 1981), dislodge the person from his or her old worldview, and make the person receptive to a new interpretation of his or her identity (Cross, 1978). An individual's cultural identity may be revised as a result of either a key turning point or critical incident, or simply a reinterpretation of everyday experiences. However, sometimes an individual can respond by resisting the new culture and retaining their old ways (Lustig and Koester, 2010).

- **Stage three: Cultural identity achievement**

The achievement of a cultural identity is characterised by a clear and confident acceptance of one's culture and an internalisation of one's cultural identity (Lustig and Koester, 2010; Phinney, 1993). In this stage, individuals have resolved uncertainties about their culture and their cultural identities, so these identities can securely inform and guide their future action (Marcia, 1980; Phinney, 1993). Moreover, people in this stage have developed ways to address cultural stereotypes and biases.

In the present study, this three-stage model of the developmental process of cultural identity was employed as the basic framework to interpret the changes in the cultural as well as the instructional dimensions of CSOL teachers' identities.

3.2.2.2 Social class identity

Social class can be seen in terms of “capitals” based on Bourdieu’s work (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984, 1991) and as a powerful identity marker (Skeggs, 1997, 2004). According to Bourdieu (1991), there are various forms of capital, taking both material and intangible forms, but all culturally significant (Harker et al., 2016):

- 1) economic capital (i.e. financial wealth in the form of money and stocks, and acquired assets and property, etc.);
- 2) cultural capital (i.e. the cultural resources and acquisitions, such as behavioural patterns like attitudes and linguistic abilities, connections with particular artefacts like educational assets or technical qualifications, and associations with certain institutions like universities and professions);
- 3) social capital (i.e. all the connections and relationships with the above institutions);
and
- 4) symbolic capital (i.e. prestige, reputation, fame, honour, charm, charisma recognised as legitimate, etc.) (Bourdieu, 1991; Skeggs, 1997, 2004; Block, 2007; Ye, 2017).

The concept of “capital” (and types of capital) is discussed here because it is highly relevant to the present study. “Cultural capital” and “symbolic capital” were identified as two significant factors that had impacted on the participant CSOL teachers’ identity trajectories. The notion of cultural capital is used mainly to explain participants’ professional identities and how the possession or lack of sufficient and appropriate cultural capital (especially relevant academic qualifications) influenced their sense of belonging to the teaching profession and the legitimacy of their membership of that particular community of practice (Wenger, 1998; Block, 2007). Symbolic capital relates to the prestige that the participant CSOL teachers had enjoyed naturally in the Chinese socio-cultural environment (Shi, 2019) but was absent in the UK context, lessening their self-esteem as teachers, as was the case with participant Mary (see Chapter 8).

3.3 Teacher identity

The concept of identity has been studied in the field of education since the early 1990s. With the focus of research gradually shifting from learners to teachers, teacher identity

emerged as a separate research area in the late 1990s (Beijaard et al., 2004). This section will examine various definitions of teacher identity so far proposed by different researchers and will elaborate the characteristics of teacher identity.

3.3.1 Definition of teacher identity

The term “teacher identity” has various definitions in the education research literature, and this section begins by drawing on the summary by Miller (2009, p.174) to present some of these definitions including the general concept of identity in the field of education, which usually serves as the basis for the interpretation of teacher identity (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Definitions of teacher identity (based on Miller, 2009)

Identity lies in “what we think or say about ourselves” (i.e. “the ways we reify our selves”), “what others think or say about us” (i.e. “the ways others reify our selves”), and “the way we live day to day” (i.e. “participation”).	Wenger, 1998, p.149-151
Identity is “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how that person understands possibilities for the future”.	Norton, 2000, p.5
Identity is “a constant ongoing negotiation of how we relate to the world”.	Pennycook, 2001, p.149
Identity is “being recognised as a certain ‘kind of person’; identity is connected not to internal states but to performances in society. It is also ‘an important analytical tool for understanding schools and society’”.	Gee, 2001, p.99
Identity is “relational, constructed and altered by how I see others and how they see me in our shared experiences and negotiated interactions”.	Johnson, 2003, p.788

<p>“Professional and personal identities are instantiations of discourses, systems of power/ knowledge that regulate and ascribe social values to all forms of human activity”.</p>	<p>Morgan, 2004, p.173</p>
<p>Identity is “transformational, transformative, context-bound, and constructed, maintained and negotiated via and language and discourse”.</p>	<p>Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, Johnson, 2005, p.21</p>
<p>“Teacher professional identity stands at the core of the teaching profession. It provides a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of ‘how to be’, ‘how to act’ and ‘how to understand’ their work and their place in society. Importantly, teacher identity is neither something that is fixed nor imposed; rather it is negotiated through experience and the sense that is made of that experience”.</p>	<p>Sachs, 2005, p.15</p>
<p>Teacher professional identities “defined here in terms of the influences on teachers, how individuals see themselves, and how they enact their profession in their settings”.</p>	<p>Varghese, 2006, p.212</p>
<p>“Identity is not just relational (i.e., how one talks or thinks about oneself, or how others talk or think about one), it is also experiential (i.e., it is formed from one’s lived experience)”.</p>	<p>Tsui, 2011, p.33</p>
<p>Identity involves “both how we view ourselves and how others view us; but also, significantly, something that we live day-to-day”.</p>	<p>Lamb, 2013, p.37</p>

A brief analysis of the conceptualisations tabled above yields some key features of teacher identity and arrives at a definition of teacher identity I will apply in this research: teacher identity involves not only teachers’ *self-perceptions*, i.e. how teachers see themselves (e.g. in Wenger, 1998; Norton, 2000; Johnson, 2003; Varghese, 2006; Lamb, 2013), but also *others’ perceptions or recognitions*, i.e. how others perceive the teachers (e.g. in Wenger, 1998; Gee, 2000; Johnson, 2003; Lamb, 2013), and further includes teachers’ *daily practices* (e.g. in Wenger, 1998; Varghese, 2006; Lamb, 2013) – three aspects which correspond closely to the Meadian definition of identity discussed in

section 3.2.1.2. Further, teacher identity is considered as relational and interpersonal, negotiated and constructed, changing and ongoing, transformational and transformative, social and context-bounded (Miller, 2009). In the next section, I will describe the characteristics of teacher identity in detail.

3.3.2 Characteristics of teacher identity

After completing this overview of the literature related to teacher identity, I learned that although the concept of teacher identity is conceptualised in different ways and appears to be somewhat diffuse (see Table 3.2), there are some key features commonly regarded as essential to teacher identity:

- Teacher identity is a dynamic attribute of a person and a constantly changing and ongoing process of negotiating experience.
- Teacher identity develops through the interplay between person and contexts, being influenced by the social, cultural and political contexts, and mediated by the personal value that teachers themselves attach to these influences.
- Teacher identity is multifaceted, composed of various sub-identities which conflict or harmonise with each other.

In the following sections, I will elaborate these characteristics and show how these features inform the current research conceptually and methodologically.

3.3.2.1 Teacher identity as an ongoing process

Teacher identity is an ongoing process (Volkman and Anderson, 1998; Coldron and Smith, 1999; Kerby, 1991; Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop, 2004; Olsen, 2010; Pillen, Den Brok and Beijaard, 2013). Reference to “ongoing process” involves two layers of meanings. Firstly, teacher identity is a process, which means it does not equate to some predetermined or already-existing personality but is something we continually negotiate, interpret and reconstruct during the course of our whole lives (Wenger, 1998; Kerby, 1991). Therefore, one’s identity formation can also be seen as a “lifelong learning” process (Day, 1999), and in this learning trajectory, we “incorporate the past and the future in the very process of negotiating the present” (Wenger, 1998, p.155).

Secondly, the ongoing character of teacher identity highlights its shifting and temporal dimension (Cooper and Olsen, 1996). In other words, teacher identity is not a static and well-developed object; rather, it is a constant becoming (Wenger, 1998) and always “in

the making” (Rodgers and Scott, 2008), a complex and dynamic equilibrium (Volkman and Anderson, 1998), and an unstable (Gee, 2001) and unfixed entity (Coldron and Smith, 1999) which is active and constantly changing (Olsen, 2010).

Accordingly, the nature of teacher identity as an ongoing process informed my study to consider participant CSOL teachers’ identities as a constantly evolving course which could be traced back to the participants’ early childhoods, proceeding through to the research period and probably would continue throughout the rest of their lives. Therefore, a retrospective inquiry approach was used to identify the factors which shaped the TI formation of CSOL teachers long before the time of the interviews as well as during the study. In addition, the research focus was not only on certain products, i.e. *what* identities CSOL teachers developed, but also just as importantly on trajectories, i.e. *how* CSOL teachers developed such identities.

3.3.2.2 Teacher identity as personal and contextual

It is asserted that teacher identity develops during the interplay between personal and contextual factors. On the one hand, teacher identity is personal, meaning that it is closely related to teachers’ inner cognitive, psychological and emotional development processes (Hong, Greene and Lowery, 2017). Teachers bring to their teaching careers their own beliefs, perspectives, conceptions, attitudes and norms emerging from their prior experiences and personal backgrounds, and develop their own ideas of what is important based on their professional work (Tickle, 2000) and their own teaching culture instilled with personal values (Feiman-Nemser and Floden, 1986).

On the other hand, teacher identity is contextual, which means it is inseparable from the social and cultural contexts in which the individual is immersed (Gee, 2001; Fitzgerald, 1993; Coldron and Smith, 1999; Beijaard et al., 2004; Carter and Doyle, 1996; Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Clandinin and Huber, 2005; Agee, 2004; Rodgers and Scott, 2008; Day, 2008; Hong and Lowery, 2017). Teacher identity is inevitably influenced by a series of contextual factors, such as the roles that society assumes teachers to fulfil, the demands that institutions expect teachers to meet, and even the educational policies implemented by the relevant authorities. It is through the interaction between the person and the context that teachers’ identities develop.

3.3.2.3 *Teacher identity as multidimensional*

Teacher identity is contextual, making it changeable from context to context. An individual can be seen as “a certain kind of person” in a given context, and meanwhile s/he can be seen as different kinds of person in other contexts (Gee, 2001). In this sense, one’s identity (including teachers’ identities) can be multiple and multidimensional (Gee, 2001; Cooper and Olson, 1996; Mishler, 1999; Gee and Crawford, 1998; McCarthy, 2001) and viewed as a composite consisting of various sub-identities (Beijaard et al., 2004).

3.4 Language teacher identity

Before addressing the definition of language teacher identity (LTI), it is important to clarify why the term “language teacher” has been adopted in this research instead of “second language (L2) teacher” or “foreign language (FL) teacher”. The term “language teacher” includes both those types of teachers and it also encompasses language teachers in other roles and contexts (such as bilingual teachers, immersion teachers, traditional foreign language teachers, etc.) (Martel and Wang, 2015). Given the complexity of language teaching in the contemporary world, it is important to take account of language teachers from a wide range of settings and contexts. Using the concept of teacher identity, the definition of LTI highlights TI more specific to the characteristics of language teaching. In the next section, I will define LTI and describe its characteristics.

3.4.1 Definition and characteristics of LTI

The term “language teacher identity” has been defined variously from different theoretical perspectives (such as sociocultural theories, poststructuralism, and communities of practices). To help elucidate this concept for researchers embarking on this area, Barkhuizen (2017) produced a composite conceptualisation of LTI based on a comprehensive overview of 41 researchers’ reflections and understandings of LTI:

“Language teacher identities (LTIs) are cognitive, social, emotional, ideological, and historical — they are both inside the teacher and outside in the social, material and technological world. LTIs are being and doing, feeling and imagining, and storying. They are struggle and harmony: they are contested and resisted, by self

and others, and they are also accepted, acknowledged and valued, by self and others. They are core and peripheral, personal and professional, they are dynamic, multiple, and hybrid, and they are foregrounded and backgrounded. And LTIs change, short-term and over time — discursively in social interaction with teacher educators, learners, teachers, administrators, and the wider community, and in material interaction with spaces, places and objects in classrooms, institutions, and online” (p.4).

According to Barkhuizen (2017), this definition was meant to be “interpreted variously from different theoretical perspectives as well as from different contextual realities (e.g., spaces where teacher education and language teaching are practiced)” (p.3). The definition’s “all-purpose” function does not mean that all the facets can be applied to every study. Instead, it means that from one perspective or context, some facets would be more salient, while from another perspective or reality, other aspects would be more relevant (Barkhuizen, 2017). Therefore, I will specify the facets that are directly related to my research and indicate how these features inform my study.

1) LTIs are *cognitive*.

This feature can be interpreted from two aspects. Firstly, language teachers seek to make sense of themselves, i.e. to understand who they are and who they desire to be or not to be, which is a cognitive activity. Therefore, in the present study, the investigation into participant CSOL teachers’ identities naturally involves examining their perceptions about themselves and their “imagined identities” (Norton, 2017; Kanno and Norton, 2003) or ideal-self (which developed under the influence of “significant others”) and its impact on their teacher identity formation. Secondly, LTIs are cognitive in that they are concerned with teachers’ beliefs, theories and philosophies, especially about language teaching, and relate to both content and pedagogical knowledge. Therefore, in terms of my study, CSOL teachers’ pedagogical beliefs and practices are intrinsic to their teacher identities.

2) LTIs are *social*.

LTIs are enacted, negotiated and projected with others, including LTs’ students, mentors, colleagues, administrators and even policy makers. Therefore, investigations of CSOL teachers should also involve examining the perceptions of others, and the influences of others’ perceptions on the CSOL teachers.

3) LTIs are *emotional*.

This means that LTIs involve teachers' desires and hopes (Norton, 2017) and, as Barcelos (2017) pointed out, "the more central a belief and more connected to their emotions, the more influential it is to their identities" (p.147). This well explains the situation with some of my participants (e.g. Lily and Rose; see Chapter 7 and Chapter 9) who had sincere aspirations to become teachers since their childhoods and demonstrated a commitment to the teaching profession throughout their careers despite changes of context.

4) LTIs are *historical*.

LTIs shift over historical time (Norton, 2017). This is why I intended to explore the developmental process of CSOL teachers' identities not only during the study period, but also how they unfolded long before the research began. The historical dimension of LTI also means that when authoring their LTIs, language teachers have historical resources available to them, i.e. the recollections of the lives they lived through. This explains why the CSOL teachers in this study referred to their prior experiences (such as growing up in China and their previous educational and professional experiences) to narrate their LTIs (Menard-Warwick, 2017; Kalaja, 2017).

5) LTIs are *being and doing*.

It is widely accepted that LTI is not an object that language teachers possess, but something they do or perform. Language teachers perform being teachers, through assuming roles (Farrell, 2017) and conducting practices such as delivering language lessons, providing feedback to language learners, and participating in professional development activities. Therefore, the study of CSOL teachers' identities is inextricable from scrutiny of the practices and the roles they carry out.

6) LTIs are *plural and multiple*.

LTI is a construct made up of multiple selves (Hadfield, 2017) and language teachers enact different aspects of who they are as LTs in different contexts (Barkhuizen, 2017). The relationship between these multiple identities also varies: they are in *struggle* and *harmony* (Donato, 2017) and they are *foregrounded* and *backgrounded* (Nelson, 2017). These dynamics informed my study, leading me to categorise and explore three dimensions of CSOL teachers' identities, namely their professional, instructional and

cultural identities. Furthermore, as will be revealed later, an individual can develop multiple identities within one component. For example, in Chapter 8, participant Mary developed a dual professional identity with one side connected to teaching and the other one to marketing.

7) LTIs are both *inside* the teacher and *outside* in the social world.

“Inside” refers to the internal and individual aspect, e.g. language teachers’ personal biographies or their emotional states. “Outside” refers to the external and social world, e.g. the socio-educational contexts (Duff, 2017; Cheung, 2017). LTIs can relate to roles designated or imposed on language teachers from the outside, and also to self-negotiated constructs internal to language teachers (Martel, 2017; Farrell, 2011). CSOL teachers’ identities also arise out of the interaction between personal and contextual factors.

8) LTIs are *accepted, acknowledged and valued*, and are inevitably *relational* and closely related to the *membership* of a community of practice (CoP).

LTs seek recognition in order to gain legitimacy in a community (Burns, 2017). “Being part of the community will generate a sense of belonging, which enhances participation and performance” (Xu, 2017, p.123). Membership of the teaching profession typically requires possession of the widely accepted cultural capitals such as academic qualifications in a language or education field, and institutional and collegial recognition (Xu, 2017). These criteria proved to be essential for the CSOL teachers in the present study, as the presence or absence of the capital impacted quite significantly on the participants’ feelings of belonging and commitment to teaching, and their sense of identity as teachers.

3.5 Teacher identity in general education

Teacher identity has been an emerging theme in the general education field since the 1990s in line with the increasing recognition of the importance of the role of teachers in the classroom (Tsui, 2011). This section provides an overview of research on teacher identity in the general education field. The studies can be clustered into three categories according to the main research focus (Beijaard et al., 2004):

- 1) Teachers' identity formation;
- 2) Characteristics of teachers' identity; and
- 3) Stories that (re)present teacher identity.

For the purposes of my study, the focus is exclusively on the first category. Within the literature pertaining to teacher identity formation, the overwhelming majority of studies have foci on novice teachers (including pre-service/student teachers and in-service teachers who are in their first years of teaching) in general education or language education (Izadinia, 2013). Far less coverage has been given to experienced (language) teachers' identity formation, so this group of teachers certainly merits more attention. This is part of the rationale for the present study's concern with how both novice and experienced CSOL teachers' identities evolve.

The TI formation studies can be further divided into four groups based on the major issues they addressed (Tsui, 2007, 2011; Beijaard et al., 2004):

- 1) The multidimensionality of TI and the relationship between these facets;
- 2) The relationship between the personal and social dimensions of TI formation;
- 3) The relationship between agency and structure in TI formation;
- 4) The process of TI formation.

In the sections that follow, I will describe each group of studies in more detail.

3.5.1 TI formation: the relationship between different dimensions

As already stated, it is widely acknowledged that identity is multifaceted (Cooper and Olson, 1996) and comprises many sub-identities. Another way of framing this is to say that one can enact different aspects of identity depending on various social settings, and all these aspects are interrelated (Gee and Crawford, 1998). However, the relationship between these multiple aspects of identity – whether they align or conflict with each other – remains contested (Mishler, 1999; Beijaard et al., 2004; Tsui, 2007, 2011). Some researchers have perceived identity as a “continuing site of struggle” between conflicting identities (Lampert, 1985; MacLure, 1993; Samuel and Stephens, 2000; Tsui, 2007, 2011). An alternative view has supported the coexistence of a plurality of sub-identities (Mishler, 1999) and asserts that the different dimensions of identity can be “harmonised” and “well-balanced” (Beijaard et al., 2004, p.122). Mishler (1999)

illustrated this theory with a vivid metaphor depicting the harmonious relationship between the sub-identities “as a chorus of voices, not just as the tenor or soprano soloist” (p.8). Continuing the metaphor, Beijaard et al. (2004) suggested that “the better the relationships between the different identities, the better the chorus of voices sounds” (p.113; see also McCarthey, 2001).

3.5.2 TI formation: the relationship between personal and social dimensions

A body of literature has shown that teacher identity is shaped by both personal and social (or contextual) aspects (Korthagen, 2004; Beijaard et al., 2004). The majority of the studies have been concerned with the personal side, particularly emphasising the role of self-reflection (i.e. who one actually presents as and what one wants to become) and personal practical knowledge in developing one’s teacher identity (Tsui, 2007, 2011; Antonek, McCormick and Donato, 1997; Estola, 2003; Cattley, 2007; Poulou, 2007). For example, in Estola’s (2003) study, a number of student teachers in Finland became more aware of the importance of hope in their TI formation and made the moral dimension of teacher identity visible through self-reflections in the form of autobiographical stories. However, some researchers put their main focus on the sociocultural and sociopolitical landscapes and the importance of interaction with others and the surroundings in shaping teacher identity (Tsui, 2007, 2011; Varghese et al., 2005; Izadinia, 2013; Korthagen, 2004; Duff and Uchida, 1997; Findlay, 2006; He, 2002a, 2002b; Reynolds, 1996). For instance, in Findlay’s (2006) study, the developing identities of five newly qualified teacher participants were significantly impacted by the environmental transition from their semi-protective teacher education programme to their school workplaces where no critical feedback or encouragement was provided.

3.5.3 TI formation: the relationship between agency and structure

Similar to the continuing debate on the nature of the interaction between personal and social factors, there is no consensus yet on the roles of agency and structure in TI formation. As indicated by Beijaard et al. (2004), being a teacher is “a matter of the teacher being seen as a teacher by himself or herself and by others; it is a matter of arguing and then redefining an identity that is socially legitimated” (p.113). In some studies, the role of teachers’ agency, i.e. one’s capacity to understand and control the action, and to make one’s own choices regardless (Webb et al., 2002), was considered

pivotal in TI formation (Coldron and Smith, 1999; Larson and Phillips, 2005). Larson and Phillips (2005), for example, suggested that although their participants (two student teachers) experienced tensions because of conflicts in culture between their workplace and their teacher education, they developed a sense of agency and even resistance which turned out to be beneficial for their identity formation as teachers. Some researchers, however, have argued that the institutional environment, including the culture, conventions and policies implemented there, can be “very pervasive”, “very demanding”, and in most cases “very restrictive” (Reynolds, 1996), hence undermining teachers’ agency (Tsui, 2007, 2011; Moore, Edwards, Halpin and George, 2002; Smagorinsky et al., 2004).

Compared with the first three groups of research, the fourth one, i.e. the process of teachers’ identity formation, has received little attention in the fields of general education and language teaching (Tsui, 2007, 2011). Hence the current study, with its focus precisely on that process, helps to fill the identified gap.

3.6 Teacher identity in language education

This section sets out the background of LTI research, the perspectives frequently adopted in theorising LTI, the core issues and findings emerging from an analysis of current LTI research, and the connections between those findings and the present research.

3.6.1 Background to the studies of TI in language education

In the field of language education, the topic of identity began to attract researchers’ attention in the 1990s. Initially, studies were mainly concerned with the identities of language learners (Martel and Wang, 2015) and one of the most prominent authorities on this area is Bonny Norton (Norton, 1994, 1995, 1997, 2010; Norton and Gao, 2008; Norton and Toohey, 2011; Norton and McKinney, 2011). It was not until the late 1990s that researchers came to turn their sights to language teachers’ identities (LTIs) and this subject burgeoned as a separate research area (Duff and Uchida, 1997; Antonek et al., 1997; Varghese, 2000; Pavlenko, 2003; Morgan, 2004; Beijaard et al., 2004; Varghese et al., 2005; Singh and Richards, 2006; Cross and Gearon, 2007; Miller, 2009; Martel

and Wang, 2015). This research is located squarely within this newly vigorous field of language teacher identity.

The thriving of studies on language teacher identity can be partly attributed to two strands of ideas about language teaching. Firstly, for a long time, teachers were seen as being like “technicians” who transfer knowledge to students. However, with deepening investigations into the landscape of the classroom, the active and complex roles of teachers began to be studied and accorded greater value and importance (Allwright, 1988; Nunan, 1988; Varghese et al., 2005). Most of the early research in this area focused atomistically on the significance of one or several attributes of teachers, such as teacher beliefs, perceptions, knowledge, attitudes, cognitions, emotions and so on, while neglecting the important point that it is a teacher’s whole identity that holistically determines the pattern of the classroom. Gradually, teacher identity came to be recognised at the heart of language teaching (Miller, 2009) as a crucial component in the landscape of the classroom as well as in teacher development (Tsui, 2007; Crandall and Christison, 2016). The current study with its particular focus on CSOL teachers’ identities has a firm foothold in the growing literature on the importance of LTI in language teaching.

Another line of inquiry promoting the development of LTI-related research was a growing interest in the sociocultural and sociopolitical dimensions of teaching (Norton, 1997; Pennycook, 1994, 2001; Kubota, 2001; Varghese et al., 2005). With the deepening exploration of classroom teaching, researchers began scrutinising the influences of many aspects of identity, such as race, gender and sexual orientation, on teachers’ teaching beliefs and practices as well as the classroom landscape. It became more obvious that teachers are “not neutral players in the classroom” (Varghese et al., 2005, p.22); instead, their positionalities in relation to their students and the broad contexts in which the teachers are situated are critical (Varghese et al., 2005). These developments informed the present study which considers the impact of sociocultural and sociopolitical factors on the process of CSOL teachers’ identity formation.

3.6.2 Current research trends in LTI

Studies of language teacher identity have flourished during the past two decades (Gu and Benson, 2015; Crandall and Christison, 2016). However, most of the studies on LTI

tend to concern student/pre-service teachers (STs/PSTs) during their teacher education (TE) (including placements) or beginning/novice teachers during their first few years of teaching (e.g. Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013). The perspectives of teachers who are later in their careers have been relatively neglected (Farrell, 2011). As indicated in section 3.5 above, this study seeks to address this disparity. Among the five participating teachers, four were experienced teachers (with three of them having over 10 years' teaching experience) and only one is a novice CSOL teacher, who has taught CSOL for around two years.

The first year(s) of teaching are usually the most intense and anxiety-producing time for (language) teachers (Farrell, 2009). Pre-service language teachers (PSLTs) during their practicum and new in-service language teachers (ISLTs) tend to find themselves having to establish their identities and positions in the classroom and in the schools where they teach (Antonek, McCormick and Donato, 1997; Duff and Uchida, 1997; Crandall and Christison, 2016). By using identity as a framework, language teachers can become aware of their own beliefs and practices, as well as their places within the institution and even in wider society (Sachs, 2005). The framework also opens a window for scholars through which they can interpret teachers' decision-making and meaning-making processes (Bullough, 1997). These advantages help explain the rationale for and growing popularity of research into the identities of PSLTs and novice ISLTs.

Changes and conflicts in professional identity have been one of the most explored topics in research into student and new practising teachers' identities. Pillen, Den Brok and Beijaard (2013) conducted a systematic overview of teachers' (including language teachers') professional identity tensions, identifying 13 types of conflicts that novice teachers experienced in their early teaching years (see Table 3.3).

**Table 3.3: Themes in teacher professional identity and corresponding tensions
(Pillen et al., 2013)**

Themes	Tensions
1. The changing role from being a student to becoming a teacher	Feeling like a student versus being expected to act like an adult teacher (Fuller and Bown, 1975; Volkmann and Anderson, 1998)
	Wanting to care for students versus being expected to be tough (Fuller and Bown, 1975; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011; Volkmann and Anderson, 1998)
	Feeling incompetent of knowledge versus being expected to be an expert (Fuller and Bown, 1975; Katz and Rath, 1992; Volkmann and Anderson, 1998)
	Wanting to invest time in practising teaching versus feeling pressured to invest time in other tasks that are part of the teaching profession (Fuller and Bown, 1975; Kälve mark et al., 2004)
	Feeling treated like a student versus wanting to take responsibility as a teacher (Pillen et al., 2013)
	Feeling like a peer versus wanting to take responsibility as a teacher (Pillen et al., 2013)
2. Wanting to care for students versus being expected to be tough (Fuller and Bown, 1975; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011; Volkmann and Anderson, 1998)	Wanting to respect students' integrity versus feeling the need to work against this integrity (Kälve mark et al., 2004; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011)
	Wanting to treat pupils as persons as a whole versus feeling the need to treat them as learners (or vice versa) (Berlak and Berlak, 1981)
	Experiencing difficulties in maintaining an emotional distance (Fuller and Bown, 1975; Veenman, 1984)
3. Conflicting conceptions of learning to teach	Experiencing conflicts between one's own and others' orientations regarding learning to teach (Alsup, 2006; Rajuan, Beijaard and Verloop, 2007)
	Being exposed to contradictory institutional attitudes (Hatch, 1993; Olson, 2010; Smagorinsky et al., 2004)
	Feeling dependent on a mentor (colleague/supervisor) versus wanting to go one's own way in teaching (Pillen et al., 2013)
	Wanting to invest in a private life versus feeling pressured to spend time and energy on work (Pillen et al., 2013)

Although the tensions specified in Table 3.3 mainly reflect the characteristics of general teachers' TIs, particularly in their first years of teaching, the findings were helpful insights for my study which examined the identities of CSOL teachers early in their career and across their continuing professional development, especially in alien sociocultural environments.

Among all the research on LTI, studies concerning the identities of teachers of English as a second/foreign/international language (ESL/EFL/EIL) constitute the overwhelming majority (Crandall and Christison, 2016). Only a small number of studies have focused on LTIs of teachers of other languages: for example, Vélez-Rendón (2010) examined the TI of a Spanish language teacher candidate; and Zheng (2012) and Ennser-Kananen and Wang (2016) investigated the TIs of CSOL teachers. There is an obvious need to address language teacher identity in more contexts, more roles and more languages (Martel and Wang, 2015). My study contributes to the evidence base on one of these (so far) under-explored groups – CSOL teachers.

To summarise, current research on TIs is dominated by studies of student and novice language teachers, mainly within ESL/EFL/EIL teaching, justifying the present study's focus on neglected aspects – the TI issues of novice and experienced teachers in the field of TCSOL. Having introduced the key themes of current research on LTIs and positioned my own research in the body of LTI literature, I will move on to discuss how the reviewed LTI studies were theorised and how the different theoretical frameworks informed the current study.

3.6.3 Theorising LTI

Language teacher identity has been theorised from different perspectives, such as sociocultural theory (Antonek et al., 1997; Reis, 2011; Vélez-Rendón, 2010), community of practices (Kanno and Stuart, 2011; Liu and Xu, 2011a; 2011b; Morton and Gray, 2010; Varghese, 2001), poststructuralism (Ajayi, 2011; Golombek and Jordan, 2005; Mantero, 2004; Menard-Warwick 2008; 2011; Morgan, 2004; Pavlenko, 2003), activity theory (Anh, 2013; Luebbbers, 2010), critical feminism (Motha, 2006), language socialisation (Duff and Uchida, 1997), symbolic interactionism (Martel, 2013), phenomenology (Cammarata and Tedick, 2012), and frames perspective (Pennington, 2015; Pennington and Richards, 2016) (based on the summary by Martel and Wang,

2015, p.294). Meanwhile, there have been a small number of LTI-related studies which have not employed theoretical frameworks (e.g. Fichtner and Chapman, 2011; Liu and Fisher, 2006; based on the summary by Martel and Wang, 2015). It is argued that no single theory or framework is adequate to interpret the complexity of teacher identity, so there is a call for openness to multiple theoretical approaches (Cross and Gearon, 2007; Varghese et al., 2005). This section will discuss the theoretical frameworks informing the present study.

3.6.3.1 Sociocultural perspective

One of the theoretical perspectives favoured by researchers in LTI-related studies is sociocultural theory, which can be traced back to the work of Lev Vygotsky (1978, 1986, 1987) who is considered to be the founder of the sociocultural approach to the study of human development. While termed “sociocultural”, the approach is actually “not a theory of the social or of the cultural aspects of human existence...it is, rather...a theory of mind...that recognises the central role that social relationships and culturally constructed artefacts play in organizing uniquely human forms of thinking” (Lantolf, 2004, p.30–31, cited in Jackson, 2008, p.15). Vygotsky’s general notions of semiotic mediation and higher-order psychological functions particularly contributed to a nascent understanding of identity formation and explained “how persons construct their personal versions of the social identities that mediate their behaviors and interpretation of the world” (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007, p.109).

According to Vygotsky (1978, 1986, 1987), just as we as humans do not act directly on the physical world but rely on tools, we also use symbolic tools or artefacts which are culturally constructed to regulate our relationship with others and ourselves (Jackson, 2008; Holland and Lachicotte, 2007). Language serves as a significant semiotic mediating device through which one modifies the environment’s stimulus, gains increasing control over social situations and articulates himself or herself in the name of an identity (Jackson, 2008; Clarke, 2008, p.25; Holland and Lachicotte, 2007, p.109). The semiotic mediation rationalises the role of culture in identity formation and clarifies how actively internalised identities translate into agency enabling one to control his or her actions (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007, p.109). Culture is essential to the formation of identity, as one actively adopts the cultural resources (such as cultural genres and artifacts) and applies them to oneself and transacts them with others, hence organising

oneself in the name of an identity (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007, p.113-114). An individual who has developed and internalised the identity of a cultural world (or a “figured world”) identifies with that world, and automatically adopts the lens valued by that world to observe, interpret and evaluate himself/herself and others, and to control and manage his or her actions (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007, p.115-116; Clarke, 2008, p.25-26). For example, in Vélez-Rendón’s (2010) research, Marcos (a native-speaking Spanish LT participant) appropriated the socially and institutionally prevailing discourse, which valued native speaker-ness and male authority, to legitimise his identity as a Spanish LT, and thus assuming a taken-for-granted view of both subject matter knowledge and classroom management skills.

In spite of the importance of “culture” in identity formation as well as in education (Clarke, 2008; Holland and Lachicotte, 2007), culture has not been clearly defined, and some of its definitions were even problematic. For example, drawing on Hofstede’s (1994) definition of culture as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (p.4), Richardson (2004) pointed out a number of cultural limitations exhibited by Emirati students, such as ““resistance to making the change and taking more responsibility for their own learning’ (p.432); difficulty in forming ‘a comfortable relationship with her college supervisor, given ... the expectations of high power distance between her and her supervisor’ (p.434); and ‘aversion to risk and uncertainty ... [and] thus may rely on outdated professional practices to use as models’ (p.434)” (cited in Clarke, 2008, p.21). These essentialised notions of culture, however, were overgeneralised and too reductive, and failed to take account of the complexity of history and society of the United Arab Emirates (Clarke, 2008, p.21). However, these kinds of cultural stereotypes can be adopted not only by the researchers who come from different social and cultural backgrounds to explore participants’ identities, but also by people who are from that culture to perceive themselves and claim their identities (as some of my participants did in articulating their teacher identities). I will discuss this issue later in the case analysis chapters.

Due to the vital role of semiotic mediation and culture in identity formation, Penuel and Wertsch (1995, p.83) suggested that it is important for researchers “to study identity in local activity settings where participants are actively engaged in forming their identities;

to examine the cultural and historical resources for identity formation as empowering and constraining tools for identity formation; [and] to take mediated action as a unit of analysis” (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007, p.114). This explains why quite a few LIT-related studies adopting the sociocultural perspective took place in the contexts of language teacher education (LTE) (e.g. Antonek et al., 1997; Vélez-Rendón, 2010; Clarke, 2008) or their continuing professional development (CPD) activities (e.g. Reis, 2011), where a mediational space was deliberately created or some mediational tools were intentionally used to facilitate pre-service and in-service language teachers to realise the development in their professional identities. Reis (2011), for instance, created a mediational space (Golombek and Johnson, 2004) for critical reflection and collaborative inquiry mainly in the form of dialogic journals, to promote the awareness of a non-native English speaker teacher (NNEST) about his professional identities. It was suggested that dialogic journals, as a means of mediation, enabled his participant Kang to challenge otherwise unexamined beliefs, feelings and attitudes about the native speaker myth and claim legitimacy as an ESL teacher. Antonek et al. (1997) also highlighted the effectiveness of student teachers’ reflections mediated by the portfolio in promoting LT’s awareness of their LTIs and constructing professional identities out of the historical and cultural conditions of their classroom experiences.

In relation to the present study, the sociocultural theoretical framework informed my research design and methodology, supporting the choice of interviews to elicit oral narratives and reflective journals to generate written narratives (although in the event no written narratives were produced, due to practical constraints) and so create a mediational space where the participant CSOL teachers could make sense of and give meaning to their experiences, and become aware of and able to articulate their teacher identities.

3.6.3.2 *Community of practice*

The connection to one or more communities of practice (CoPs) (e.g. the institution where a teacher works, the teachers in that institution, the teaching profession etc.) is intrinsic to a language teacher’s identity (Pennington and Richards, 2016, based on Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) and this assertion is borne out in the present research. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce the theoretical framework of CoPs before showing how this framework contributed to the theorising of my study.

A community of practice is usually defined as having three characteristics, namely: 1) mutual engagement; 2) a joint enterprise; and 3) a shared repertoire (Wenger, 1998, p.152). The boundaries between different communities of practice are “not geographical” and “not necessarily visible or explicit” (Wenger 1998, p.183), meaning that one institution might correspond to a CoP, but not necessarily one; it could be none or more than one or several CoPs (Xiang, 2019). According to the theory of community of practice, identities are formed with tensions between “our investment of various forms of belonging” (Wenger, 1998, p.188) (i.e. identification) and “our ability to negotiate the meanings that matter in those contexts” (Wenger, 1998, p.188) (i.e. negotiability). Therefore, identity formation is a dual process of identification and negotiation of meaning. As identification is both reificative and participative (Wenger, 1998, p.191), the process of identity formation involves three aspects, namely reification, practice and negotiation.

First of all, identity is constructed partly through reification. This means that a person identifies herself/himself (self-perceptions) and is identified by other people (others’ perceptions) as having a socially organised category, a description, a role or other kinds of reificative characteristics (Wenger, 1998; Tsui, 2007). Meanwhile, identity is formed partly through participation, which is a process of “identifying with something or someone” (Wenger, 1998, p.191) through concrete actions and tasks (i.e. day-to-day practices) (Trent, 2015). In other words, “it is the lived experience of belonging that constitutes who we are” (Tsui, 2007, p.660).

Within the framework of community of practice, identity formation – or to be more specific, identification – is usually considered in the context of three modes of belonging, namely engagement, imagination and alignment (Wenger, 1998). Engagement in practice is an importance source of identification, which incorporates an investment of ourselves in not only what we do, but also our relations with others (Wenger, 1998; Tsui, 2007). It is through engagement that one manifests competence and is recognised as competent (Wenger, 1998), thus gaining membership of a CoP. Therefore, membership, in its essence, is “an experience and a display of competence” (Wenger, 1998, p.152). In order to gain entry to a CoP and be reckoned as a legitimate member, one needs to accumulate sufficient and appropriate social capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984) such as academic qualifications to demonstrate his or her competence

(Block, 2007). Imagination constitutes the second mode of belonging (and source of identification) as it allows people to go beyond the CoP they are directly engaged in here and now, and to perceive the world and locate themselves in a larger world, across time and space (Wenger, 1998; Tsui, 2007; Trent, 2015). The third mode of belonging (and source of identification) is alignment, which connects an individual's practices to broader structures and enterprises. It is through alignment that the identity of a larger organisation, such as a school, becomes part of the identity of an individual (Tsui, 2007; Trent, 2015). As Wenger (1998) put it, "we become part of something big because we do what it takes to play our part" (p.179). Alignment usually involves power, so it is often achieved through the interplay of compliance and allegiance (Wenger, 1998; Tsui, 2007).

Richards (2012) introduced the concept of CoP to interpret the nature of the English language teaching profession. He argued that:

"English language teaching is a profession, which means that it is seen as a career in a field of educational specialisation, it requires a specialised knowledge base obtained through both academic study and practical experience, and it is a field of work where membership is based on entry requirements and standards. Becoming an English language teacher means becoming part of a worldwide community of professionals with shared goals, values, discourse, and practices" (p.52, cited in Pennington and Richards, 2016, p.20).

This argument does not fit the English language teaching profession exclusively, but is applicable to the entire teaching profession. Teachers participate in the CoP of the teaching profession "through sharing knowledge, perspectives, and values; reflecting on those of others; and acquiring new knowledge and then shifting perspectives and values accordingly" (Pennington and Richards, 2016, p.20). It is through such participation that teachers develop a sense of connection to the teaching profession and congeal such sense into their identity as teaching professionals (Pennington and Richards, 2016, p.20).

The theory of community of practice informed this study in its concern with how participant CSOL teachers negotiated their relationships with the teaching profession (including TCSOL, TESOL and teaching for children) through their decisions to join, remain in and/or leave the profession, and how they established a sense of connection to the teaching profession in different institutions and different sociocultural contexts

as part of their teacher identities (i.e. the aspect of “professional identity” presented in each case).

3.6.3.3 *Frames perspective*

Frames are considered as “windows, maps, tools, lenses, orientations, and perspectives” (Bolman and Deal, 2003, p.12) through which researchers can explore, characterise and interpret a phenomenon of interest in an organised way. Therefore, framing is a useful tool for conceptualising and describing social structure and practices (Pennington, 2015). The two academic works discussed in this section (Pennington, 2015; Pennington and Richards, 2016) explored LTI in terms of the specific characteristics of language teaching, and they both adopted the concept of framing to structure and interpret LTI. These two exemplars of the frames approach are detailed below.

A. Frames of teacher identity in TESOL

The frames perspective was initially adopted by Pennington and Hoekje (2010, 2014) to model English language teaching (ELT) work, and through which they divided ELT into two categories (see Table 3.4): 1) Frames of ELT work, representing the different facets of ELT work; and ELT Context Frames, reflecting the various contexts in which ELT work happens.

Table 3.4: Frames model of ELT (Pennington, 2015, p.36)

Frames of ELT Work

<i>Instruction</i>	teaching content, methods, materials, and technologies; teacher roles, teacher–student relationship
<i>Disciplinary field</i>	academic affiliation; academic qualifications; areas of teacher knowledge; research and scholarship
<i>Profession</i>	ethics and standards; teacher education and development; working conditions; political influence and power; collegial relations
<i>Business</i>	income; accountability and efficiency; cost-effectiveness; customer satisfaction; recruitment and promotion
<i>Service client</i>	care; helper role; meeting student needs; voluntary labour; support of department, institution, and field

ELT Context Frames

<i>Global</i>	international orientation; practices related to global flows of people, money, technology, information, ideologies, languages
<i>Local</i>	situatedness of practice in department, institution, community, nation; specific teacher and student groups in a particular locale
<i>Sociocultural</i>	linguistic and ethnic backgrounds of teachers and students; demographics of administrators, teachers, students

This framework was later modified by Pennington (2015) to investigate teacher identity in the TESOL area. The revised frames also comprised two main categories – practice-centred frames and contextual frames, each with multiple dimensions (see Table 3.5).

Table 3.5: Frames of teacher identity in TESOL (Pennington, 2015, p.37)

<p>Practice-Centered Frames</p> <p><i>Instructional</i></p> <p><i>Disciplinary</i></p> <p><i>Professional</i></p> <p><i>Vocational</i></p> <p><i>Economic</i></p> <p>Contextual Frames</p> <p><i>Global</i></p> <p><i>Local</i></p> <p><i>Sociocultural</i></p>

Instructional identity is central to the identity of a teacher in a particular field, encompassing both the content and methods of instruction, and reflecting all the characteristics in the way a teacher conceives and conducts his or her teaching practices (Pennington, 2015). A teacher’s instructional identity involves the role s/he enacts in the classroom (such as facilitator, disciplinarian, subject-matter expert, etc.), the types of his/her instructional practices or approaches, and his/her positioning in relation to the students (i.e. teacher-student relationship) (Pennington, 2015, p.38).

Disciplinary identity reflects the connection a teacher has to a certain academic field and the research and knowledge specific to that field. An ESOL teacher’s disciplinary

identity can be rather complex, relating to: 1) one's affinity with different areas of this discipline (e.g. linguistics, applied linguistics, education and other fields); 2) one's academic qualifications (e.g. master's or doctoral level); 3) the type of academic unit one is affiliated with; and 4) the requirements of the institution (e.g. whether including research or not) (Pennington, 2015, p.39-41).

Vocational identity encompasses a teacher's commitment and sense of affiliation to the teaching work in a specific area or context. Teacher commitment is a teacher's dedication to the students and the teaching job (Firestone and Pennell, 1993), which usually involves an intrinsic enjoyment and satisfaction obtained from serving and helping others (e.g. students) (Pennington, 2015, p.43).

Economic identity refers to a teacher's judgement of and identification with the teaching work based on the economic facet of the work, e.g. whether the job is chosen because of economic necessity, whether the work is rewarded, and how successful one feels by taking the teaching work (Pennington, 2015, p.44).

A teacher's sociocultural identity relates the teacher's sociocultural characteristics to those of other people, including students, other teachers, employers and the wider teaching field and society. Sociocultural identity involves positioning the self within a social construction of people's affiliations and the groups they belong to, as formed in interaction with others in different contexts.

Owing to the close similarity between TESOL and TCSOL, this framework is also a powerful tool for inspecting and interpreting CSOL teachers' identities, and thus inspired my approach to structuring my participants' accounts and chronicling their developing identities as CSOL teachers. In the summary of this chapter (section 3.8) and the methodology chapter (section 4.9), I will specify how these two frameworks are applied to the study, jointly with other theoretical perspectives, to classify the different aspects of the participants' teacher identities.

B. Framework of language teacher identity in terms of competence

Pennington and Richards (2016) studied teacher identity in relation to teacher competence (looking at general LTs, rather than TESOL exclusively) and they identified eight elements constituting language teachers' identities. According to the earlier work of Richards (2012), there are ten dimensions of teacher knowledge and skills which

form the basis of expertise and competence of teachers in language teaching, which are (p.46):

- 1) Language proficiency;
- 2) Content knowledge;
- 3) Teaching skills;
- 4) Contextual knowledge;
- 5) Language teacher identity;
- 6) Learner-focused teaching;
- 7) Pedagogical reasoning skills;
- 8) Theorising from practice;
- 9) Membership in a community of practice;
- 10) Professionalism.

Later they reconceptualised and synthesised these elements within two main categories. Their framework is summarised below (based on Pennington and Richards, 2016, p.11-20):

Foundational Competence of Language Teacher Identity

- 1) *Language-related identity* involves a person's language background and language proficiency;
- 2) *Disciplinary identity*, underpinned by specific knowledge of the field, including both *disciplinary knowledge* (i.e. the body of knowledge that is considered by the language teaching profession to be essential to gaining membership of the profession) and *pedagogical content knowledge* (i.e. knowledge that provides a basis for language teaching);
- 3) *Context-related identity* refers to the potentials or influences (both positive and negative) created by different contexts on language teachers;
- 4) *Self-knowledge and awareness*, which means being conscious of one's strengths and shortcomings as a language teacher, and how to optimise teaching based on such understandings;
- 5) *Student-related identity (student knowledge and awareness)* involves an increasing understanding of students and shifts in focus from teacher to learners.

Advanced Competence of Language Teacher Identity

- 6) *Practised and responsive teaching skills (knowledge into practice)*, which is the ability to operationalise disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge, and combine it with personal and contextual features to perform teaching practices;

- 7) *Theorising from practice (practice into knowledge)*. Teachers develop personal practical theory of teaching which incorporates their own beliefs, concepts and philosophies;
- 8) *Membership in communities of practice and profession*, which indicates language teachers' connection to one of more communities of practice.

This framework organises language teachers' identity in a comprehensive way, providing a list of "*a priori* codes" (Willis, 2014, p.419) that can be drawn on to structure the accounts of the participants. It will be detailed further in the methodology chapter (see section 4.9).

3.6.4 Role identity of language teachers

People's identities generally involve their self-perceptions and other-perceptions in relation to their roles and their practice of enacting various roles in different social contexts, therefore the role identity is inherent to one's identity according to Meadian theory. In the same vein, the role identity constitutes a significant dimension of teachers' (including language teachers') identities as well as a topic frequently covered by LTI-related articles.

Language teachers usually view their identities in terms of the roles they take up in the classroom, in the workplace and in relationship with their students. Farrell (2011), for example, after an investigation of three experienced ESL teachers, identified 16 roles they claimed to have enacted, and categorised them into three types (see Table 3.6). The first type is "teacher as manager" including seven sub-identities which were clustered in regard to the various roles that ESL teachers played in classroom. The second type is "teacher as acculturator", which can be further divided into three sub-identities, and they were all about the work that ESL teachers did outside the classroom in helping students get accustomed to the new learning and life environment. The third type is "teacher as professional" (with three sub-identities), reflecting the attitudes that ESL teachers held towards their work or profession. It appears that some of these roles were not confined to the ESL teachers examined by Farrell, because they also emerged in my study, for example the vendor role (selling the institution as well as a particular learning method).

Table 3.6: Taxonomy of experienced ESL teacher role identity

Category	Definition
Teacher as Manager • Vendor (12) • Entertainer (9) • Communication controller (6) • Juggler (5) • Motivator (4) • Presenter (3) • Arbitrator (3)	Attempt to control everything that happens in classroom • A seller of ‘learning’ of English; ‘selling’ a particular teaching method • Tells jokes & stories to class • Attempts to control classroom communication and classroom interaction dynamics (turn taking etc) • Multi-tasker in the classroom • Motivates students to learn; keeps students on task • Delivers information • Offers feedback (positive & negative) in classroom
Teacher as ‘Acculturator’ • ‘Socializer’ (9) • Social Worker (8) • Careprovider (4)	Helps students get accustomed to life outside class • “Socializes” with students; attends functions outside class with students. • Offers advice and support to students on matters related to living in another country/culture • Plays careprovider role for students
Teacher as Professional • Collaborator (14) • Learner (4) • Knowledgeable (3)	Teachers dedicated to their work; take it seriously • Works & shares with other teachers • Continuously seeks knowledge about teaching & self as teacher • Knowledgeable about teaching and subject matter

Role identity is the product of contextual factors and personal choices. In specifying these roles, Farrell (2011) pointed out that some of them (e.g. vendor, entertainer, acculturator, socialiser, social worker, and care provider) were predetermined, i.e. “ready-made roles” (p.59) which ESL teachers had not actively sought out, but were imposed on them by the historical environment, power distributions and cultural values. Some roles, however, were “individually created roles” (p.59) emerging from ESL teachers’ personal interaction with the social environment, such as communication controller, juggler, motivator, presenter, arbitrator, collaborator, learner and being ‘knowledgeable’. Whether or not a role was undertaken by teachers out of willingness varied and was significantly influenced by teachers’ own experiences and backgrounds. In the present study, for example, there were differences in the findings on CSOL teachers’ attitudes towards some roles (such as the role of vendor), as will be detailed later (see Chapter 8).

3.6.5 Elements shaping (L)TI formation

Research has highlighted that a number of factors impact on teachers’ (including language teachers’) identity formation (Beijaard et al., 2004; Izadinia, 2013; Martel and Wang, 2015). In this section, I review the relevant body of literature, with the primary focus on identifying the elements shown to be influential to the development of LTI specifically, while not excluding reference to the factors significant to general TI formation, as there are many commonalities between LTI and general TI.

3.6.5.1 Experiences

An important influence on (language) teachers' identity formation is their experiences (past, present and even future) including personal, educational and professional aspects, which as Miller (2009) suggested are "a repertoire of resources they can deploy and 'test' as they negotiate and build their professional identities in social and institutional contexts" (p.175).

3.6.5.1.1 Personal experiences

The first type of experience which is closely related to TI formation is teachers' personal experience (Izadinia, 2013; Martel and Wang, 2015; Pennington and Richards, 2016), including the manner of their upbringing in families since childhood, their marriage and parenting, their intercultural experiences, and other situations or events they go through in daily life. Teachers bring their growing-up experiences to their classrooms, and teacher identity is therefore, in part, a projection of their autobiography, i.e. their personal experiences (Pennington and Richards, 2016). Edwards and Edwards (2017), for instance, told the story of Wiremu, a teacher in New Zealand. In Wiremu's narration, he perceived himself as a teacher who respected students and could assess students by carefully listening to their questions. He explicitly attributed his practice of encouraging students' curiosity to his own positive experiences with his father who valued his ability to ask endless questions.

Apart from the upbringing experiences that teachers gain from their parents, the lessons they learn from being a parent themselves also contribute to their TI formation. In Ennsner-Kananen and Wang's (2016) research, Min, a Chinese-born participant reflected on her painful experiences of failing to retain Chinese values in parenting her American-born daughter who turned out to "reject anything Chinese" (p.630). She was therefore informed to highlight the importance of recognising and respecting students' home cultures in classroom teaching.

Intercultural experiences can be seen as a typical element in shaping language teachers' identities, considering the nature of the job. In Menard-Warwick's (2008) research, one of the participant English language teachers, Ruby, transformed her transnational life experiences into her pedagogical resources and encouraged her students to be life-long cultural learners in the target language, modelling intercultural teacher identities. Similar to the participants in Ennsner-Kananen and Wang's (2016) study who drew

largely on their cross-cultural parenting and marriages in their teaching culture, Ruby also stressed the importance of assumptions underlying cultural behaviours in her class because these insights helped communication in her intercultural marriage.

3.6.5.1.2 Educational experiences

Teachers' educational biographies as learners (i.e. their own schooling experiences) may influence their teacher identities. For example, teachers may unconsciously integrate certain aspects inherent to their education system into their own teacher identity development. For example, teachers in Hong Kong, who themselves learnt English via traditional instruction methods, tended to believe in the value of formal instruction and thus conducted teaching in such ways (Richards and Pennington, 1998). Language teachers may avoid certain practices because of the negative experiences they themselves had. Both Golombek (1998) and Numrich (1996), in their studies of pre-service teachers in the USA, found that teachers tended to avoid explicit error correction in language teaching, because as pupils their own experiences with this practice had been negative.

3.6.5.1.3 Professional experiences

The third influential source for TI formation, which cannot be ignored, is teachers' professional experiences, either inside or outside education (especially language teaching) contexts. Such influences can be implicit or explicit, function positively or negatively, be revealed in the teacher preparation programme or sustained during the entire course of one's teaching career.

First of all, teachers' prior and current (language) teaching experiences definitely exert an influence on their TI development (Martel and Wang, 2015). Kanno and Stuart's (2011) research found that language teachers' practices shaped their LTIs, showing that the participant student teachers became more confident with the increases in their competence in coping with subject-related matter and in conducting pedagogical practices. Luebbers (2010) investigated a group of FL student teachers and compared their expected target language use in the classroom before their placement (which was "as much as possible") with their actual use during their teaching practicum (which ranged from 28%-47%). It was suggested that the engagement in actual teaching practices and contending with students' expectations changed those student teachers' sense of selves as FL teachers and as providers of target language input.

Secondly, it is important not to lose sight of the influences on LTI of teachers' professional experiences in non-educational fields, which is particularly evident in second-career teachers (SCTs). Nielsen's (2016) study, for instance, surveyed a number of practising SCTs (including second-career language teachers, SCLTs) in the USA. Half of the participants who were interviewed mentioned that the skills they had acquired during their previous careers had become advantageous in their second career as teachers. Astrid, one of the interviewees, described how her experiences and skills in dealing with customer relations gained during her previous career in business were benefiting her teaching practices, particularly helping her placate students and keep them calm. In a similar vein, the in-service SCLTs in Trent's (2018) study who had worked in other areas such as business and engineering also referred to the benefits of their previous experiences. While the SCTs believed that their previous professional experience brought certain advantages, they also reported that the school or some colleagues did not recognise these transferable skills or they undervalued them (Nielsen, 2016; Trent, 2018). Therefore, it is argued that staff in such workplaces need greater insights into the valuable role of knowledge and experience acquired by SCTs outside educational settings in contributing to their language teaching skills, so as to facilitate the development of teachers' identities (Nielsen, 2016; Trent, 2018).

The importance of realising and acknowledging the value of a teacher's previous work experiences, particularly where these were not in the field of education, was an issue that arose for some of the participants in my research (e.g. Mary), but the situation was rather complex. Questions arose about how teacher identities might be shaped where teachers are influenced not only by their previous careers but also by enacting non-teaching work *concurrently* with their teacher roles: for example, a part-time CSOL teacher employed both in teaching and non-teaching positions in different organisations and workplaces, or a teacher who carries out significant non-teaching tasks (e.g. marketing-related) for the institution where she teaches. These questions are worth exploring and will be addressed in the case analysis chapters.

3.6.5.2 Context

Contextual factors constitute another dimension of teachers' identity formation (Miller, 2009). These factors range from micro-level to institutional (e.g. textbook, timetable,

curriculum, classroom, school culture) to the macro-level of the sociocultural environment.

The culture of the schools where (student) teachers do their teaching may influence the development of their teacher identity. Findlay (2006), for example, examined the impact of school context on the identity development of five newly qualified teachers. She found that the transition from the nurturing environments of teacher training programmes to school environments where student teachers received no critical feedback or praise had a significant influence on the student teachers' identities. Sometimes there are some ideological conflicts between the school/institution where student teachers work and their teacher education programme. In Larson and Phillip's (2005) study, despite the tensions experienced by the two participant student teachers, they developed resistance and a sense of agency at their sites of conflict and overall the tensions appeared to benefit their development as teachers.

Studies have also shown that the sociocultural environment exerts significant influence on language teachers' identities. In Liu's (2009) study, a narrative inquiry approach was employed to explore the experiences of Ms Ying, an EFL teacher in China who was born in the 1950s. It was suggested that Chinese economic reforms had influenced Ying's career choice to quit her previous job as an interpreter and become an EFL teacher in the university. Moreover, some of the ideologies advocated within Chinese society during certain historical periods appeared to have shaped teachers' identities. For example, in Ying's narration, she compared herself to "a pump of an oil well", putting pressure on students in order to promote their progress. This metaphor which Ying retained as part of her teacher identity can be traced back to a popular motto established for the model oil worker in China in the 1950s and 1960s: "a person without pressure will make no progress; a well without pressure will not produce oil" (Liu, 2009, p.262).

3.7 Teacher identity in TCSOL

In the last fifteen years, CSOL teachers have received increasing research attention in China (Huang and Liu, 2017; Xu, 2019). Xu's (2019) investigation of the academic literature on CSOL teachers in the Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index (CSSCI)

from 2004 to 2018 (see Figure 3.1) shows that since the establishment of the first CI in 2004 there has been a burgeoning interest in Chinese academia about issues concerning CSOL teachers. However, compared with the flourishing research focused on areas such as CSOL teacher education and training, teacher reflection, teacher cognition, personal practical knowledge and intercultural competence, studies (especially empirical ones) on CSOL teachers' identities have been surprisingly scarce. A general search of the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI)¹ Database applying both “CSOL teachers” and “identity” as the “subject” search terms resulted in only three academic articles discussing issues pertaining to CSOL teachers' identities (Zheng, 2012; Wang, 2017; Jiang, Liu and Zhang, 2019). Additionally, a search of the Web of Science database and Google Books yielded several papers (Sun, 2012; Wu, Palmer and Field, 2011; Ennser-Kananen and Wang, 2016) and a book (Ye, 2017) dealing with CSOL teachers' identities. An overview of these published studies is set out below and indicates how they relate to the current doctoral study.

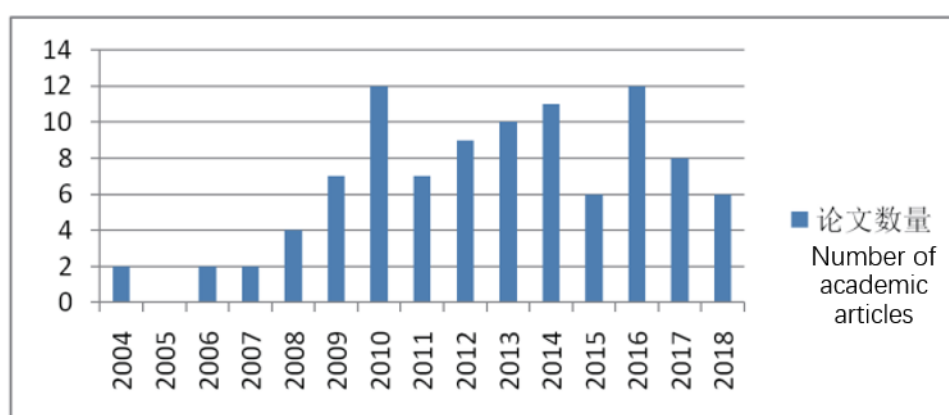


Figure 3.1: Number of CSSCI articles about CSOL teachers from 2004 to 2018

Adopting the social conflict theory (Coser, 1998), Jiang et al. (2019) investigated the identity conflicts experienced by eight students majoring in TCSOL (abbreviated as S-

¹ CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure, 中国知网) is a key Chinese national information construction project under the lead of Tsinghua University, and supported by PRC Ministry of Education, PRC Ministry of Science, Propaganda Department of the Communist Party of China and PRC General Administration of Press and Publication. This project was first launched in 1996. The CNKI has built up a comprehensive China Integrated Knowledge Resources System including journals, doctoral dissertations, masters' theses, proceedings, newspapers, yearbooks, statistical yearbooks, ebooks, patents, standards and so on.

TCSOL) and explored the reasons for such conflicts. At the time of interview, four of these students were still postgraduate students taking TCSOL programmes in different universities in China, and four had already graduated from their programmes but were engaged in non-TCSOL jobs in China. The research findings showed that the conflicts between the S-TCSOLs' needs for formal professional acknowledgement on the one hand, and the lack of means or resources for professional identification provided by the TCSOL industry on the other (e.g. no authoritative qualifications specific to CSOL teachers), led to students having anxiety regarding their occupational identity. The postgraduate taught TCSOL programmes had focused on the cultivation of S-TCSOLs' professional skills and this was partly at odds with the value placed by universities on academic and research abilities. This tension led to perceived difficulties for S-TCSOLs to be accepted as qualified teachers by the universities where most of their target students (i.e. non-Chinese speaking students) were located. S-TCSOLs also experienced a conflict between their ideal identities and their instrumentalised and marginalised roles in the teaching institutions. Similar issues are addressed in the current research study and will emerge in the reasons why one participant, Coco, who was also a student taking a postgraduate taught TCSOL programme in China during the study period, decided to leave the field of TCSOL after graduation.

Both Zheng (2012) and Wang (2017) researched Hanban-assigned volunteer Chinese teachers' identities in their MA dissertations, but their studies differed in the theoretical perspectives taken, the specific focus of the research, and the research methods. With regard to the research focus, while both studies investigated Hanban-assigned volunteer teachers, Zheng's (2012) emphasis was on the dimension of "volunteer" in the participants' identities; Wang's (2017) study, on the other hand, highlighted the participants' "teacher" identities. In terms of the research methods, Zheng (2012) adopted the narrative inquiry approach and collected data mainly through semi-structured interviews from six participants about their one-year teaching experiences in France. Wang (2017), however, adopted a mixed methods approach, administering a survey to 41 Hanban-assigned volunteer teachers at the beginning and end of their one-year overseas dispatch period, and complemented this with interviews of the most representative participants. As for the theoretical frameworks, Zheng (2012) applied the social identity theory (Tajfel, 1974) and theories related to intercultural competence, and explored the participants' social and cultural identities as volunteers during their

acculturation to an alien environment. She categorised the volunteers' social identities into three types (national emissary, foreign language teaching assistant and disseminator of culture) and discovered that their cultural identities were characterised by an emphasis on their national identity as Chinese and a strong sense of being a lonely and confused stranger. Wang (2017) adopted the sociocultural theory proposed by Vygotsky (1978) and developed a questionnaire on international volunteer Chinese teacher identity to investigate Hanban-assigned CSOL volunteer teachers' identities across four dimensions, namely occupational identity, professional identity, individual identity and environmental identity. She found that over a one-year period of teaching practice, CSOL volunteer teachers' occupational, professional and individual identities were significantly strengthened, but their environmental identity had no significant change. Among the factors influencing CSOL volunteer teachers' identities, students' appraisal played an important and positive role in increasing the strength of their identity, while inadequate organisational support was the main cause of identity problems. Based on this finding, Wang (2017) proposed some recommendations: 1) Hanban should focus on cultivating the volunteer CSOL teachers' spirit of volunteering and strengthening their service motivation; 2) the CI should adopt human-based management and provide more care and support for the volunteer CSOL teachers; and 3) the CI should provide more training and guidance about local language, culture and teaching skills. The problems in teachers' identities due to issues around institutional support and interpersonal relationships were not exclusive to CSOL volunteer teachers, but also emerged for some of the participants in the current doctoral study, especially local CSOL teachers. This will be explored in detail later in the thesis.

Ye's (2017) research investigated the working and living experiences of three Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers dispatched to the UK, and explored the reasons behind their acculturation and factors leading to changes in their identities, with the aim of improving the CI programme (p.2). The study found that during the UK sojourn, two of the participants (Su and Qiao) developed new sub-identities as intercultural mediators, and all participants developed a sense of themselves as being more competent and more respectable (Ye, 2017, p.125). Notably, these three participants all employed blogging to "construct a desirable virtual identity when their real identities had been threatened in the host society" (Ye, 2017, p.126). Moreover, each participant

experienced a heightened awareness of nationality, which may not have occurred if they were in their home countries (Ye, 2017, p.126).

As can be seen from the above, within the limited number of studies addressing CSOL teachers' identity, most of these were concerned with Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers and volunteers. Studies addressing the experience of locally sourced CSOL teachers in contexts outside of China are scarce, largely because of the difficulties in approaching potential participants (Xu, 2019). Wu, Palmer and Field (2011) and Ennser-Kananen and Wang (2016) studied CSOL teachers based in the USA, but those participant CSOL teachers were not affiliated with CIs. These gaps in the evidence base are met by the current study in which all the participant CSOL teachers were working in a CI in England, and three of them were locally based.

Wu et al. (2011) investigated the professional identity and beliefs of three Chinese heritage language teachers in a community-based Chinese school in the USA. Although professional identity was one of their stated research focuses, the description of findings on this aspect was rather limited, merely that the participant CSOL teachers had weak professional identities due mainly to low pay and insufficient training and collegial support.

Ennser-Kananen and Wang (2016) investigated 25 participants who were working or preparing to work as teachers of Chinese in K-12 schools in America. They put their sights on a dimension of language teachers' (including CSOL teachers') identities which has received little attention in the literature so far – cultural identity – and examined the connections between this and pedagogical learning in the professional development context. According to their findings, the CSOL teacher participants took different standpoints to view their identities in terms of the Chinese (home) and US American (host) cultures. Some of the participants claimed that two or more cultures coexisted within themselves, but the Chinese identity was usually more dominant and stable. Unlike previous studies which focused more on how language teachers drew on their cultural identities (especially their personal intercultural experiences) to serve the language teaching, Wang highlighted that the relationship between cultural identities and pedagogical learning was bidirectional. In other words, pedagogical learning can also shape the cultural identities of the CSOL teachers, bolstering the argument for teacher education and professional training to promote the development of CSOL

teachers' sense of identity not just to promote their skills. Due to its paucity in the current LTI literature (including CSOL), cultural identity is a key focus of the present study.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter, I considered first the concept of identity in the social sciences, arriving at a working definition of identity to serve as the conceptual basis of this study, which has three key aspects: identity is: 1) what we think or say about ourselves (i.e. our self-perceptions); 2) what others think or say about us (i.e. others' perceptions); and 3) the way we live day to day (Wenger, 1998; Lamb, 2013). The research focus was then narrowed down to the realm of education, concerned with teacher identity particularly in the field of language teaching. A number of characteristics of LTI were explored and identified as closely related to the present research: that LIT is an ongoing and constantly evolving process which is cognitive, social, emotional, historical, 'doing and being', plural and multiple, operating inside the teacher and outside in the social world, and also relational and closely connected to the recognition and membership of a community of practice (Barkhuizen, 2017). These features informed this study theoretically as well as methodologically, leading to the decision to adopt a combined retrospective and concurrent inquiry approach to exploring participant CSOL teachers' experiences in order to produce a comprehensive picture of their TI trajectories (as will be detailed later in Chapter 4).

Next, I conducted a review of studies related to teacher identity in the domains of general education, language education and TCSOL in order to position my study in the existing body of literature. An examination of the TI studies in the field of general education showed me that empirical research focusing on the *process* of TI formation is rare, highlighting the need for more studies on this aspect. The exploration of the literature related to LTI showed that the overwhelming majority of research has focused on recently qualified or trainee teachers especially in EFL/ESL/EIL teaching areas. This reinforces the value of my study in investigating the process of LTI development not only in novice teachers but also those with substantial experience, and reaching outside of English language teaching to embrace CSOL. The overview of existing research into

CSOL teachers' identities revealed a bias towards the study of Hanban-assigned teachers and volunteers (e.g. Zheng, 2012; Wang, 2017; Ye, 2017; Xiang, 2019) and little exploration of the cultural dimensions of CSOL teachers' identities (e.g. in Enns-Kananen and Wang, 2016). Therefore, my study targeted an overlooked category of CSOL teachers, i.e. ones who were already based locally in the host country, and tackled a neglected aspect of teacher identity, i.e. cultural identity.

A review of the theoretical perspectives prevailing in the literature on language teacher identity underpinned the call for combined theoretical approaches to explore the complexity of LTI (Cross and Gearon, 2007; Varghese et al., 2005). Therefore, I have chosen to synthesise different theoretical frameworks in order to explain the multiple dimensions of CSOL teachers' identities (see below Figure 3.2). The frames perspective (Pennington, 2015; Pennington and Richards, 2016; see section 3.6.3.3) was adopted to structure and classify participants' teacher identities into three components, namely professional, instructional and cultural identities. Community of practice theory (Wenger, 1998; see section 3.6.3.2) and the sociocultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986, 1987; Holland and Lachicotte, 2007; see section 3.6.3.1) were employed mainly to analyse participants' professional identities, especially their sense of belonging to the teaching profession and their strengthening or weakening identities as teachers. The three-stage model of ethnic/cultural identity development (Phinney, 1990, 1993; Lustig and Koester, 2010; see section 3.2.2.1) supported the interpretation of acculturation processes in participants' cultural identities as well as their instructional practices. Finally, a number of factors identified as influential on teacher identity formation were examined and categorised. The next chapter will present the research methodology.

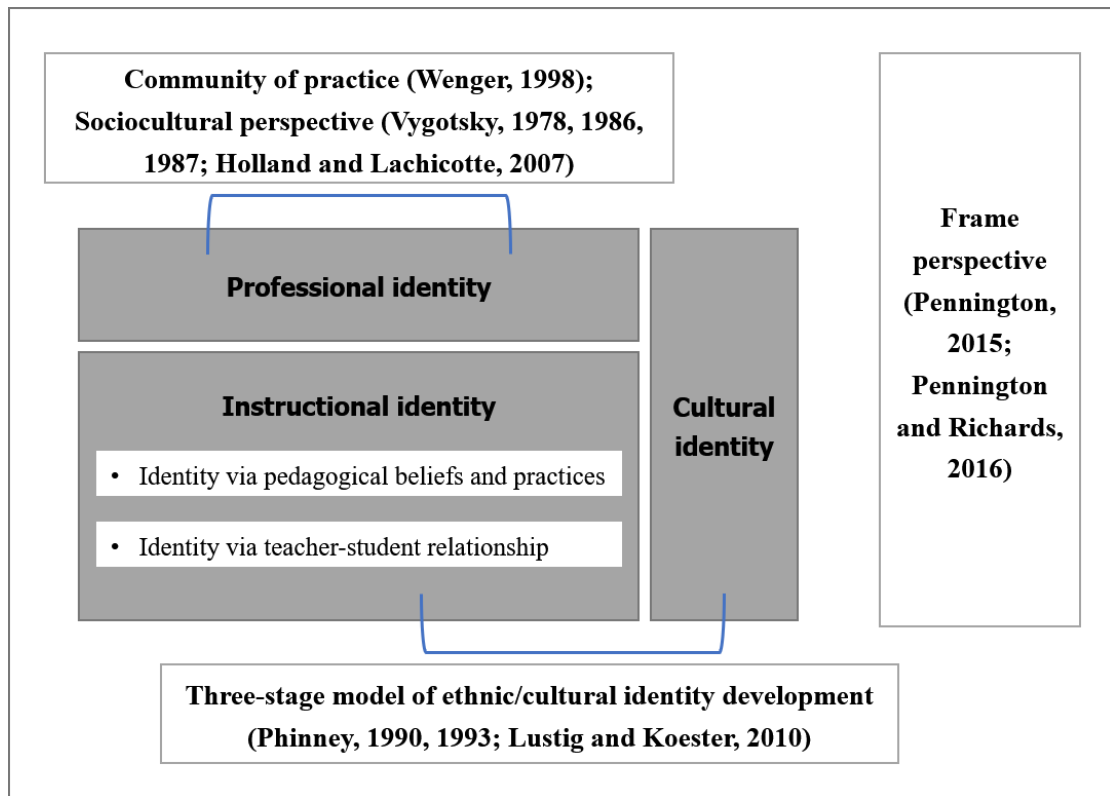


Figure 3.2: Theoretical framework of the study

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed account of the methodological design of the present study. It starts by introducing the research aim and questions, and then explains the research paradigm, rationalising the methodology and the specific approaches and methods chosen for the study. The following two sections describe the study site and the principles adopted for the selection of participants. The next two sections provide a detailed overview of how the data were collected and analysed. The concluding sections outline the strategies adopted by the researcher to enhance the quality of the study and the credibility of its findings, followed by the ethical issues addressed and the study's methodological limitations.

4.2 Research aim and questions

This study investigated the stories of five CSOL teachers in a Confucius Institute in the UK, with the aim of illustrating the process of their teacher identity formation and exploring the implications for CSOL teachers' professional development. The purpose of this research is two-fold:

- On the academic level, the present study seeks to contribute evidence to the empirical research literature on a subject which so far has received little attention: the developmental processes underlying CSOL teachers' identity formation. The study investigates early career CSOL teachers as well as experienced practitioners, and includes Hanban-assigned teachers as well as those who are locally employed.
- On the practical level, the study seeks to provide a more in-depth understanding of how CSOL teachers' identities develop over time and identify the factors influencing this process, in order to inform the education and management of CSOL teachers and facilitate a wider range of CSOL teachers to realise their professional development.

To achieve these stated aims, the study addresses four main research questions. Before specifying these, I need to clarify one issue first. In the literature review chapter, the concepts of “identity” and “teacher identity” were discussed at length, indicating that teacher identity involves three aspects: 1) teachers’ self-perceptions, i.e. how teachers see themselves; 2) others’ perceptions or recognitions, i.e. how others perceive the teachers, and 3) teachers’ daily practices. However, at the operational level, due to practical constraints which emerged during the data collection (detailed later in section 4.8.1.1 *Gaining access to the study site*), most of the accessible evidence took the form of self-reports or narrations and these encompassed participants’ self-perceptions as well as commentary on other peoples’ perceptions of the participants, and details of the participants’ daily practices. Therefore, in this research, the teacher identities studied were essentially CSOL teachers’ *self-reported* identities, rather than their *real* identities. Actually, gaining one’s *real* identity is a mission impossible. Even if the first-hand data could be collected apart from participants’ self-narratives (i.e. the researcher has access to observe participant CSOL teachers’ classroom teaching practices, and is able to collect others’ perceptions on the participants in person), it cannot guarantee the authenticity as the sources of data are subjective themselves (i.e. CSOL teachers might perform their teaching practices in order to satisfy the researcher, and people who are invited to comment on the participants may also give their answers from their own subject positions, hence generating biased opinions). In this study, subjectivity is unavoidable (detailed in section 4.3.1.2 *Subjectivity*), but if the conditions allow, the more sources of data employed, the fuller and more comprehensive image will be created about teacher identities of CSOL teachers, and the greater the reliability and trustworthiness of this research will be (see section 4.10 *Enhancing the quality of the research*). Considering the characteristics of the data collected as explained above, the research questions are framed as follows:

Research Question 1: What kinds of identities do CSOL teachers develop, based on their *self-report*?

Research Question 2: How do CSOL teachers’ identities develop, based on their *self-report*?

Research Question 3: What kinds of factors influence the process of CSOL teachers’ identity formation, based on their *self-report*?

Research Question 4: What are the implications of the findings for facilitating CSOL teachers' professional development?

To explore these research questions and better understand the complexity and dynamics of CSOL teachers' identity formation, a qualitative research approach was adopted as the most effective and appropriate way to generate rich and in-depth data (Dörnyei, 2007). The next section will detail the research paradigm for this study.

4.3 Research paradigm

All academic studies are inevitably influenced by a set of beliefs and fundamental assumptions about the world, i.e. philosophical worldviews or paradigms (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016) brought about by the researchers (Lincoln and Denzin, 2003, 2011). The philosophical paradigm is a general philosophical orientation about the world which informs our choice of theories to guide our research (Guba, 1990; Creswell, 2014; Creswell and Poth, 2017).

There are two important philosophical paradigms that are widely adopted in social science research, namely positivism and social constructivism (Creswell, 2014, which is often described as interpretivism; see Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Mertens, 2010). Positivism advocates that research into social reality should be studied with the same principles and methods as used in the natural sciences (Bryman, 2016). It asserts that belief is also objective (Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba, 2011), i.e. knowledge or facts of reality are independent from the inquirer or the researcher. Social constructivism, however, highlights an alternative worldview, emphasising that “people develop subjective meanings of their experiences” and “the subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically” (Creswell, 2014, p.46), i.e. they are formed through the interaction with others in the world where they live.

The philosophical paradigms underpinning any research can be described in terms of: ontology (concerning the social reality); epistemology (concerning the nature of knowledge); and methodology (concerning the procedures of research – the way we collect, generate, analyse and interpret data that allows us to construct new understandings of the world) (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2014; Creswell and Poth, 2017). Before introducing the

design and conduct of this study, it is necessary (and it is also the tradition) for social science researchers to highlight and clarify the position they hold in their research (Guba and Lincoln, 1999; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Creswell and Poth, 2017). Considering the nature of teacher identity (both personal and interpersonal, constructed during the interaction between people's internal world and the external society) and the purpose of this research (exploring the dynamics and complexity of the process of CSOL teachers' identity formation over time), this study takes a social constructivist position. In the following section, I will specify the perspectives of the study, addressing ontology, epistemology and methodology in turn.

4.3.1 Ontology

Ontology is concerned with the essence of the world and the nature of the human being. Accordingly, ontological assumptions are about how people perceive the social reality and "what kind of being is the human being" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p.12). From the constructivist perspective, the world is "socially constructed" and "subjectively experienced" (Opie, 2004, p.20). Therefore, all human actions are inherently meaningful (Hammersley, 1992) and it is thus of great significance to "collect subjective accounts and perceptions that explain how the world is experienced and constructed by people who live in it" (Opie, 2004, p.20). This research, with its focus on a particular group of people (CSOL teachers' identities), reflects the constructivist and subjectivist ontological positions by exploring how the world is personally experienced and how people negotiate and make sense of these experiences.

4.3.1.1 Constructivist

Social constructivism stresses that reality is a personal and social construct, thus concerning how individuals understand and interpret the world they are situated in. Research taking a social constructivist stance relies heavily on individuals' views, seeking understanding of the complex and multiple realities that participants construct (Creswell and Poth, 2017), and values human action, considering it as purposeful and meaningful (Williams and Burden, 1997). From the constructivist perspective, people develop subjective meanings and build their knowledge from their lived experience through interaction with their contexts (Glaserfeld, 1995). This research takes the social constructivist position to explore CSOL teachers' identities by examining their

own understandings of their life experiences and the subjective meanings they generate through negotiation with their contexts.

4.3.1.2 Subjectivity

This study is also subjectivist in that it assumes and acknowledges that the participants' personal perceptions of their life experiences and teaching practices are subjective, and that researchers also bring their own values and perspectives to the process of interpreting the collected data, which are inevitably and necessarily subjective (Jansen and Peshkin, 1992; Scott and Usher, 1999; Stake, 1995).

4.3.2 Epistemology

Epistemology is theory on the nature of knowledge – what counts as knowledge, how knowledge is known, and what is the relationship between the inquirer and the known (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Creswell and Poth, 2017). From the social constructivist perspective, knowledge derives from subjective experiences of people and is inseparable from the contexts where people live and work; hence knowledge is experiential, personal, subjective and people-involved (Opie, 2004). This research takes the constructivist epistemological stance. It considers subjective experience to be a valid source of knowledge concerning how people – in this case the participant CSOL teachers – experience the world, and it values the meanings made through interaction with the contexts, i.e. the construction of identity.

4.3.2.1 Constructivist-interpretive

This research represents the characteristics of both constructivist and interpretive epistemology. The constructivist epistemology highlights the social constructivist nature of knowledge and the role of the human mind in actively constructing and building such knowledge. Meanwhile, the research adopts an interpretive epistemological position by considering human actions as inherently meaningful and seeking to grasp and interpret the meanings that constitute those actions. In this study, CSOL teachers' lived experiences were treated as the essential basis for constructing knowledge. To explore the process of CSOL teachers' identity formation, the research acknowledged the value of their lived experiences and the negotiation of such experiences in developing teacher identity.

4.3.2.2 *Fallibilist*

Fallibilist epistemologists claim that knowledge is inherently tentative and uncertain (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Schwandt, 2003). Therefore, findings from this constructivist-interpretive research illuminate CSOL teachers' identity formation in a particular context (based at a particular Confucius Institute in England): the findings are provisional and cannot be seen as definitive conclusions suitable for generalising to other situations and contexts.

4.3.3 Methodology

Methodology refers to the methods, techniques and strategies used through processes of data generation, analysis and interpretation (Ernest, 1994). The constructivist-interpretive perspectives in the ontological and epistemological assumptions highlighted above have important implications for my choice of methodology.

4.3.3.1 *Interpretive*

Due to the complexity of the world, individuals may have different interpretations of social reality. An interpretive methodology, on the one hand, affords freedom for participants to make sense of their own personal experiences (Richards, 2003) and on the other hand, it enables researchers to explore the meanings that individuals attach to their experiences and actions.

4.3.3.2 *Inductive*

An inductive approach was adopted in this study to explore participant CSOL teachers' identities. Although there is a body of literature concerning teacher identity formation issues, the categories came from the analysis of participants' own accounts rather than any prematurely forming themes (Patton, 1990; Silverman, 2000).

4.3.3.3 *Naturalistic*

One of the features of this study is that the data were collected through interviews in natural settings (i.e. during the course of their daily instructions) rather than in artificial situations (i.e. training programmes specifically for teachers' professional development) (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011).

4.3.4 My role as researcher

It is crucial for social researchers, especially those who utilise qualitative methodology, to clarify their roles as researchers because the stance they take would influence the trustworthiness or credibility of their research (Unluer, 2012). It is common for qualitative researchers to conduct studies with “populations, communities, and identity groups of which they are also members” (Kanuha, 2000, p.439), i.e. ‘insider’ research. As this study was conducted in a Confucius Institute to which I once belonged, it is classed as insider research (Breen, 2007). As an insider researcher, I cannot be completely separated from the phenomenon being investigated.

There are obvious advantages for insiders conducting research in settings they are familiar with, such as: 1) relatively easy and rapid access to the study site because the researcher is known to the institution being investigated; 2) ready access to the participants hence less time spent on establishing relationships with the potential participants (Asselin, 2003; Brannick and Coghlan, 2007); and 3) the researcher is already equipped with background knowledge of the research setting which may help them to appreciate the significance of what is happening (Robson, 2002; Campbell, McNamara and Gilroy, 2003). As a student who majored in TCSOL, and as a CSOL teacher who was working part-time in the CI where my participants were based, my educational background and work experiences provided me with favourable conditions as an insider who could easily approach and gain the trust of the participant CSOL teachers. Because I had similar experiences to those of my participants, my empathy was fine-tuned when hearing their stories and I could understand more precisely the reasons and motivations behind their perceptions and practices. However, insider research is not without its limitations, and some authors have doubted “the feasibility of insiders taking part in any worthwhile, credible or objective enquiry into a situation in which they are centrally involved” (Robson and McCartan, 2016, p.7). All researchers seeking to conduct insider research need to scrutinise certain issues and take steps to avoid them.

The first issue that insider researchers need to consider is their pre-understanding, which “refers to such things as people’s knowledge, insights and experience before they engage in a research programme” (Gummeson, 2000, p.57). Being too familiar with the culture of the research setting may bring about risks, as too much existing or

entrenched knowledge may limit insider researchers' abilities and curiosity to probe for alternative and/or deeper meanings and develop more in-depth understanding of the situation, compared with investigators who are ignorant of the study site (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007). Moreover, insider researchers are highly likely to take for granted the knowledge and experiences they already had, assuming that "their own perspective is far more widespread than it actually is" (Mercer, 2007, p.6), or being unaware of the potential wrongness in their beliefs, hence losing objectivity (Unluer, 2012). The tacit assumptions and unconscious bias can become visible to researchers to a certain extent when they carefully review and examine their research notes or transcriptions of participant interviews (Asselin, 2003). To ensure the objectivity and credibility of the research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) also suggested the use of "member checks" by which the researchers check their data, analytic categories, interpretations and conclusions with the study participants (a technique I partially adopted in my study, and detailed in section 4.10).

The second challenge for the insider researcher is role duality (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007; Unluer, 2012), also called "role confusion" (Asselin, 2003) or "role conflict" (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007). The role conflict refers to the sense of being "caught between loyalty tugs, behavioral claims, and identification dilemmas" (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007, p.70) which insider researchers may experience when they perceive or respond to events or analyse data from other role perspectives, i.e. not simply as researchers (Asselin, 2003). This role duality can bring some advantages, for example, strong motivation and active investment in conducting the research. Nielsen and Repstad (1993) suggested that the insider researcher, as a member of the organisation being studied and a peer of the study participants, may have a strong desire to influence and change the organisation. They may feel empathy for their participants who are also their colleagues, and be motivated to sustain their energies with the study (as was the case with my conduct of the present study). However, research done in a familiar setting brings a greater risk of influencing the way researchers perceive the phenomena of interest, resulting in "inappropriate responses, [...] inaccurate interpretations, and premature conclusions" (Asselin, 2003, p.102). Asselin (2003) suggested some techniques for insider researchers to guard against role confusion. Firstly, researchers should temporarily step back from the data collection process and regard themselves as researchers. Secondly, it might be useful for researchers to discuss their thoughts with

other experienced researchers or colleagues to ensure that their roles as researchers prevail over the subordinate roles as members of the organisation(s) in the study setting. The third issue that insider researchers should be aware of is the influence of participants' perceptions and expectations (Asselin, 2003). The relationship between researchers and participants can vary from "openness to restrictiveness" (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007, p.70), largely depending on participants' perceptions of and attitudes towards the researchers (Mercer, 2007; Drever, 1995) and influenced by the organisational context. For example, there may be negative consequences if the participants believe that the researcher has a hidden agenda to involve them in the research or use their information in particular ways. Conversely, if a researcher is considered trustworthy, then the participants may feel comfortable to confide their personal concerns in him or her (Asselin, 2003). Researchers can take certain measures to avoid misperceptions by their participants: emphasising their roles as researchers rather than organisational members; assuring participants of the confidentiality of their information and the anonymity of the recorded data; explaining clearly how the collected data will be used in the future; reassuring participants that their participation will have no effect on their work position or status, regardless of the kind of information they provide for the research.

4.4 Research approaches

Research approaches are "plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation" (Creswell and Creswell, 2017, p.295). The selection of research approach is generally informed by the nature of the research problems or questions to address, the researchers' personal experiences and philosophical assumptions, and even the intended or likely audiences of the study (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). This study adopted case study and narrative inquiry as the two main research approaches. In this section, I will outline the features of the chosen approaches and explain their methodological implications for the study.

4.4.1 Case study

This study aims to investigate the process of CSOL teachers' identity formation, embracing complexity in that process, and to illuminate how these identities developed under the influence of a range of factors. With these aims in mind, the advantages of the case study approach made it the best choice for the present research. Case studies offer the potential for rich, thick descriptions and in-depth insights into complex social issues embedded within cultural contexts, and they allow researchers to examine how intricate circumstances come together and interact in shaping the social reality (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 155).

Case studies can be categorised into sub-types according to different perspectives in the literature. Here I will outline the characteristics of three sub-types which are the most relevant to this study.

Exploratory. Traditionally, the case study has been considered as a way to explore new and seldom charted areas (Dörnyei, 2007) and to generate questions that can be investigated in subsequent studies (Yin, 2014). The present research is an exploratory case study as it investigates empirically how CSOL teachers' identities evolve (a subject which has had limited research attention to date) and aims to identify the factors that influence this process (Bassey 1999; Duff 2008).

Instrumental. An "instrumental case study" (Stake, 1995) is one in which the case is explored to seek insights into wider issues beyond the case itself. The specific case is chosen precisely "because it is expected to advance our understanding of that other interest" (Wellington, 2015, p.166). The present case study is instrumental in that it also aims to produce insights into certain issues outside the case details themselves. The study focuses on identity formation processes in CSOL teachers at a specific Confucius Institute in the UK, and its wider intention is to better understand how to facilitate CSOL teachers' professional development in the long term.

Collective. A collective (Stake, 1995; Creswell, 2014) or multiple case (Yin, 2014) study is a joint investigation of a "set of cases" (Robson, 2000), either with similar or dissimilar characteristics, and the cases are chosen to generate theories for a larger collection of cases (Wellington, 2015). This present research investigates CSOL teachers from three different sources within the context of CI being studied, forming

several separate but interrelated cases. A subsequent comparison among cases enabled me to discover the similarities and differences in the process of their teacher identity formation, hence producing lessons that can benefit CSOL teachers' professional development.

Longitudinal. This research integrated two well-known paradigms in conducting longitudinal case studies, namely retrospective longitudinal case studies and prospective longitudinal studies or “panel studies” (Dörnyei, 2007; Duff, 2008). First, this study is retrospective and longitudinal requiring the participants to think back and review their past experiences of language learning and teaching before the start of the research, to identify the turning points and critical moments in the journey of their teacher identity. Second, the research is prospective, as it collected information about change and captures a vivid picture of the development of participant CSOL teachers' identities during the data collection period (Dörnyei 2007; Duff 2008).

4.4.2 Narrative inquiry

The other key research approach adopted in this study is narrative inquiry, one of the most frequently used approaches to explore identity in second language teaching and learning (Benson et al., 2013). Prior to explaining more about the rationale for using narrative inquiry in this research, it is necessary to clarify what narrative is. According to Hermanns (1995, cited in Flick, 2014), narrative can be understood as follows:

“First the initial situation is outlined (‘how everything started’), then the events relevant to the narrative are selected from the whole host of experiences and presented as a coherent progression of events (‘how things developed’), and finally the situation at the end of the development is presented (‘what became’)” (p.265).

Narrative, therefore, is “a distinct form of discourse: as meaning making through the shaping or ordering of experience, a way of understanding one's own or others' actions, of organising events and objects into a meaningful whole, of connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events overtime” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p. 421). It is through narrative that we “incorporate the past and the future in the very process of negotiating the present” (Wenger, 1998, p.155).

Narrative inquiry is suitable for studying identity for the following reasons:

- Firstly, narrative “calls on storytelling traditions which give structure to expression” (Elbaz, 1990), through which one constructs his or her identity simultaneously.
- Secondly, narrative is a meaning-making process, providing a mechanism through which one can negotiate his or her experiences, hence articulating and making explicit his or her identity.
- Thirdly, narrative “often involves a moral lesson to be learned” (Elbaz, 1990), which means it is solution-oriented and it aims to resolve problems, improve the quality of one’s life and realise one’s further personal growth. These ideas correspond with the goal of developing and being aware of one’s identity.

Moreover, “narrative methods are especially valuable when we want to capture the nature and meaning of experiences that are difficult to observe directly” (Benson et al., 2013, p.8). This is particularly true for my study. As reiterated earlier, a teacher’s identity consists of his or her self-perceptions, others’ perceptions and the teacher’s own day-to-day practices. Ideally, data collection on these aspects would include, for example, classroom observations or interviews with a teacher’s students, colleagues and mentors in order to triangulate and reflect a teacher’s *real* identity. However, these data collection plans had to be modified due to unforeseen barriers and practical constraints. Lesson observations could not proceed because I was not permitted to observe my participants’ classes during the research period due to the regulations of the institutions where they worked. The intended data gathering from my participants’ past mentors, colleagues and students could not take place because I could not get direct access to these individuals. Therefore, my data collection relied on participants’ own narrations via an extensive series of interviews. In these circumstances, narrative inquiry played an irreplaceable role in the present study.

4.5 Research methods

A research method is “a technique for collecting data” (Bryman, 2016, p.40) which usually involves the use of specific tools or instruments such as observations, interviews and questionnaires to collect data. This study adopted narrative inquiry as one of the main research approaches, so it was vital to employ effective methods to elicit participants’ narratives about their learning, teaching and life experiences, through

which the process of their teacher identity formation would become explicit. Generally, there are three forms of narrative data, namely oral narratives, written narratives and multimodal narratives (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). Both oral and written narratives can yield thick data telling an individual's story. However, considering the practical constraints (all my participants had tight schedules and were unlikely to have time for the project in addition to interviews), I decided to rely mainly on oral narratives generated through interviews, supplemented with written narratives collected via participants' reflective journals. The rationales for the choice of these two methods are explained in the next section.

4.5.1 Interview — oral narratives

Identity is a synthesis of one's self-perceptions, others' perceptions and one's daily practices. Therefore, to explore and demonstrate how a CSOL teacher's TI is formed, the investigator must find a way to learn about change in these three dimensions with the passage of *time* – from experiences occurring before and during the study period. Interviewing, as a research method, allows the researcher to “probe an interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings and perspectives” (Wellington, 2015, p.137) across time, i.e. capture their self-perceptions, one of the dimensions of identity. As for the other two constituents of identity – others' perceptions and one's daily practices – other forms of evidence were unavailable (as outlined above, it was not possible to conduct ethnographical teaching observations or to interview their colleagues or students). However, interviewing as a method proved its incomparable advantages in eliciting participants' stories of the past and the present, enabling me the researcher to probe experiences which happened long before the study period that I could not observe (Wellington, 2015). Through these participant narratives, the process of their TI formation unfolded.

There are two dimensions of interviews with regard to the time frame of the narratives, namely retrospective and concurrent interviewing (Barkhuizen, Benson and Chik, 2014). Retrospective interviews focus mainly on one's past experiences, aiming to find out how past experiences shape present practices (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). Concurrent interviews, however, are concerned with both past and newly emerging experiences during the data collection period (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). As described earlier, 'identity' is an ongoing and constantly changing process, so my inquiry into the

trajectory of participants' identity formation adopted the concurrent interview method to capture participants' experiences prior to the study as well as recent and new events during the whole research period.

Interviews can also be categorised as structured, semi-structured, and unstructured (or open) interviews (Dörnyei, 2007; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; Mishler, 1986). Both unstructured and semi-structured interview techniques were used in this research but at different stages of the data collection. Interviews in the first round were unstructured and geared to learning about each participant's history. Each case profile became progressively enriched, leading to the use of individually focused, semi-structured interview techniques for subsequent interviews (Silverman 2000; Verschuren 2003) but including some unstructured elements to elicit narratives about newly occurred experiences.

The unstructured interview approach was chosen for the following reasons:

- *Maximum flexibility.* As conveyed by its name, the “unstructured” interview provides maximum flexibility for storytellers to narrate their own stories and life experiences without specified pre-set questions (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990) and in unpredictable directions (Dörnyei, 2007; Wellington, 2015). By starting with an unstructured interview, I could invite participants to talk freely about their past upbringing, education, teaching and any life experiences they felt relevant to their becoming (and being) a CSOL teacher; this flexibility was especially useful in light of the varied ages and backgrounds of the participants. During and after the interviews, I could develop each of their profiles and structure their individualised stories.
- *Rich and in-depth insights into the participant's world.* The open interviews reiterate the invitation to participants to tell their life stories in their own words and try to give a fuller narration of the complexities (Chase, 2003). It is an effective way to elicit the deep meanings of participants' experiences and it enables the interviewer-researchers to explore participants' perspectives in depth.
- *Relaxed environment and greater rapport.* The use of unstructured interviews creates a relaxed atmosphere in which interaction can proceed like a conversation rather than a formalised and rigid question-answer activity. It also allows for occasional diversions (Malcolm, 2004) and questions for clarification during the

storytelling process so as to keep the interview moving in a more natural way (Dörnyei, 2007). Moreover, open interviews are based on and in turn contribute to the establishment of rapport between the researchers and the participants.

Having obtained narratives of the participants' general life experiences from the unstructured interview round and then drafted their timelines, more individually focused semi-structured interviews were designed and carried out. The phases of participants' narrated experiences were used as guidance and direction for the semi-structured interview schedules comprising a set of pre-prepared guiding questions and prompts. Nevertheless, the interview format was still relatively open-ended and the interviewees were encouraged to elaborate on their narration of their experiences.

4.5.2 Reflective journals — written narratives

Reflective teacher journals refer to “strategies which require teachers to express in written form their thoughts, beliefs and attitudes, typically in relation to particular topics or experiences” (Borg, 2006, p.249). In the literature on teachers' identities, reflection is widely considered as a critical means either to facilitate the construction of or to display the developmental process of teachers' professional identities (Korthagen, 2004; Sutherland et al., 2010). Reflective journals or diaries offer unparalleled opportunity for researchers “to capture the particulars of experience” (Dörnyei, 2007, p.156) and to identify personal cognitive, emotive and psychological reasons that are not easy to reveal behind the changes in teachers' identity formation.

In the present study, the reflective journals were intended to be used in two ways: 1) to elicit participants' prior experiences before data collection; 2) to record participants' newly emerged experiences during the intervals between the interviews, which could later serve as an important source to probe in-depth views in the next interviews. Although the participants were encouraged to keep reflective journals or diaries, there were always some realistic difficulties in getting them to write in the first place (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). The participant CSOL teachers in the chosen CI normally had a heavy workload, hence they were less motivated to create written narratives and were more willing to be interviewed which was relatively time and energy saving. In my research, therefore, reflective journal writing was not compulsory and the written narrative data (if there were some) were used to complement the oral narratives.

4.6 The selection of study site

This research was conducted in a Confucius Institute located in England. The next section sets out brief background information about the chosen CI followed by the rationale for selecting this study site.

4.6.1 Description and background of the study site

The CI where the present study was conducted is part of a university in the UK and was set up in partnership with Hanban and several other universities in China. It offers a wide range of Chinese cultural activities and language courses to both adults and children. (Table 4.1 illustrates the course structure of the CI which will help readers better understand the selected CI and the duties of the participant CSOL teachers; the course types are numbered from 1 to 5 for ease of reference later.) In recent years, the CI has extended its role to participate in some public events in Chinese language and culture, including a focus on the needs of business, industry and health.

In order to fulfil such a wide remit, the CI has not only requested the dispatch of a large number of volunteers and teachers from Hanban every year, but also recruited plenty of local teachers to supplement this group. At the time that I started to think about the design of my research, there were already nearly 30 CSOL teachers – two Hanban-assigned volunteers, six Hanban-assigned teachers and almost 20 local teachers working in the CI. This presented a great potential opportunity for me to conduct research into CSOL teachers' identity formation.

Table 4.1: Course structure of the selected CI

	Course Types	Students	Course Place	Course Time	Specification
Mandarin Chinese courses for children	[1] Chinese courses in (three) Confucius classrooms (CCs)	Secondary school students	British local mainstream schools	School term	CCs are financially supported by Hanban. Hanban-assigned teachers and volunteers are responsible for delivering Chinese classes in CCs (within school curriculum or in the form of after-school club)
	[2] Chinese courses in (eleven) connection schools	Primary and secondary school students	British local mainstream schools	School term	Based on the requests of British local schools, CI randomly sends CSOL teachers from three sources to provide Chinese courses and cultural activities in CI connection schools, usually FREE of charge
	[3] Chinese courses in (one) language and cultural school for young people	Children and young people, aged 3.5-18 from all walks of life, including students from Chinese-heritage families (accounting for the majority), and from families of other language backgrounds	Chinese language and cultural school for young people (as a part of the university, the CI was allowed to use the classrooms in the university to offer Chinese courses for these young students)	At weekends	Essentially a supplementary Chinese language school affiliated to the CI; Students need to pay for the courses
Mandarin Chinese courses for adults	[4] Non-specialist Chinese courses in the university	University students, majored not in Chinese language	University classrooms	University semester	Credited courses provided for registered university students as part of their programmes
	[5] Chinese courses for all adult learners	All adults, including university students, staff, and the general public	As a part of the university, the CI was allowed to use the classrooms in the university to offer Chinese courses for the registered adult learners	In the evenings	Essentially a community Chinese language school affiliated to the CI; Students need to pay for the courses

4.6.2 Rationale for the choice of study site

The rationale for choosing this study site was two-fold. First, the CI had an obvious advantage in its community of CSOL teachers, rich in number (around 30 at the time I intended to start my research) as well as variety. The staff included CSOL teachers and volunteers assigned from Hanban and those who were locally employed, and they varied greatly in age, academic background and number of years teaching (detailed further in Table 4.3 in section 4.8.1.4). This would benefit my research in covering a wider range of CSOL teachers than focusing only on novice and young Hanban-dispatched CSOL volunteers, the profile of the majority of participants in the published research on CSOL teachers' identities. The second reason was a practical consideration – for the convenience of data collection. As indicated earlier, this study is an insider research project, meaning that the chosen CI was also the place where I worked as a part-time CSOL teacher. It was relatively easy for me to get approval from the CI to conduct research at the site and gain access to the potential CSOL teacher participants who were in fact my colleagues.

4.7 The selection of participants

This section specifies the principles and strategies I employed to select and recruit participants. Detailed background information about the participants will be set out later in section 4.8.1.4 following the account of the recruitment of the participants.

4.7.1 Sampling strategies

A well-designed case study usually requires a relatively small sample but capable of generating data as rich and thick as possible. Due to the constraints on participant numbers and access to them, researchers must always make a principled and purposive sampling plan which aligns with the research aims and helps to maximise the knowledge generated (Dörnyei, 2007). The optimal sample size for a case study has long been a topic of debate. As suggested by Duff (2006), one of the leading case study researchers in applied linguistics, the typical sample size of case studies is four to six focal participants, and so “even if there is attrition among the participants (and there

usually is), there will likely be 3-4 cases remaining” (Dörnyei, 2007, p.152). Dörnyei (2007), based on his own research experience, proposed that “an initial sample size of 6-10 might work well” (p 127). This research adopted “purposive sampling” (Creswell, 2014; Dörnyei, 2007; Cohen et al., 2000; Morse, 1991; Patton, 1990) to select potential participants who could provide in-depth and varied description of the issues to be investigated. Set out below is a brief explanation of specific sampling strategies used in this research:

Maximum variation sampling (Duff, 2006). This strategy requires the researchers to select participants by considering the variety in their experiences. To ensure an appropriate variety of participants in this research, I purposively recruited participants of different types, namely Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers and volunteers, and local CSOL teachers. It was also important that the participants differed in their gender, age, educational backgrounds and teaching experiences, so as to reflect the diversity of CSOL teachers and gain the richest possible picture of the identity formation process for different CSOL teachers.

Convenience sampling. Although not an ideal or recommended approach, this common and practical strategy for selecting participants involves recruiting those who are available (Dörnyei, 2007). Due to constraints of funding, time and human resourcing, it is too often the case that researchers (particularly when one researcher alone is responsible for a study) are compelled to compromise by selecting accessible or convenient participants. In this research, participants came from a CI in the UK where I worked. All were colleagues of mine and so were easy to approach.

4.8 Data collection

The data collection work in the present study can be divided into three stages: 1) preparatory work (access to the study site and approaching participants); 2) formal data collection period and procedures; and 3) data processing following collection. This section gives an account of all the steps at each stage.

4.8.1 Stage one: Before data collection

The preparatory work before the formal start of data collection lasted for about 14 months, from October 2015 (when I first joined the CI and worked there as a CSOL teacher) to December 2016 (when I was granted the formal ethical approval to collect data). In the following sections, I will describe how I gained access to the study site and recruited participants.

4.8.1.1 Gaining access to the study site

The prerequisite of data collection is gaining access to and permission from the study site. I initiated this action early (around October 2015), at about the same time that I became an insider, i.e. a part-time CSOL teacher in the CI. Before starting to collect data, it is important to obtain the approval of “gatekeepers”, i.e. those “who provide access to the site and allow or permit the research to be done” (Creswell, 2014, p.188). Due to the complexity in the CI’s course structure, the “gatekeepers” in this research involved different groups of people in various contexts. Here below I will clarify the access I need to get (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Access to different course places

	Course Types	Course Place	Specification
Mandarin Chinese courses for children	[1] Chinese courses in (three) Confucius classrooms (CCs)	British local mainstream schools	CCs are financially supported by Hanban, but are <i>located in and managed by British local schools</i>
	[2] Chinese courses in (eleven) connection schools	British local mainstream schools	The Chinese courses of this type are <i>given in and managed by British local schools</i>
	[3] Chinese courses in (one) language and cultural school for young people	Chinese language and cultural school for young people (as a part of the university, the CI was allowed to use the classrooms in the university to offer Chinese courses for these young students)	Essentially a supplementary Chinese language school <i>affiliated to and managed by the CI</i>
Mandarin Chinese	[4] Non-specialist Chinese courses in the university	University classrooms	Credited courses provided for registered university students, <i>managed by the university</i>

courses for adults	[5] Chinese courses for all adult learners	As a part of the university, the CI was allowed to use the classrooms in the university to offer Chinese courses for the registered adult learners	Essentially a community Chinese language school <i>affiliated to and managed by the CI</i>
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At the administrative level, CSOL teachers all belonged to and were managed by the CI, so the first permission I needed was from the CI, or more specifically, a senior officer who held one of the highest positions in the CI and was responsible for the deployment and management of CSOL teachers. As an insider, I was allowed to approach the teachers and conduct my research in the CI very smoothly.

Although all the CSOL teachers were managed by the CI, they were responsible for delivering different types of courses, which meant their actual workplaces varied. Referring to Table 4.2, course types [1] and [2] were provided in and managed by different British local schools, course type [4] was provided for university students under the regulation of the university, and only course types [3] and [5] were directly affiliated to the CI. Having the permission of the CI manager meant that I was allowed to interview CSOL teachers, invite them to provide reflective materials, and observe their classes only in schools directly affiliated to the CI (i.e. course types [3] and [5]). If I planned to investigate their courses of types [1], [2] and [4], I needed further permission from the university and a number of British local schools where they taught. However, I was not allowed to observe in these places, due to regulations protecting the privacy of students, and this was especially stringent regarding children in the local schools. Furthermore, as a CSOL teacher in the CI myself, I was later assigned to teach course type [3] meaning that when the data collection formally began, my timetable clashed substantially with most of my participants' schedules (i.e. Leo, Rose, Mary and Lily), making it impossible for me to do the classroom observations. These barriers explain why classroom observation was excluded from my data collection methods.

4.8.1.2 Approaching the participants and building rapport

Before describing the formal procedure of recruiting participants following ethical approval, I will first give an account of a more time-consuming and effortful work phase – approaching the potential participants and developing rapport with them. This preparatory action started early (around October 2015, when I selected the CI as my study site). As introduced in section 4.5, the research protocol included a series of

interviews (each one lasting one hour or even longer) with each participant over an extended period of time, meaning that the study required sustained and intensive participant engagement and was highly likely to use a large amount of their time and energy (Dörnyei, 2007). Therefore, it was crucial for the researcher to establish very good rapport with the participants (Dörnyei, 2007, p.136), to gain their trust and be seen as someone with whom the participants feel comfortable spending time with, talking, and sharing information about their lives (Montgomery, 2012, p.145, based on Liamputtong, 2007, p.56). Instead of asking the manager of the CI to help me circulate the invitation emails (which typically yield low response rates), I talked in person to all the CSOL teachers in the CI (who were also my potential participants). Face-to-face communication is preferred in the Chinese cultural context, because it is seen to demonstrate the requester's earnestness and respect to the person being asked, and it helps to establish a good relationship (Song, Ma and Peng, 2006). In addition, as this research intended to explore the TI formation of Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers/volunteers and local CSOL teachers, the recruiting work had to be conducted in a purposive way by myself to make sure that CSOL teachers of all three types were included.

Thanks to a variety of activities (such as group discussions, professional training courses and other cultural events) organised by the CI at that time, I was fortunate to have the chance to meet every CSOL teacher in the CI and to communicate with them one by one. Moreover, as a novice teacher myself, I was not assigned to teach during the year from October 2015 to October 2016 (the year before data collection) and was encouraged by the CI manager to observe other CSOL teachers' classes as part of my own professional development (this mainly refers to teachers delivering course type [3] at the weekend Chinese language and cultural school for young people). When auditing their classes, I seized the opportunity to converse with them, introduce my research and invite them to participate in my study. I also helped as a temporary teaching assistant in some of their classes (i.e. for Rose and Mary). In these ways, I was able to build a rapport with the CSOL teachers, gain their trust and learn some background information about them, which naturally informed and fed into my later data collection stage.

4.8.1.3 Recruiting the participants

Potential research participants must be informed of the purpose of the study, which is usually stated on a consent form approved by the university or institutional review boards (Creswell, 2014, p.78). The informed consent is “an autonomous authorisation which requires awareness, assent and absence of duress” and requires the researcher to “discuss in some detail what each of these involves” (Martina and Marker, based on Faden and Beauchamp, 1986). The process not only guarantees a participant’s right and opportunity to say yes to their engagement in the study, but also ensures their freedom to say no and opt out of the research (Bourke and Loveridge, 2014, p.152). After a long period of being in communication with the CSOL teachers in the selected CI, nine of them already had a general idea of my study and had expressed their interest in participation. Once ethical approval had been granted by the university and the department (see Appendix 1), I provided these potential participants with the formal project information sheet (see Appendix 2) and the participant consent form (see Appendix 3). After I explained the research purpose, the preliminary procedures to collect the data, the nature and content of work they were expected to do and the likely time commitment, the benefits and the risks they might encounter, and how the data would be managed and used later, they re-affirmed their willingness to participate in the study and were invited to sign the consent forms. Although the signed consent forms confirmed participants’ agreement to be involved in this study, it was explicitly reiterated to them that their participation was entirely voluntary and they had the right to withdraw from the research at any time without giving reasons.

Initially, a total of nine participants were engaged in the study, but four of these withdrew half-way due to personal reasons. The remaining five people proceeded to complete the study and their stories are presented in this set of case studies. The next section will outline the background information of these five participants, and their names have been anonymised.

4.8.1.4 Description and background of the participants

Table 4.3 below displays five participants’ background information. One thing needs to be clarified: the number codes in the last column “Duties in CI” refer to the course types (introduced in Table 4.1) for which the participants were responsible.

Table 4.3: Background of the participants

Sources	Names (pseudonyms)	Gender	Age	Academic background	Number of years teaching (at the time of final interview)	Working status in CI	Duties in CI (course types*)
Hanban-assigned CSOL volunteers	Coco	F	20s	Bachelor: TCSOL; Master: TCSOL	≥ 2 years in TCSOL	Full-time	[1]
Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers	Leo	M	40s	Bachelor: Chinese language and literature; Master: Modern mandarin Chinese grammar	≈ 18 years in TCSOL	Full-time	[3] [4] [5]
Local CSOL teachers	Rose	F	40s	Bachelor: TESOL; Master: Education (in the UK)	≈ 3 years in TESOL; ≥ 10 years in TCSOL	Part-time	[2] [3]
	Mary	F	30s	Bachelor: Electronic information; Master 1: Business and marketing (in the UK); Master 2: Business and marketing (in the UK)	≈ 1 year in university; ≈ 1.5 years in TESOL; ≥ 3 years in TCSOL	Part-time	[2] [3]
	Lily	F	40s	Bachelor: Early childhood education	≥ 10 years in teaching children; ≈ 8 years in TCSOL	Part-time	[2] [3]

* Number codes refer to the course types (introduced in Table 4.1) which the participants taught.

As Table 4.3 shows, four out of the five participants were female teachers. Participants came from three sources: Hanban-assigned CSOL teachers and volunteers and local CSOL teachers. Most participants had formal education or professional training in languages, education or related fields, including TCSOL (e.g. Coco), linguistics (e.g. Leo), education (e.g. Lily) and TESOL (e.g. Rose); only one participant's academic background was unrelated to TCSOL (Mary had specialised in business and marketing). According to the official publication *Hanban-assigned CSOL Volunteers Administration Regulations (2008)*, Hanban-assigned volunteers are usually recent graduates or current postgraduate students, so typically they are quite young (early 20s) and have limited practical CSOL teaching experience (generally under three years), as is the case with the participant Coco. Although Coco was called 'volunteers', she in fact had a regular income and certain subsidies from Hanban. In this CI, Coco was mainly responsible for teaching CCs (course type [1]) in a local secondary school and was also required to work in the CI office for a certain number of hours every week.

The *Hanban-assigned CSOL Teachers Administration Regulations (2017)* specify that only those teachers with more than two years' practical experience in TCSOL or those who have already been teachers in Chinese universities or schools are eligible for dispatch as "Hanban-assigned teachers". Therefore, Hanban-assigned teachers were typically more experienced than other volunteer CSOL teachers. Leo, for instance, has been engaged in CSOL teaching for over 15 years. Compared with volunteers, Hanban-dispatched teachers received higher salaries and larger subsidies. They are required by the *Regulations (2017)* to teach (or undertake other types of related work) for no less than 20 hours per week. In this study site, the participant Hanban-assigned teachers were also required to work in the CI office when they did not have classes. For example, Leo was responsible for three types of Chinese courses (Types [3], [4], [5]) for both children and adults, and he taught in the evenings and at weekends; such an 'irregular' timetable proved to be a heavy and tiring workload for him.

The constitution governing local CSOL teachers' activities is rather complicated. Although Hanban has advocated since 2012 to strengthen the professional training and cultivation of local CSOL teachers (Zhai, 2015), no official document has yet been issued to specify the standards of employing these teachers. Standards largely depend on the CIs themselves (Xu and Bao, 2019). As apparent in Table 4.3, local CSOL

teachers were mainly responsible for teaching Chinese language classes in the language and cultural school for young people on weekends (course type [3]) and organising Chinese cultural activities in British local schools (course type [2]). In the study site, the three local teachers were paid hourly with rates ranging from around £8.00 to £15.00, depending on the type of work. They did not have fixed contracts with the CIs. The management of these local CSOL teachers was relatively loose, and unlike the Hanban-assigned teachers and volunteers, they were not required to work in the CI's office. With regard to the work status of the participants, all the Hanban-assigned volunteers and teachers were full-time teachers, while all the local teachers were (and could only be) part-time teachers.

4.8.2 Stage two: During data collection

It is not uncommon for researchers to adjust and improve their research design during or after the practical data collection work. This was the case for my study. Before introducing the data collection work, I will briefly refer back to my initial research aim and design and describe minor changes which had to be made, explaining the reasons and justifications for this and specifying how the data collection was modified accordingly. Clarifying these points will also explain why the ethical approval (both information sheet and consent form, see Appendices 2 and 3) refer to CSOL teachers' reflection processes rather than their 'teacher identity'.

4.8.2.1 Introduction of the initial research and the adjustments made

As indicated above, the present study focused on the process of CSOL teachers' identity formation and its implications for their professional development. However, my original research purpose was to study the relationship between CSOL teachers' reflection processes and their professional development. It was the data collection work itself that served to enrich my thinking and inspire changes to the research aim and design.

In terms of methods, both the initial and amended research plans adopted interviews as the main data collection method, with the first interview inviting participants to narrate their previous experiences, and subsequent interviews focusing partially on their new experiences and partially on further elaboration of their history. Both research designs specified reflective journals as a supplementary data collection method, envisaging that

these would provide triggers to treat as probes for more in-depth narration during the interviews. These similarities made it possible for me to make some adjustments to the methodology without the need to seek fresh ethical approval from the university.

The adjustment of my original research aim was made for the following reasons. After the first round of interviews, I came to realise that the participants' narrations of their past education and teaching experiences produced data which were far richer than the scope of the initial research focus (teacher reflections). Moreover, the participants' psychological changes over their lives and careers and specifically their shifts in perceptions and practices under the influence of certain people and contexts all emerged broadly in chronological order during the interviews, conveying the trajectory of how they developed to become CSOL teachers. In these circumstances, I wanted to make the most of the valuable data by altering my research topic direction to focus on the evolution of CSOL teacher identities instead of merely their reflection processes. However, as the first round interviews each took just one hour, the narration by the participants with very rich teaching and life experiences (e.g. Leo had taught CSOL for more than 15 years) was quite general because there was not time to dig deeper into their history. To remedy this, I allocated much more time in the subsequent interviews to probing participants' past experiences. When I decided to make these revisions to my research topic, I communicated the changes to my participants immediately, ensured that they understood, and thus obtained their informed consent to continue with the modified study.

The next section details the data collection procedures for this study, encompassing the gathering of oral narrative data via a series of interviews. As already stated, no reflective journals were provided by the participants.

4.8.2.2 Collecting oral narrative data through interviews

This section describes the detailed procedures for collecting oral narrative data through the interviews.

1) Making the interview plan

Having decided to collect data via interviews, it was essential to draft an interview plan, and determine the aims, procedures and duration of the interviews. The first round was for unstructured interviews which sought to elicit participants' narration of their past

experiences. The aims for subsequent interviews were two-fold: 1) probe prior experiences via semi-structured interviews; and 2) elicit newly emerged experiences through unstructured components. Each participant was expected to be interviewed three to four times, with each interview lasting 60 to 90 minutes (the number and duration of interviews had been negotiated and agreed with the participants). The entire data collection period was intended to take seven months from January to July 2017. The interviews were scheduled at regular intervals of six to eight weeks according to each participant’s teaching calendar.

The interview processes and procedures are set out in Table 4.4 below; these were largely followed in practice. As the interviews were progressively focused (i.e. subsequent interviews were heavily informed by previous interviews), the post-interview work was of critical importance. This work included the pre-coding in which probe questions were developed via careful preliminary analysis of the raw data. Pre-coding is detailed further in section 4.9.1. The next section gives an account of the data collection fieldwork with each participant.

Table 4.4: Interview procedures

Interview focus and procedures	Post-interview work
<p><u>Interview 1</u></p> <p>Participants narrate their past experiences (e.g. upbringing, learning, teaching, life experiences, etc.).</p>	<p>Transcribing;</p> <p>Sorting the data chronologically;</p> <p>Reading and reflecting on data;</p> <p>Writing analytic memos;</p> <p>Identifying issues of potential interests and developing probe question list.</p>
<p><u>Interview 2</u></p> <p>Probing participants’ past experiences based on the data collected last time;</p> <p>Participants narrate newly occurred experiences during the interval since the last interview.</p>	<p>Transcribing;</p> <p>Sorting the data chronologically;</p> <p>Reading and reflecting on data;</p> <p>Writing analytic memos;</p> <p>Identifying issues of potential interests and developing probe question list.</p>

<p><u>Interview 3</u></p> <p>Probing participants' past experiences based on the data collected last time;</p> <p>Participants narrate newly occurred experiences during the interval since the last interview.</p>	<p>Transcribing;</p> <p>Sorting the data chronologically;</p> <p>Reading and reflecting on data;</p> <p>Writing analytic memos;</p> <p>Identifying issues of potential interests and developing probe question list.</p>
<p><u>Interview 4</u> (maybe)</p> <p>Probing participants' past education and teaching experiences based on previous data collected.</p> <p>Participants narrate newly occurred experiences during the interval since the last interview.</p> <p>Summary.</p>	<p>Transcribing;</p> <p>Sorting the data chronologically;</p> <p>Reading and reflecting on data;</p> <p>Writing analytic memos;</p> <p>Identifying issues of potential interests;</p> <p>Coding and analysing.</p>

2) Contacting the participants and conducting the interviews

Once the interview procedures were established, I contacted the participants to arrange specific dates and times. Participants were free to use Chinese, English or a mixture of both languages during the interviews. All preferred to use Chinese but occasionally expressed some words and phrases in English. It was assumed that speaking Chinese, the first language for interviewees and interviewer, increased participants' comfort levels and allowed the researcher and participants alike to express themselves in a more relaxed and accurate way, thus enhancing the prospects of generating richer data (Squires, 2008, p.272). Table 4.5 below reports the scheduled interview dates, duration of each interview (with the length of transcripts represented in Chinese characters) and the types of data collected.

Table 4.5: Interviews scheduled during data collection

	Hanban-assigned Volunteers			Hanban-assigned Teachers			Local Teachers								
	Coco			Leo			Rose			Mary			Lily		
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Interviews (date/time/ word length of the transcripts in Chinese characters)	10/Feb/ 2017 (70min, 15831)	07/Jun/ 2017 (51min, 13204)	05/Dec/ 2017 (102min, 26127)	14/Feb/ 2017 (61min, 13398)	02/May/ 2017 (54min, 12966)	04/Jul/ 2017 (63min, 17490)	09/Jan/ 2017 (64min, 10116)	23/Sep/ 2017 (116min, 29323)		24/Feb/ 2017 (66min, 18398)	17/Jun/ 2017 (113min, 28786)		05/Mar/ 2017 (45min, 8173)	27/May/ 2017 (50min, 14400)	21/Jul/ 2017 (46min, 12918)
Classroom observations			Feedback offered by her mentor in a British local school												
Online Chinese teaching channel on Youtube			11 video clips on Youtube from 05/Oct/2017 to 09/Dec/2017												
Other documents										Teaching plan 04/Mar/2017	Teaching plan 06/May/2017				

As Table 4.5 shows, all participants were interviewed at least twice, with each interview taking no less than 45 minutes. Those participants who were interviewed only twice usually had a relatively long second interview (e.g. Rose and Mary) to ensure that the information gathered was sufficient to reveal the process of their TI formation. The participants sometimes were happy to exceed the estimated duration (1~1.5 hours) if their timetable allowed and/or because they were still highly engaged and motivated and wished to share more of their experiences. Although the interview rounds were expected to be finished within seven months in total, each participant's individual circumstances varied greatly. Some completed within six months (e.g. Leo, Mary and Lily), while others took an eight-month period (e.g. Rose) or even longer (e.g. Coco took 12 months, spanning the entire period of her teaching in the UK). The first round of interviews finished between January and March 2017 broadly as planned, but subsequent rounds diverged in accordance with participants' timetables and preferences. The Hanban-assigned CSOL teacher (Leo) and volunteer (Coco) went back to China soon after their last interviews, while the other three local CSOL teacher participants remained in the UK, making it possible for me to conduct supplementary interviews during the data analysis period, after the end of the main data collection period (as will be detailed later). This flexible approach to sustained longitudinal investigations respected the participants' timetables, minimised the impact of the research on their personal lives, and helped to guarantee that the dataset was rich enough to meet the study's aims. However, it did lead to the problem of "absence of analytic closure", meaning that it was difficult to decide "when exactly it is appropriate to start making interpretations and writing up the results" (Dörnyei, 2007, p.87, based on Thomson and Holland, 2003). On reflection, this was one of the most challenging aspects of my analysis.

Table 4.5 specifies the four types of data actually collected during the study. Of these, the interview tape recordings were the main planned data sources, while the other three were emergent data sources supplied by Coco and Mary. No reflective journals were provided by the participants. In the last interview with Coco, she voluntarily offered 20 classroom observation feedback forms provided by her mentor in the British local school where she taught (Coco was responsible for course type [1]; see Table 3.3). She also showed me 11 video clips (published on YouTube) which she made for her classroom teaching and verbally consented to the use of these data in the present study.

Mary also provided two of her teaching plans as evidence of her participation in a CSOL teacher training programme. In section 4.9, I will report how these emergent data were analysed and used to triangulate other data in this study.

4.8.3 Stage three: After the data collection

According to the design of the present study, the data collection period ended in December 2017 and was followed by promptly by coding and analysis. In order to avoid misunderstanding and over-interpreting the accounts of my participants, I consulted them several times during the coding and analysis stage to check my interpretations (i.e. the “member checks” proposed by Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The checking was sometimes done via recorded voice messages, and in some instances led to additional interviews (listed in Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Interviews scheduled after planned data collection

	Local Teachers								
	Rose			Mary			Lily		
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
Interviews	24/Feb/ 2018 (23min, 1235)	10/Mar/ 2018 (18min, 1801)	05/Apr/ 2019 (41min, 7645)	27/May/ 2018 (85min, 14933)			24/Jul/ 2018 (84min, 15207)		

As mentioned above, three participants (Rose, Mary and Lily) remained in the UK following the main data collection period, so further contact with them was easy and all three were enthusiastic and willing to continue their involvement in my research. It was in these participants’ supplementary interviews that very significant changes to my participants’ identities became apparent. Further, it was my post-interview checking and analysis of these narratives that particularly influenced my interpretation of how these participants’ identities had changed and grown, thus informing my thesis overall. Given that identity development is a constantly evolving process, the sustained interviewing phase seemed to support the three participants to ponder ideas deeply and express them fully, allowing the researcher-author to capture their thoughts and experiences as

accurately and completely as possible. However, this additional data collection also brought about challenges. Sometimes the participants would revise or contradict their statements, so there was no definitive closure of the analysis. Also, as observed by Dörnyei (2007, p.87), the next round of data gathering can substantially modify the researcher's provisional interpretations, thus challenging the stability of the interpretations; this problem also led to a prolonged analysis phase in the present study. The next section will provide a detailed description of the data analysis process.

4.9 Data analysis

As reported in section 4.8.2.2, in addition to the expected interview transcripts, three other sources of data emerged during the data collection: 20 classroom observation feedback forms and 11 video clips, both provided by Coco, and two teaching plans offered by Mary. As Coco's videos were recorded only to show that she employed the 'flipped classroom' pedagogical strategy during her teaching, and Mary's documented teaching plans were simply to evidence her participation in a CSOL teacher training programme (detailed later in Chapter 5 and Chapter 8), these data were not regarded as sufficiently relevant to the current study to merit close analysis. Ultimately, two types of data were admitted for analysis and presentation, namely the oral narratives derived from the interviews of all participants, and the written feedback on classroom observations by Coco's teaching mentor. The next section describes the approach to analysing the interview transcripts, which had three stages: pre-coding, initial coding and analysis, and second-level coding and analysis. Following this, the analysis of the feedback forms will be described.

4.9.1 Stage one: Pre-coding

As mentioned in section 4.5 (research methods), the data collection in this study was progressively focused, meaning that the former interviews informed the latter. Questions to be posed in the subsequent interviews were largely prompted by the contents of the previous interview narratives. Therefore, after each interview, I conducted some preliminary process work (i.e. pre-coding) to ensure that the data collection could progress. The pre-coding was thus interwoven with the data collection in this study, and involved four tasks: 1) transcribing the data; 2) sorting the data

chronologically; 3) repeatedly reading and reflecting on the data; and 4) identifying interesting-looking issues and developing lists of probe questions for the next interview. Each of these steps is described in more detail as follows.

4.9.1.1 *Transcribing the data*

Interview recordings constitute the largest and most important source of data in the present research, so the first step was to transcribe them into a textual format that could be used for analysis. However, transcription is a time-consuming process: a one-hour interview may take as long as five to seven hours to transcribe (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 246). Therefore, the first issue considered was how to improve the efficiency of the transcribing work. For this task, I adopted software called Aboboo (see Figure 4.1). Although it was originally designed to facilitate foreign language learning, two of its functions make it suitable for transcribing: (1) decomposing long utterances intelligently (i.e. automatic splitting of audio/video files into component sentences, eliminating the need to manually parse utterances); and (2) dictation (i.e. providing free-length sentence dictation). Using the dictation mode, by setting an appropriate interval time (five seconds) between the sentences played back for typing, I avoided having to pause and re-start the recordings repeatedly and the need to switch between different windows, thus saving considerable time.



Figure 4.1: Screenshot depicting the use of Aboboo to transcribe interview recording

There have long been concerns about the loss of information through the transcription process (Crabtree, 1999; Dörnyei, 2007), which is usually in three areas: 1) the nonverbal aspects (e.g. body language, facial expressions, gestures); 2) the suprasegmentals (e.g. stress, intonation); and 3) speech that is “imperfect” in some ways (e.g. false starts, word repetition) (Dörnyei, 2007). In order to preserve the richest set of information, I adopted certain strategies during data collection: writing field notes of all the noticeable reactions of my participants during the interviews, which were later added into my transcription. With a good knowledge of the contextual background, I transcribed all the data myself, ensuring that all important details were covered. The interview transcripts comprised a total of 261,951 Chinese characters (around 300 pages). The translation of these transcripts will be detailed in section 4.9.5.

4.9.1.2 Sorting the data chronologically and defining phases

The raw text in the untreated transcripts was rich but ‘messy’ and needed preliminary processing prior to coding. As this research aims to explore the process of CSOL teachers’ identity formation, I worked on the assumption that the final thesis would describe and evidence the changes in participants’ teacher identities with the passage of time. Therefore, I chose to reorder and adjust the transcript contents chronologically. Based on the first round of interview transcripts where participants narrated their life experiences from their childhood to the time of their participation in the research, I built up their individual profiles, developed clear timelines of their life experiences, divided these experiences into different phases, and sorted the transcripts into each phase for the convenience of coding and analysis later on. The data emerging in subsequent interviews were re-ordered in a similar fashion and added to corresponding phases.

4.9.1.3 Reading and reflecting on data

After chronologically ordering the transcripts, in the third step, I spent substantial time carefully reading and examining the data, phase by phase, i.e. ‘immersing’ in the data (Wallis, 2010) and getting to know the narratives thoroughly. Immersion in the data is a crucial and indispensable preparatory stage, as it gives researchers important “first impressions” (Stake, 1995, p.71) which will shape their thinking about the data and influence their ways to code the data. As Richards (2005) pointed out:

“There is no alternative to reading and reflecting on each data record, and the sooner the better. This is purposive reading. Aim to question the record and add to it, to comment on it and to look for ideas that lead you up from the particular text to themes in the project” (p.69).

Through purposive reading and reflecting on the transcripts, I became more familiar with the data and gained a preliminary sense of some key themes and emerging issues (Dörnyei, 2007).

4.9.1.4 Identifying issues of potential interest and developing probe question list

When reading the transcripts, I highlighted places which looked interesting and had potential to develop into themes, and I recorded my thoughts and analytic memos (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Dörnyei, 2007). As the interviews were progressively focused (i.e. each interview informed the one that followed) (Silverman, 2000; Verschuren, 2003) both within and across the cases, the highlighted points were also of great value because they fed into the formulation of questions to ask in the subsequent interviews. Additionally, I took the opportunity to highlight narratives of experiences which were sketchily recounted by participants but which I considered to be of great potential significance based on my analysis of the data; these points were also added to the list of questions to elicit further elaboration in the next interview.

After collecting the data and completing the pre-coding, I started the main coding and analysis work, which will be detailed in the following section.

4.9.2 Stage two: Initial coding and analysis

Coding is defined as “the process of organizing the data by bracketing chunks (or text or image segments) and assigning a word or phrase to represent a category in order to make sense of it” (Creswell and Creswell, 2017, p.247, based on Rossman and Rallis, 2012). Codes, therefore, are labels or tags attached to particular pieces of information making them manageable and malleable (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Dörnyei, 2007). Generally, there are two types of codes (or categories). The first type is the “*a priori* code” (Willis, 2014, p.419) or “prefigured category” (Crabtree and Miller, 1992, p.151). These are codes/categories that already existed in theoretical models or literature prior to the data analysis (Willis, 2014; Creswell and Poth, 2017). Another type is the “inductive code” (Willis, 2014, p.419) or “emergent category”. These are

codes/categories emerging from the data analysis process itself. This study adopted these two approaches in combination. In order to reflect the participants' views with the utmost fidelity (Creswell and Poth, 2017), I did the initial coding work on the transcripts of one of my five cases (case Rose) in an inductive way first, without using specific *a priori* categories. Moreover, I had not yet come across the research article in which the proposed thematic categories for language teachers' identities were most closely related to my study, so it is fair to say that at the initial coding stage, the "contamination" and influence of the predetermined categories on my perspective (Morse, 1994; Patton, 1990; Silverman, 2000) were rather limited.

For the purposes of qualitative analysis, initially I elected to code the transcripts manually (aided by Microsoft Word functionality) for the following reasons. Although Nvivo software has long been regarded as a powerful qualitative analytic tool and was highly recommended for qualitative researchers (Bandura, 2006; Dörnyei, 2007; Saldaña, 2015), its complex instructions and multiple functions were very challenging for me when I began reviewing and coding my first case and had only rudimentary ideas of what kinds of themes would be generated. To avoid expending more mental energy on the software than the data, I decided to start coding manually, making use of certain functions in Microsoft Word. Although such an approach is relatively old-fashioned, it has its merits: it was familiar to me, and enabled me to apply codes directly to the textual data in a confident and systematic manner (Saldaña, 2015, p.29).

This study adopted 'thematic analysis' to analyse the interview transcripts, "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.79). The thematic analysis proceeded directly after the coding for case Rose. As mentioned earlier, in the pre-coding stage, I had already reorganised the participants' accounts chronologically and sorted them into different phases. The initial coding started with an examination of the data phase by phase. Take case Rose for example: firstly, I wrote down a list of words and phrases (initial codes) identifying an array of features of the data in each phase. These codes were descriptive at first (e.g. see Table 4.7: "being considerate; care about students' feelings", extracted from Phase 4). Then, I reviewed these preliminary codes and refined them to be more abstract (e.g. see Table 4.7: "student-centredness" extracted from Phase 4). Next, I compared the generated codes from different phases, to ascertain whether there were codes recurring

in all or most of the phases and revolving around similar topics. For instance, the code “student-centredness” recurred in Phases 4 and Phase 8.3 of case Rose, and could be transformed into an overarching theme/category related to “teacher-student relationship” (or the language teacher’s “student-related identity”). With the passage of time, Rose showed a “growing student-centred orientation”, forming a sub-theme under this category.

Following this technique, I identified several categories which roughly corresponded to the elements of language teaching and dimensions of language teachers’ competence. With these categories in mind, I reviewed more literature and came across a framework proposed by Pennington and Richards (2016) categorising language teachers’ identity into eight aspects. Given the similarities between my own coding work and their framework, and the potential parallels I had noticed between case Rose and other four cases (based on my knowledge and familiarity with the data at the pre-coding stage), I decided to fine-tune Pennington and Richards’ framework on the basis of my own codes and adopted this as a template to code the remaining four cases. In the next section, I will describe how I used the template to process my data and how I dealt with the problems which emerged.

Table 4.7: Excerpt of initial coding

Phases	Transcripts	Initial codes		Sub-theme	Theme/Category
		1st time codes (descriptive)	2nd time codes (abstract)		
Phase 4	“给成人上课的时候, 我会特别注意, 不会问太 personal 的问题。…… 还有就是必须要考虑成人的面子, 这个 face 的问题。” (When giving classes to adults, I was particularly careful to avoid asking too personal questions. …… For adults, I must take into account of their “face” issue.)	Being considerate; Care about students’ feelings.	Student-centredness	Growing student-centred orientation	Teacher-student relationship /Student-related identity
Phase 8.3	“我更多的是以学生为中心。” (I was placing students at the centre more.)	Student-centredness	Student-centredness		

	<p>“我现在如果看到班上的孩子学得不太好，我都不会去特别苛责，我觉得我要尊重他，我要为孩子考虑一下，不能让孩子来适应你。”</p> <p>(Now, if I saw that students in my class didn't learn very well, I didn't blame them. I thought I should respect them, I should show more consideration for them and I should not ask them to adapt to me.)</p>	<p>Being tolerant and considerate;</p> <p>Respect students;</p> <p>Care about students' feelings.</p>	<p>Student-centredness</p>	
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4.9.3 Stage three: Second-level coding and analysis

In this stage, I adopted a template to help me code the remaining four cases. Although the use of pre-determined categories seems to be at odds with some qualitative research principles, the fact is that researchers seldom start data analysis with a blank slate and no initial ideas (Dörnyei, 2007). Moreover, “having a specific template of codes helps to carry out the initial coding of a large volume of text in a focused and time-efficient manner” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 253). Based on my initial coding and analysis of case Rose, and with reference to the framework of language teacher identity developed by Pennington and Richards (2016), I identified seven categories that might be used for data classification, including 1) personal/autobiographical, 2) professional, 3) disciplinary, 4) student-related, 5) context-related, 6) language-related, and 7) cultural/national identity. In this way, my coding work transformed from extracting emergent categories from data inductively, to a process of sorting data into pre-set categories deductively (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

However, problems gradually emerged when it came to analysis. Having categorised teachers' identities in a way that was too 'neat', I found that when trying to interpret the development of TI under each category, inevitably it was necessary to cite the content under other categories as well. Therefore, I modified the categories and made a synthesis of the themes (see Figure 4.2) and adopted them to restructure my data.

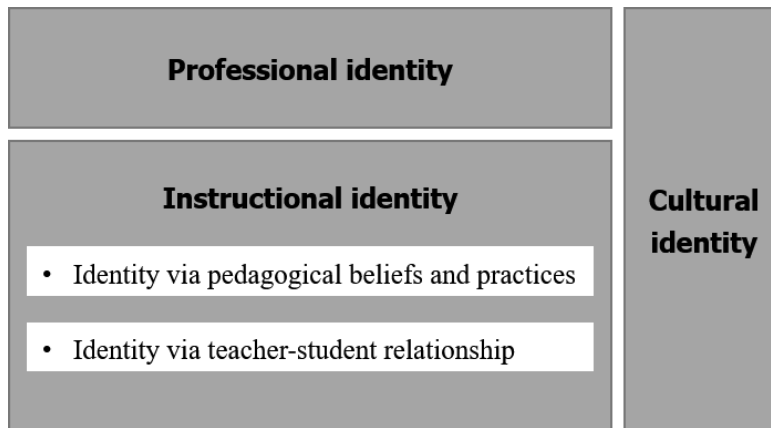


Figure 4.2: Themes to structure the data

Although manual coding using Microsoft Word did have its advantages in letting me code directly on the textual data and helping me develop a general sense of the categories and themes, as the amount of data to be coded grew, I switched to electronic coding using Nvivo (see Figure 4.3).

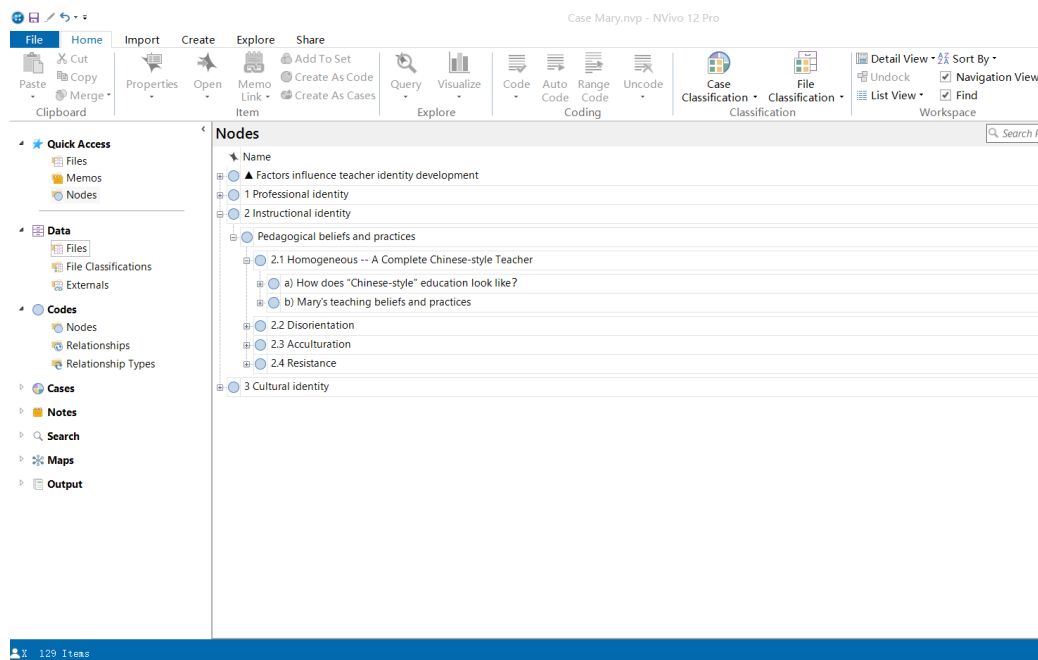


Figure 4.3 An example screen shot of Case Mary's coding in the NVivo 12 software

4.9.4 Stage four: Analysis of the feedback forms

Due to the practical constraints mentioned earlier, I did not have the chance to observe Coco's teaching practices personally in the British local school. Therefore, the

classroom observation feedback forms provided by Coco's colleagues and mentor made up for this insufficiency to a small extent, and corroborated some of Coco's narration. The approach taken to analyse the feedback forms was 'content analysis', "a research method that detects, records, and analyses the presence of specified words or concepts in a sample of forms of communication" (Sproule, 2010, p.324). A number of themes were identified, representing Coco's instructional characteristics such as having a good relationship with students, being good at motivating them, being 'firm but fun', and being pedagogically skilled.

4.9.5 Stage five: Data translation

Translation, according to Larson (1998), involves "transferring the meaning of the source language into receptor language" (p.3). There has been increasing concern and attention to issues of language translation in academic research because of burgeoning cross-language research (especially qualitative research) in which "study participants and researchers speak different languages" (Nurjannah et al., 2014, p.1) or "the target language for publication is different from the source of data" (Nurjannah et al., 2014, p.1). Unlike quantitative researchers who deal primarily with numerical and statistical data, qualitative researchers usually work with linguistic data (words, sentences and longer narratives), requiring them to interpret the meanings of participants' words (Fenna, Tineke, Hans, and Dorly, 2010). Therefore, it is especially important in cross-language qualitative studies that speech or writing is translated and interpreted in the correct way.

There are several issues researchers need to consider when approaching a translation task. The first one is the appropriate time to translate the data. Generally, there are three distinct points in the research process for data translation: before analysis, during analysis, or after analysis (Suh et al., 2009). Suh et al. (2009) suggested that translation should be done during the data analysis in order to ensure the authenticity of the findings. Larkin et al. (2007) also indicated that if the translation takes place too early before the data analysis, some of the meanings might be lost, especially those hidden behind the participants' explicit expressions. In my study, the data were translated from Chinese into English after I completed the coding and analysis, because it was important

to ensure that the data were precisely understood and interpreted authentically in their original language (my own first language).

The second issue to be considered is who should do the translation. An interpreter, i.e. a person who translates the research data from one language to another (Josephine and Maurice, 2010), is frequently employed in cross-cultural qualitative research, but this decision should be made cautiously. When considering an interpreter, researchers should think carefully about the theoretical or philosophical approaches applied in the study (Adamson and Donovan, 2002; Esposito, 2001; Temple, 2002; Temple and Young, 2004; Twinn, 1997). It is suggested that professional interpreters with officially accredited language proficiency could be used (Nurjannah et al., 2014), but these are more appropriate in research which supports an objective epistemology seeking to uncover an “existing truth”, rather than in studies which take the constructivist or interpretive stance seeking to generate theories (Temple and Young, 2004). In the latter type of studies, interpreters are highly likely to be influenced by the sociocultural world they are situated in and thus colour the data they interpret with their own perspectives, attitudes and experiences (Adamson and Donovan, 2002; Squires, 2008, 2009; Temple, 2002; Temple and Young, 2004). In order to avoid such risks, I did the translation work myself and I will detail my strategies next.

The third problem to address is the *process* of translation. There are two ways to translate: forward and back(ward). Forward translation is defined as “the process of translating data from the source language to the target language” (Nurjannah et al., 2014, p.1). Back(ward) translation, is just the opposite, the translation of the target language back to the original language of the data (Chen and Boore, 2009; Maneesriwongul and Dixon, 2004). Ideally, it is advocated that forward translation and backward translation should both be used in order to ensure the validity of translation (Maneesriwongul and Dixon, 2004). However, it has been argued that the forward-backward technique is actually not very effective especially in reducing the problems associated with linguistic or cultural differences (Su and Parham, 2002), nor can it guarantee conceptual equivalence (Nurjannah et al., 2014) – a phenomenon which was typical in my research. My participants tended to use idioms and proverbs specific to Chinese culture, and during interviews they would sometimes quote from ancient Chinese classics (e.g. *The Analects of Confucius*). Such phrases usually contain allusions and extended meanings

embedded in Chinese culture. In order to convey the complete connotations in my participants' accounts, I quoted these set phrases as they originally were in Chinese pinyin and characters, followed by a detailed description of their original and extended meanings, rather than just giving a (usually not equivalent) English translation. Additionally, the back-translation process is considered to be excessively time-consuming (Chen and Boore, 2009). My time was quite limited, therefore I adopted another strategy: consulting others with relevant expertise. One consultant is a Chinese scholar who gained a PhD degree in social science at a British university, and the other consultant is a native English speaker who was majored in Chinese language in the university and has lived in China for over five years. The data were sent to them (with names, institutions and cities anonymised) to seek their advice for improving the quality of the translations.

4.10 Enhancing the quality of the research

Although the terminology is somewhat contested (e.g. Winter, 2000; Stenbacka, 2001; Golafshani, 2003), the validity and reliability of qualitative research have long concerned researchers (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Dörnyei 2007; Duff 2008; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2002). Validity, according to Ary et al. (2002), concerns not only the extent to which a particular instrument measures what it intends to measure (see also Winter, 2000, p.1), but also the soundness of the interpretation and representation of the data collected (p.242). Reliability, or “trustworthiness” (as preferred by Lincoln and Guba, 1985), involves the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the data (see also Morse et al., 2002) and it is important in evaluating the worth of a research study. In the present study, a number of techniques were adopted in order to enhance the trustworthiness of the data.

Prolonged engagement, which means spending sufficient time in the research field observing and investigating the social settings and phenomena, and developing relationships with the members of the culture (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Prolonged engagement is one of the most distinctive features of the present study, reflected not

only in the data collection period (which was extended to 12 months from the original seven), but also by the nature and duration of preparatory work before formal data collection (14 months from October 2015 to December 2016). During this time I communicated with the CSOL teachers (potential participants), observed their classes, participated in their group discussions and professional training courses, and developed a strong and enduring rapport with the participants. However, this prolonged and in-depth involvement also increased the risk of research bias, which I tried to address (refer to the next point).

Reflexivity. “A researcher’s background and position will affect what they choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for this purpose, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusions” (Malterud, 2001, p.483-484). To overcome my bias and subjectivity particularly as an insider researcher, I adopted the following methods. Firstly, I tried my best to be open-minded, not to expect ‘desirable’ findings or ask leading questions during the interviews. Secondly, I tried to identify my tacit assumptions and unconscious bias through reviewing a body of literature and repeatedly reading the transcripts (as described earlier in section 4.3.4 “my role as researcher”) (Asselin, 2003). Thirdly, I discussed issues with my supervisors – individuals who are different from me in social and cultural background – and this process helped me ‘jump out’ of my pre-existing modes of thinking shaped by my cultural background. Fourthly, I discussed my research with my ‘critical friends’ (one is a Chinese scholar in social sciences but not in my own area, and the other is a British university engineering student) and gathered their opinions and perspectives about some of the phenomena I discovered during the study period, in order to avoid being locked into the thinking patterns determined by my own academic background.

Thick description. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) pointed out, thick description can be considered as a way of achieving a type of external validity. By describing a phenomenon in sufficient detail one can begin to evaluate the extent to which the

conclusions drawn are transferable to other times, settings, situations and people. Thanks to my prolonged engagement in the field, the present research yielded more than 261,900 Chinese characters (around 300 pages) of transcripts, enabling me to produce thick descriptions of five cases which allow readers to gauge the generalisability of the findings (especially the factors influencing the process of TI formation) to other contexts (Dörnyei, 2007; Duff, 2008; Richards, 2003).

Triangulation, which involves the use of multiple sources of data to explore and generate understanding (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Creswell, 2014). When designing the research, three different data collection methods (interviews, classroom observations and reflective journals) were envisaged to produce different kinds of data to improve the validity of this study. However, owing to practical barriers, the series of interviews with participants was the only method that took place. This drawback was to some extent ameliorated by some unplanned, emergent data: mentors' feedback forms and video clips (uploaded on YouTube) provided by Coco, and several teaching plans supplied by Mary.

Member-checking, which means to test the analytical categories, interpretations and conclusions with the participants who originally generated the data. This can be done both formally and informally as opportunities for member checks may arise during the normal course of observation and conversation. To avoid overinterpreting or misunderstanding my participants' accounts, I usually double-checked with them via text or voice messages (as explained in the section 4.8.3 "after the data collection") during the process of data analysis. However, member-checking can be problematic in that respondents may disagree with the researcher's interpretations. Then the question of whose interpretation should stand becomes an issue (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this study, member-checking was partially employed, meaning that instead of revealing all my interpretations and analysis to the participants, I asked for clarification only about the parts I was not sure of.

Although it is acknowledged that in qualitative research, bias and subjectivity will never be eliminated (Cohen et al., 2002, p.245), the combined use of the above techniques sought to enhance the quality and credibility of the present study.

4.11 Ethical Issues

Ethics concerns “the application of moral principles to prevent harming or wronging others, to promote the good, to be respectful and to be fair” (Sikes, 2004, p.25). When conducting research which involves people, ethical issues should be taken into account in order to protect their rights and interests as participants (Cohen et al., 2018; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Dörnyei, 2007). Here, I outline the steps taken to ensure the ethical integrity of the study.

Obtrusiveness. CSOL teachers working in the selected CI usually have heavy workloads (as detailed in the section 4.8.1.4 background of participants). However, the main research method I employed – interview – required extensive involvement which occupied considerable leisure time and was potentially tiring both physically and mentally. I was therefore very sensitive to the potential impact of my research on participant teachers’ work and personal lives. To minimise the problem, I consulted participants to ensure that all interviews were scheduled on dates and times that were most convenient for them, taking care to avoid highly stressful periods in the teaching calendar.

Face-threat. In the research interviews, participant teachers were asked to review their learning and teaching experiences and one of them offered the feedback forms completed by their professional mentors about their teaching performances. Due to the nature of these forms, the information was likely to identify shortcomings or areas for improvement in their teaching performances, and perhaps criticising the context. In Chinese culture, confessing one’s own weaknesses in public or in a written record that will later be revealed to others is an act that threatens ‘face’; similarly, those who point

out and discuss others' weaknesses may threaten others' faces (Wang, 2010; Zhang, 2009). In this case, as a researcher, I tried my best to be objective and not to judge their behaviours. All the people and institutions referred to in the interviews and documents were given pseudonyms in my research.

Anonymity. Notwithstanding the careful steps to anonymise all records, it cannot be guaranteed that participants' profiles will not be recognised by individuals familiar with the institution (Denscombe, 2002, Dörnyei, 2007, Duff, 2008). Accordingly, I warned the participants that this was a risk and obtained their informed consent. To further ensure their privacy, I double-checked whether there was anything inappropriate in their interviews or other documents that they did not want to make public. Moreover, all the anonymised data, including recordings, transcriptions and translations, were stored in an encrypted, password-protected electronic folder on the university computer system.

Confidentiality. Confidentiality is a vital issue for consideration in research. I assured my participants that all the data collected would be treated as confidential and would not be shared with other participants or any other third parties.

4.12 Limitations in the research design

The advantages of the qualitative approach, specifically the case study, made it the best choice to fulfil the purpose of the present study, i.e. produce thick description and in-depth data revealing the dynamics and complexity in the process of CSOL teachers' identity formation. Nevertheless, certain limitations to the approach should be addressed. The main reservation with case studies is the generalisability of the findings (Dörnyei, 2007, p.153), i.e. "the extent to which theory developed within one study may be exported ... to provide explanatory theory for the experiences of other individuals who are in comparable situations" (Horsburgh, 2003, p.311). Unlike quantitative research which studies the population at large in order to ensure statistical generalisability (Horsburgh, 2003), qualitative research "cannot be extended to wider populations with the same degree of certainty that quantitative analyses can" (Atieno,

2009, p.17). For this reason, the generalisability of the findings of this study are necessarily limited.

Another limitation comes from a lack of diversity in the research methods employed in the present study. Due to certain practical constraints (detailed in section 4.8.1.1), this study relies mainly on self-reported data obtained via participant interviews. There is an inherent risk that such data are not sufficiently accurate and complete, as the participants may “present themselves in a favourable light” (Newman et al., 2002, p.294) or reveal only those aspects of their teacher identities that they are aware of. Therefore, any future empirical study would be improved by incorporating multiple sources of data.

4.13 Summary

In this chapter, I have provided a detailed description of the research design and methodology. I began with a presentation of the main research purpose and four questions to be addressed by the study. After introducing the general philosophical paradigms, I explained the ontological and epistemological stances adopted in the study, and rationalised the selection of the qualitative research approaches (i.e. case study and narrative inquiry) and the specific methods employed in the study (i.e. interviews supplemented with reflective journals). Then I addressed the issues arising from my status as an insider researcher, followed by detailed information about the study site and the participants. This chapter also specified the procedures of data collection and analysis in detail. In the concluding sections, I set out the strategies to enhance the quality of this research, the ethical issues addressed and the limitations in the research design. The next five chapters will present the stories of the case study participants.

CHAPTER 5

CASE COCO

This chapter presents the story of Coco, a Hanban-assigned CSOL volunteer. Firstly, there is a brief introduction to relevant background information about Coco followed by a detailed account of the developmental process of her professional identity. The chapter then describes the acculturation process in Coco's instructional identity intertwined with changes in her cultural identity. The factors that have impacted on the formation of Coco's teacher identity are also discussed.

5.1 Profile of Coco

Coco was born in the 1990s. She started to learn English when she was in primary school (Phase 1). She entered University Q in the early 2010s, majoring in TCSOL (Phase 2). In her final year as an undergraduate, Coco signed up for the postgraduate admission examination which she successfully passed and obtained a place as a postgraduate student in University Y, again majoring in TCFL. Soon after she graduated with her first degree and before formally beginning postgraduate study, she was selected by Hanban as a CSOL volunteer and assigned to teach in Country N (Phase 3). In order to take up that opportunity, Coco successfully applied to defer her entry to University Y by one year, preserving her postgraduate admission qualification until she finished the Hanban programme the following year. Therefore, when Coco was working in Country N (Phase 3), she was also a deferred postgraduate student in University Y. Coco started her postgraduate studies after returning to China from Country N. From 2016 to 2017, Coco was assigned by Hanban for the second time to work in a CI in the UK and was responsible for the course type [1] (introduced in the Methodology chapter). It was during this period that she participated in my research and was interviewed three times. Figure 5.1 shows the timeline of Coco's experiences.

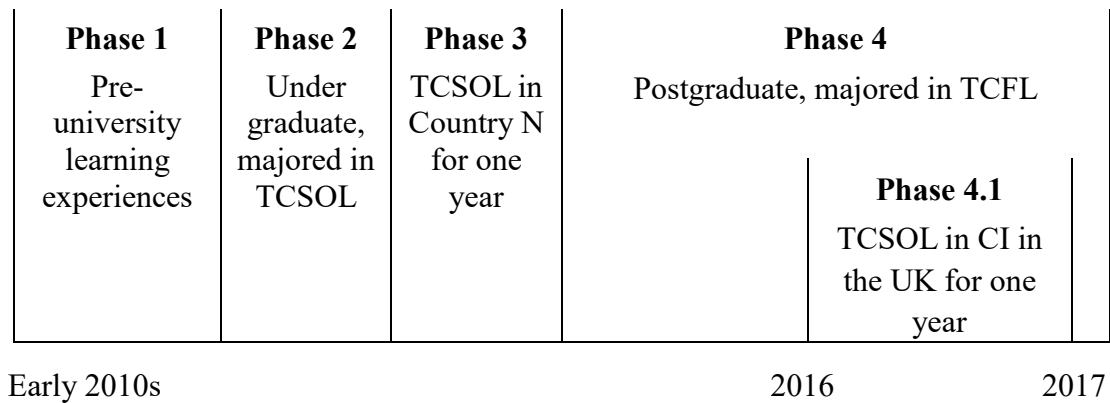


Figure 5.1: Timeline of Coco’s experiences

5.2 Professional identity

This section describes the developmental process of Coco’s professional identity, with a particular focus on how she negotiated the two sides of her dual identity as a CSOL teacher and as a postgraduate student in TCSOL and then grew to identify more closely with being a teacher.

5.2.1 Initial interest in TCSOL

Coco developed a genuine interest in TCSOL (Phase 1) and actively chose to study this major when she was admitted by the university. As she stated,

“I have *always been interested in* TCSOL, so I chose this major in the university. I have been studying TCSOL since my undergraduate period.” (Interview 05/Dec/2017) [All the italics in Case Coco were added by the author to emphasise Coco’s emotions and attitudes]

The act of choosing TCSOL was a significant statement of belonging (Clarke, 2008) and the impetus for her choice was both internal and external. Owing to her family background, i.e. her father was a teacher and role model (Clarke, 2008), Coco developed a sense of affinity to the teaching profession when she was still a child. She reported that she has been talkative since her early years and she grew interested in all kinds of “speakers”, particularly teachers. As she recalled,

“I like talking and I paid much attention to the speakers, especially teachers: how do they talk, how do they grasp people’s mind through words, and how to be a person who can talk interestingly and attract others – these were the issues I particularly concerned with.” (Interview 07/Jun/2017)

When Coco started to receive education in schools, she became interested in English and developed a good command of English. This self-perception of her aptitude made her feel that she was compatible with TCSOL work (Olsen, 2008). Two other factors played significant roles in Coco’s university major and career choice. She had a curiosity and drive to explore grammatical rules and gain linguistic insights. She was also attracted by the extrinsic benefits of studying TCSOL (Pennington, 2015) which would satisfy her “vanity” to communicate with people from other countries and to see the world. As she described,

“My English was *relatively good* at that time. ... Unlike most of my peers who felt it was a headache to learn grammar, personally I was *very interested* in learning grammar. I thought I could develop a more in-depth understanding of my mother language if I studied the TCSOL major. Moreover, I might communicate with foreigners and even teach them, which rather *appealed to my vanity* at that time. These were the reasons why I chose the TCSOL major.” (Interview 10/Feb/2017)

5.2.2 Growing commitment to TCSOL

After being admitted into the undergraduate programme (Phase 2), Coco became more passionate about and thus invested a lot of energy in studying TCSOL, particularly in Modern Mandarin Chinese grammar (MMCG), one of the compulsory courses of the TCSOL programme. As she explained,

“*Truly, I like TCSOL very much.* When I was in the university, I was *especially interested in MMCG*. I learnt it *very well*, and my teacher thought that I would be a *promising* student in this research area. Therefore, I decided to apply for a master’s programme in TCSOL later.” (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

Martel and Wang (2015), drawing on a body of literature on language teacher identity, highlighted that a person’s significant others, including teacher educators during teacher education, can exert influence on teachers’ identity trajectories (p.290). Coco’s

account shows that the recognition from her significant other, an expert teacher in the TCSOL area, boosted Coco's confidence and sense of competence and affirmed her determination to pursue TCSOL and advance her education in this area. As Coco recounted,

“Although I started to prepare for the postgraduate admission examination quite late, I quickly became *obsessed* with it, and I found it was *qi le wu qiong* (其乐无穷, a Chinese idiom which means an endless enjoyment). During the whole preparation period, the *enjoyment* I felt was far greater than the suffering. I felt I was *progressing* every day. Every time I read a book, I gained different ideas. I felt *busy but enriched* during that period of time. You know, I also applied for the selection of CSOL volunteers organised by Hanban after the postgraduate admission examination.” (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

Coco had invested great effort and mental strain in order to pass the postgraduate admission examination and be admitted to the TCSOL MA programme, but she agentively downplayed these aspects and offset them by focusing on the intrinsic enjoyment and benefits of the process (Clarke, 2008; Pennington, 2015). Indeed, she demonstrated her deepening commitment to TCSOL in practice by promptly applying for the Hanban scheme and was later selected and dispatched to teach Chinese in Country N.

5.2.2.1 *Teacher in the classroom, but student out of the classroom*

When reviewing her first assignment outside of China and her CSOL teaching experiences in Country N (Phase 3), Coco defined herself as “a teacher in the classroom, but a student out of the classroom” (Interview 05/Dec/2017). As a teacher, Coco was committed to her TCSOL job. Although there was no one observing or supervising her teaching, she treated her work very seriously. As she declared,

“Actually, the school where I was assigned to teach didn't understand Chinese as well as TCSOL at all. There was only me to teach Chinese, but *this doesn't mean that I could fool my students or lower the requirements on myself.*” (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

Coco reported that she invested a lot of energy in designing and delivering her classes. Faced with teaching different groups of students, she carefully considered the range of cognitive abilities and psychological characteristics in the different groups of students. She adapted curricula, set differentiated learning objectives, and selected appropriate teaching materials from the Hanban-set textbooks. These strategies evidence Coco's agency in mediating her practices as she aimed to live up to her sense of teacher identity in the classroom (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007; Benson, 2017).

Notwithstanding her clear commitment to TCSOL, manifested both in attitude and teaching practice, Coco's sense of identity as a CSOL teacher was apparently confined to the classroom environment. Internally, Coco still perceived herself as "a student out of the classroom". She reported that when she was talking with her students outside the class, she kept stressing that "you are a student, and I'm also a student, we are friends" (Interview 05/Dec/2017) in her efforts to forge a close relationship with her students. As she reflected,

"I still felt myself as *a student* and *an equal friend* of my students. Therefore, at that time, even if I didn't keep my promise with the students occasionally, I just felt a bit sad, but *didn't take it very seriously*. However, such *unprofessional* things *never happened* when I was later teaching in the UK." (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

As suggested by Hadfield (2017), "teacher identity is a construction made up of multiple selves ... which may coexist harmoniously or be in conflict" (p.255). It is particularly common for novice teachers to experience tensions in their identities, still feeling like students in their first years of teaching while having to take responsibilities as teachers (Fuller and Bown, 1975; Volkmann and Anderson, 1998; Pillen et al., 2013). When Coco was teaching CSOL independently in Country N as a Hanban-selected and authorised teacher, Coco was also officially a postgraduate student (with deferred commencement) in University Y. Her narratives indicate that during her first assignment Coco grappled with the two sides of her dual identity in a resilient way. On the one hand, she worked hard to perform as a professional CSOL teacher in the classroom; on the other hand, when she perceived that she did not fulfil her teacher

identity perfectly, e.g. failing to keep a promise to her students, she turned to her student identity for help. By viewing herself as an “equal friend” or peer of her students, her sense of guilt was mitigated. Therefore, although Coco was dedicated to TCSOL, the comparison with her second UK assignment, where “such *unprofessional* things *never happened*”, shows that her relationship with her teacher identity at this earlier stage was not yet highly robust.

Another factor influencing Coco’s fledgling professional identity as a teacher was her immigration status in Country N, where she held only a visitor visa and therefore felt she was “more like a tourist” (Interview 05/Dec/2017).

5.2.2.2 *Teacher in and out of the classroom*

In contrast to her experiences in Country N, when Coco was dispatched to teach in the UK (Phase 4.1), she manifested a stronger sense of identity as a CSOL teacher right from the beginning, even though she was still a postgraduate student in University Y at the time. She explained, “since my first day teaching Chinese in the British local school¹, I have positioned myself as a ‘*formal employee*’” (Interview 05/Dec/2017). Meanwhile, when communicating with the local residents in social contexts, Coco agentively chose to foreground her teacher identity over her student identity (Barkhuizen, 2017). As she reported,

“I knew many British people, when they asked me, I said I am a teacher, and *I didn’t say* I am a student. Actually, I am a student, but *I would say* I am a teacher.” (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

At this stage, Coco explicitly defined herself as a teacher and consciously tried to live up to the identity of “a teacher in and out of the classroom” (Interview 05/Dec/2017). As Holland and Lachicotte (2007) suggested, “identities motivate action. One pursues opportunities to enact one’s claimed identities and thereby validates them for oneself and for others” (p.108). Administratively, Coco was regulated by the CI and was

¹ Coco was responsible for the course type [1] (as introduced in the Methodology Chapter). Therefore, her workplace was in fact in a local school in the UK.

assigned to teach a certain number of Chinese lessons in that local school. However, she agentively perceived herself as a “*formal employee*” of that school from the beginning of her time there, and voluntarily imposed higher standards on herself compared with her behaviour on assignment in Country N. She was never late for classes, and she kept her word with students by noting down every small thing she promised to do (such as playing a certain song) as she did not want to be considered “unprofessional” or to “lose the trust of the students” (Interview 05/Dec/2017). She became more skilled and mature in delivering classes. For example, she actively adjusted her teaching methods by integrating techniques or games (such as word puzzles and raffle tickets) popular among British students. It was obvious that the quality of Coco’s teaching was progressively improving and she received high praise at the school where she taught, as evidenced by one of the feedback forms provided by her mentor:

“*Another really enjoyable and well-delivered lesson. The pupils were keen to learn and very positive. It has been lovely seeing them make so much progress in your lesson. Well done! Keep on doing what you are doing, you are a gifted teacher.*” (Feedback form 28/Nov/2017)

Additionally, unlike her perspectives on her first dispatch in Country N (Phase 3), Coco declared that “even away from class, *I’m also a teacher, a professional CSOL teacher*” (Interview 05/Dec/2017) and tried her best to live up to her teacher identity even outside the classroom. Rather than viewing herself as a peer of her students as she had previously in Country N, she “took the stance of a teacher, endeavouring to provide the students with more professional suggestions even when chatting with them after the class” (Interview 05/Dec/2017). Furthermore, she invested more time in preparing lessons and reflecting on them after class, as well as learning more about British culture and society in order to better understand her students and avoid sensitive topics.

Coco’s deepening sense of her CSOL teacher identity and commitment to TCSOL can be attributed to three main factors. First of all, the CSOL teacher education programme in University Y exerted a positive influence on the development of Coco’s teacher

identity and this was especially true of the teacher educators Coco came across between her two dispatch periods (Phase 3 and Phase 4.1). During her interviews, Coco talked about two “significant others” and the lessons she learnt from them which shaped the trajectory of her teacher identity (Liu, 2000; Martel and Wang, 2015):

“There was a *truly excellent* teacher in our university, and his classes had a *huge impact* on me! His classes were the *most structured* classes I had ever seen. He was *really conscientious* about his students. He carefully read each paper we submitted and told us how to revise in a detailed way. *Nobody before had taught us like that! If every teacher could teach us like him, we would definitely improve a lot!*” (Interview 10/Feb/2017)

“There was another teacher who was really popular in our university. He used a metaphor to describe teachers: a good teacher is just like an informed tour guide who can lead the tourists to see the unseen. Some tour guides might be welcomed by others, but some might not, it depends on what you do. You know, he was *really a successful* teacher! *A successful teacher should be like him!*” (Interview 10/Feb/2017)

Teachers encountered at schools and universities can make inspirational models whom trainee teachers subsequently aspire to imitate (Clarke, 2008, p.80). Coco appeared to perceive such role models as “the ideal self”, i.e. a possible target for professional achievement or success (Dörnyei, 2000; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Lauriala and Kukkonen, 2005). Thus she imposed high expectations and requirements on herself in her efforts to live up to this elevated CSOL teacher identity right from the start of her assignment in the UK.

The second factor behind Coco’s evolving teacher identity is connected to the quality and regularity of the mentoring and professional training provided by the school where she taught. According to Coco, these development opportunities enabled her to better adapt to the culture of teaching in the UK and improved her professionalism, thus enriching her sense of competence as a teacher (Guarino et al., 2006). As Coco recalled,

“I gained a lot from the weekly professional training, which lasted for about 50 minutes every time. I showed my feedback forms to my mentor, and he would

point out my advantages and shortcomings. I asked him a lot and hence stored a lot of ideas, so I feel *I'm better equipped to be a teacher.*" (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

The third factor relates to the influence of Coco's more experienced teaching colleagues in the CI who functioned as positive role models. As Coco described,

"Unlike in Country N where there was only me as a CSOL teacher in the school, this year I worked in the CI and my colleagues were all teachers. Therefore, I had more reference points. I observed how they acted as teachers and I set similar requirements for myself. For the past year, I had been drawing a picture of an ideal teacher in my mind." (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

Wenger (1998) has proposed that exposure to role models and their paradigmatic trajectories in a community of practice is likely to be the most influential factor shaping the identity formation of newcomers (p.156). By learning from her colleagues in the CI and adopting their good habits and qualities, Coco became even more committed to TCSOL.

Finally, Coco regarded the grant of her working visa as something that legitimised her identity as a teacher in the UK. As she stated,

"In the UK, I held the Tier 5 working visa to teach, therefore, *legally, I am a teacher.*" (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

5.2.3 Decreasing commitment to TCSOL

In Coco's final interview which was conducted just a few days before she left the UK, Coco expressed her concerns about her future as a CSOL teacher. As she explained,

"If I'm going to work in China, I will *definitely not* find a job as a CSOL teacher. If I plan to be a CSOL teacher in a Chinese university, I must get a PhD degree. If I will just be a CSOL teacher without bianzhi² (编制, similar to "tenure"), I would not do it, because *the salary is too low*. If I will be paid with just 3000RMB (around £350) a month, I can't survive. Yes, so *I will change my job* when I go back to

² Bianzhi (编制): authorised strength, which refers to the authorised configuration of an organisation, and the number of members and the positions authorised to be in an organisation. Bianzhi, in the Chinese context, usually means one's identity as a "formal employee" of an institution who can enjoy a stable and relatively high level of welfare and this is lifelong.

China. But if I can work abroad, I think I will still be a CSOL teacher.” (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

This quote clearly expresses a conditional or even decreasing commitment to TCSOL. In fact, Coco’s misgivings are not uncommon among university students (undergraduates and postgraduates) who majored in TCSOL. According to a recent survey, only 10% of postgraduate students specialising in TCSOL undertook TCSOL-related work after graduation (Zhao, 2017). Anxiety about future career options, weak identities as CSOL teachers and even a sense of inferiority about their chosen profession have become increasingly pervasive among university students who majored in TCSOL (Lu, 2014; Jiang et al. 2019). These issues are closely related to the restrictions inherent in the profession of TCSOL. In China, most of the bodies which provide CSOL teaching posts are based in higher education institutions, i.e. universities. Currently, to be considered for employment as a university teacher (especially with tenure) in China, usually an applicant must have a PhD degree or even relevant postdoctoral experience. However, university students specialised in TCSOL typically have only a bachelor’s or master’s degree (but it is noteworthy that a doctoral programme in TCSOL began to be offered in China in 2015, as referred to in Chapter 1). Therefore, TCSOL graduates are unlikely to be recruited as university teachers. Even if they gain a teaching post at a Chinese university, it is impossible for them to get tenure (Jiang et al., 2019). Another significant factor in teacher attrition is unfair pay (Schaefer, 2013; Pennington, 2015). In Chinese universities, salaries differ remarkably between teachers with and without tenure, with the former enjoying much higher remuneration (Jiang et al., 2019). Therefore, without the prospect of economic security, Coco expressed firmly that she “will *definitely not* find a job as a CSOL teacher” when going back to China, evidencing a substantially decreasing commitment to a TCSOL career even though she remained genuinely interested in the work itself.

5.3 Instructional identity

5.3.1 Teacher-student relationship dimensions of instructional identity

This section describes the developmental process of Coco's instructional identity, particularly with regard to how she negotiated the teacher-student (T-S) relationship, and how it intertwined with the changes in her cultural identity during her time teaching in the UK. In her interviews, Coco explicitly referred to her teaching practices as having two chronological stages: the first stage lasted from December 2016 to July 2017, and the second stage spanned the last four months of her assignment in the UK, from September to December 2017. Next, I will provide a detailed account of the acculturation in Coco's instructional identity as well as her cultural identity.

5.3.1.1 Homogeneity and conformity

When reviewing her teaching practices in the first stage, Coco drew attention to the homogeneity in her ways of dealing with the teacher-student relationship and her conformity to the educational practices embedded in Chinese culture. As she recalled,

“Well, I felt previously in my class, I still kept a *very Chinese-style ethos* and practice. I mean, *teacher spoke and students listened.*” (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

Coco characterised the teaching and learning in her first stage as “following the instructions” (Interview 05/Dec/2017). As she explained,

“All I focused on was ensuring that students practise the sentences required by the Hanban-designed curriculum, which might later appear in the tests organised by Hanban, even though they were really boring and unlikely to be used by students in their real life.” (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

Two key features emerged in Coco's account of her previous ways of perceiving and negotiating the teacher-student relationship: 1) emphasising the authority of teachers over students in the classroom; and 2) prioritising the expectations and requirements imposed by Hanban in line with its higher hierarchical position, while neglecting the actual learning preferences of students. Underlying such beliefs and practices was her

cultural identity which respected and conformed to the educational traditions and thinking patterns in her home culture (Lustig and Koester, 2010). According to Hofstede (1980, 1986), unequal relationships exist in any culture; however, the degree to which they are accepted varies from one culture to another. China has generally been classified as a high power distance society (Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1994; Spencer-Oatey, 1997; Hu, 1999) meaning that the power value is widely accepted and firmly embedded in Chinese culture, and less powerful persons have relatively high tolerance of the inequality in power (Hofstede, 1986). As introduced in Chapter 1, throughout most of China's history, teachers who taught in schools were also officials in the government; thus teachers enjoyed a high social status in China. Although there is a gradual weakening of teachers' prestige due to reforms of the educational system in modern China, the traditions of respecting teachers and according them authority are still largely preserved in contemporary Chinese society (Shi, 2019). Clearly, Coco's early teaching practices, summarised concisely as "*teacher spoke and students listened*", reflect an internalisation of this tradition. Moreover, the Hanban-assigned volunteers, who are usually located at the bottom of the "food chain", have been influenced by the high power distance inherent in the Chinese sociocultural context and instinctively have tended to comply with the requirements of their leaders, including both the CI and Hanban (Wang, 2017, p.30). Coco, as one of the volunteers, displayed a similar orientation – giving more weight to Hanban's expectations than to her students during the first half of her teaching period in the UK.

5.3.1.2 Encounter, immersion, acculturation and preservation

The opportunity for situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991) in an alien school and classroom environment and involving the experience of cultural differences in education prompted changes in Coco's cultural identity as well as acculturation in her instructional identity particularly concerning the teacher-student relationship.

The first step in these changes was Coco starting to question her existing thinking patterns and behaviours and becoming more receptive to a new interpretation of the teacher-student relationship (Cross, 1978; Phinney, 1993). As she recalled,

“I *chatted with my British colleagues* every day during our lunch time. Later and gradually, *I came to learn more about British people*. They told me that *teachers are not naturally respected by students* in the UK, only when the students feel that you are doing a good job, then they would respect you. It was actually *quite difficult* for a Chinese teacher, or for teachers from some Asian countries, to adapt to this at first. But *gradually I could accept it*. In the later stage, I felt that *students do not have the obligation to listen to my class*. If I taught badly or the class is boring, the students *ought not to listen to me*. Therefore, in the second stage of my teaching, I spent a lot of energy preparing classes, and introduced the flipped classroom approach into my class, endeavouring to make my Chinese classes more interesting and effective. *I should not guide students to the way I want, but should satisfy their demands.*” (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

As can be seen from Coco’s account, her reexamination of her educational beliefs inherent in her home culture and her reinterpretation of the T-S relationship took place via her immersion in the British educational culture. Coco’s interaction and communication with her colleagues from that culture enabled her to gain insights into British people’s ways of thinking and being. These insights prompted Coco to reexamine and question the rationality of the educational ethos which took for granted the authority of teachers and the obedience of students in the classroom, and led to a fundamental change in her beliefs and practices to prioritise students’ learning interests (Lustig and Koester, 2010; Smolcic and Katunich, 2017).

In contrast to the way she scrupulously followed the Hanban-set curriculum (with appropriate differentiation of objectives and materials) during her first stage of teaching in the UK, Coco showed greater agency in the selection of lesson content with more of an emphasis on students’ actual interests and preferences, and adjusted her teaching plan and strategies accordingly. As she recalled,

“Previously, I *just followed* the Hanban-designed curriculum, and *had no idea* of what British students really interested in. But *now I will ask them*. I found they

were particularly fond of high-tech related things. Therefore, one time, when I was planning how to introduce Chinese culture, I *deliberately added* a lesson myself which was *not included* in the Hanban-set curriculum. I introduced the high-speed rail, bike-sharing and mobile payment in China to my students, which especially caught their attention. They really wanted to know what China looked like, but their teachers assigned by Hanban previously just used to sing the Peking Opera. So, the students thought Chinese people are still singing the Peking Opera every day, but that's not true. Therefore, I hope to eliminate their misconceptions and help them learn about contemporary China. *This is my own way to profess my love to my homeland and home culture.*" (Interview 05/Dec/2017)

The above excerpt illustrates a redirection in the student-related aspects of Coco's teacher identity as well as developments in her cultural identity with a shift from passive conformity to authority (i.e. Hanban) to a desire to satisfy students' real learning needs. However, despite the changes in her instructional practices, Coco still ardently loved and strongly identified with Chinese culture. She demonstrated a sense of national pride in the achievements of contemporary China especially in the areas of economy and technology, and expressed a sincere wish to present a positive image of China to the world, voluntarily undertaking the "cultural ambassador" role (Zheng, 2012; Wang, 2014; Ye, 2017). This finding echoes the work of Ye (2017) who showed that the experiences of CSOL teaching in the UK raised Hanban-assigned teachers' awareness of their nationality to a level that they would not have experienced in their home country (p.126). Moreover, compared with many CSOL teachers using old-fashioned strategies to disseminate Chinese culture by foregrounding only its traditional arts and customs (Ye, 2017), Coco appeared to be more reflective and was able to integrate modern phenomena in Chinese culture and society into her teaching, thus introducing diverse and up-to-date images of contemporary China to her students.

5.4 Summary

In this chapter, I analysed the developmental process of Coco's teacher identity and explored the factors which exerted an influence on this process. Two figures are provided at the end of this section to illustrate the dynamics of the process.

5.4.1 Professional identity

Coco's evolving professional identity was characterised by a growing commitment to TCSOL particularly through the negotiation between the two facets of her dual identity as a CSOL teacher and a postgraduate student in this discipline (see below Figure 5.2). Driven largely by her sincere interest in TCSOL, Coco dedicated herself to TCSOL and her commitment and enthusiasm for this specialism was sustained from her adolescence until her second assignment in the UK. The favourable recognition from her teacher educator during Coco's undergraduate degree helped to boost her sense of competence and confidence and further entrench her commitment to TCSOL. Coco's sense of identity as a CSOL teacher continued to grow stronger during her two assignments outside of China, reflected particularly in the changing balance in her dual identity. In her first assignment, Coco was resilient in traversing her dual identity. While enacting the teacher role and her commitment to CSOL teaching in the classroom, she also occasionally sought help from her student identity to ameliorate her sense of guilt over minor failings to live up to her ideal teacher identity. Coco herself described this dual-identity interplay as "a teacher in the classroom, but a student out of the classroom". Later, from the outset of her second assignment in the UK, Coco intentionally foregrounded her teacher identity in order to best perform as "a teacher in and out of the classroom", demonstrating a strong sense of agency in this change. Her deepening identity as a CSOL teacher was also closely linked to the positive influences of the "significant others" in the teacher education programme in China and her UK workplace, as well as her positive experience of continuing professional development training in the UK. Notwithstanding that Coco's education and workplace experiences had helped her develop the expertise and sense of connection to the discipline necessary

for success in the CSOL teaching profession (Richards, 2016), she ultimately felt compelled to leave the profession due to its structural barriers in terms of career progression and remuneration. Thus, this case study highlights that the problems within the TCSOL profession itself can be seen as significant impediments to the sustained development of teacher identity. Chapter 10 discusses the matter further, including a call for changes to the profession.

5.4.2 Instructional identity

The development of Coco's instructional identity was intertwined with the changes in her cultural identity (see below Figure 5.3). A self-professed "Chinese-style" teacher, Coco's instructional identity was originally teacher-centred by nature, emphasising teachers' authority over students together with a passive deference and conformity to higher authority: for example, Coco scrupulously followed the Hanban-set curriculum in her first few months teaching CSOL in the UK. This early instructional identity was forged under the influence of Coco's cultural identity which had internalised educational traditions in China, i.e. deference and respect for teachers and a high value on teaching, and resonated with the high power distance of the Chinese sociocultural context. Immersion in British culture at a British school with ample opportunity to talk and share ideas with colleagues helped Coco re-assess her own ethos and practices concerning the teacher-student relationship in the classroom. She experienced changes in her instructional identity which were manifested by putting students' interests and preferences at the forefront of her lesson planning and delivery. In spite of these changes, Coco's cultural identity which sincerely appreciated her home culture motivated her to voluntarily undertake the "cultural ambassador" role to promote especially the modern phenomenon in Chinese culture and society in her class.

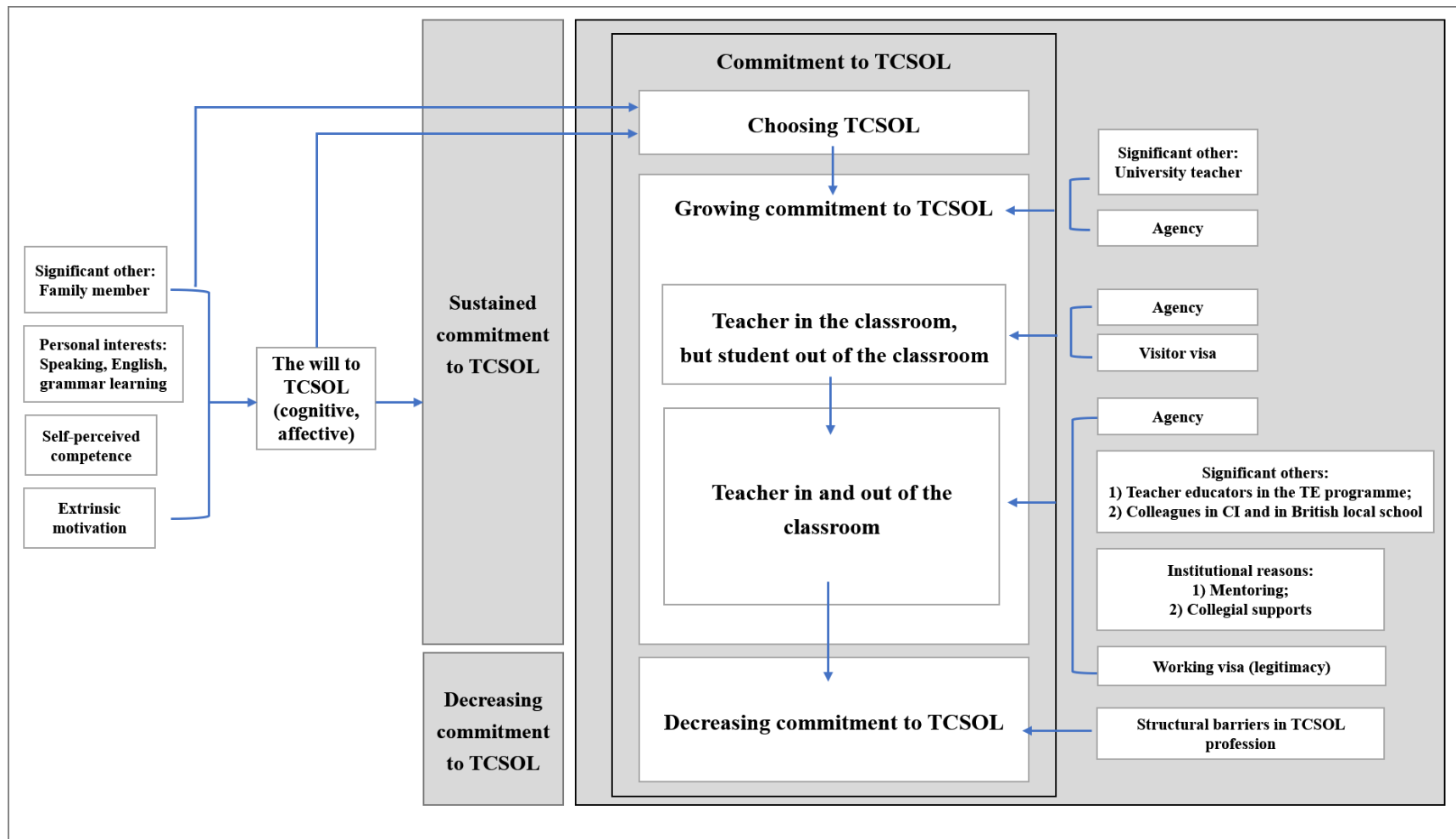


Figure 5.2: Coco's professional identity

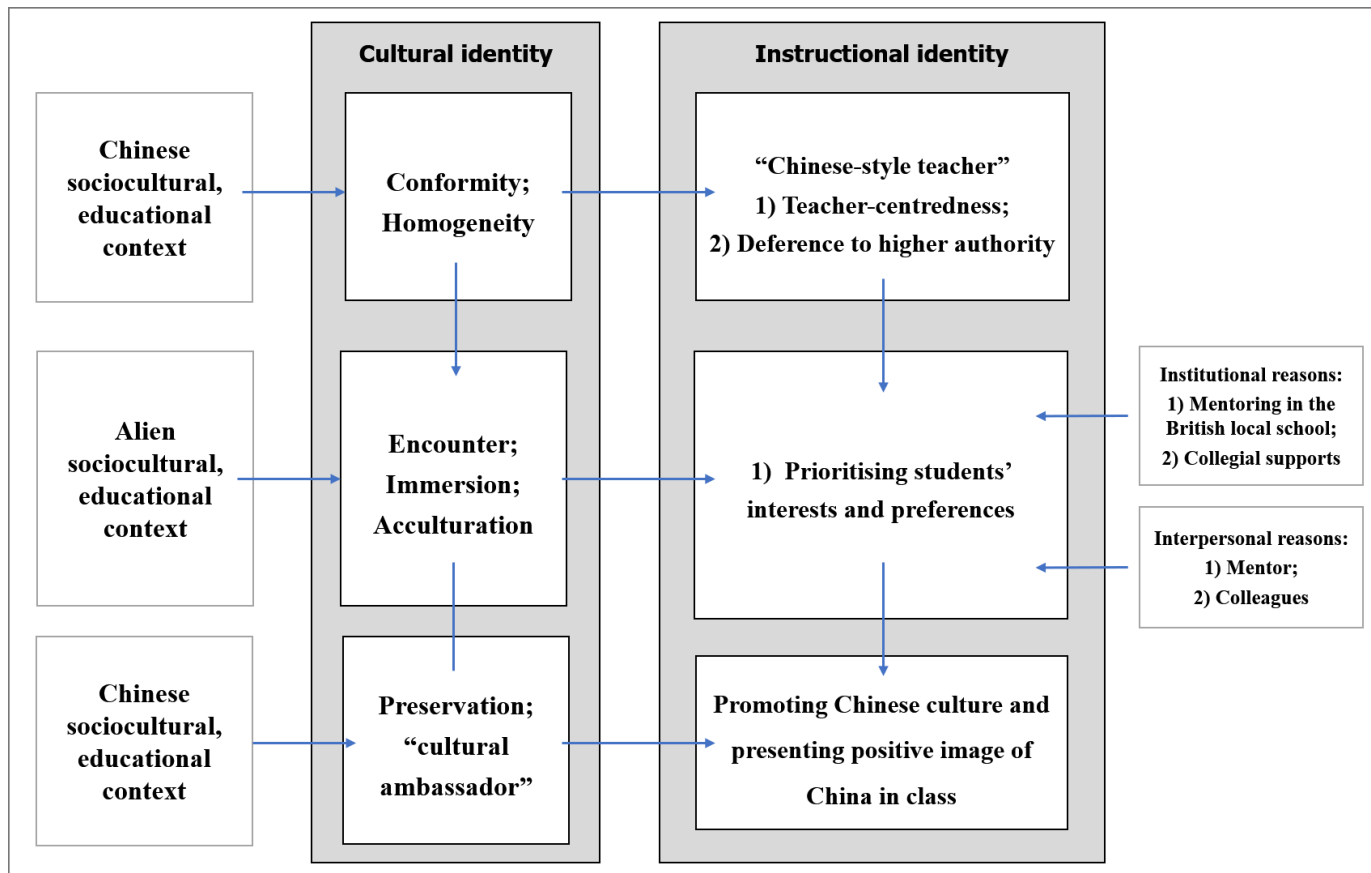


Figure 5.3: Coco's cultural and instructional identity

CHAPTER 6

CASE LEO

This chapter presents the story of Leo, a Hanban-assigned CSOL teacher in the CI being studied. Firstly, background information about Leo's educational and professional experiences will be provided in chronological order, followed by a detailed analysis of the developmental process of his professional identity. Following this, I will describe the changes in Leo's instructional identity, particularly in the teacher-student relationship dimension, and explain how his cultural identity influenced this process. The factors that have impacted on Leo's teacher identity formation will also be identified and discussed.

6.1 Profile of Leo

Leo was born in the 1970s in a small town in China. For the convenience of analysis, I have grouped his life experiences into four major stages (see Figure 6.1). In Phase 1, Leo started to learn English as a foreign language in secondary school, and this phase also includes his EFL learning experiences before entering university. He was admitted as an undergraduate student to a Chinese university, majoring in Chinese Language and Literature (Phase 2). After graduation, he advanced his education in Modern Mandarin Chinese Grammar and obtained a master's degree in that specialism (Phase 3). In the late 1990s, Leo accepted a CSOL teaching job at University Y in China and has been a CSOL teacher since that time (Phase 4). Because of the special nature of his job as a CSOL teacher, Leo was temporarily assigned to teach in four countries during his nearly 20 year-long TCSOL career; meanwhile, he kept his staff position in University Y. First he worked in two different European universities (one in Country D during Phase 4.1 and the other in Country H during Phase 4.2) and then he taught in a Confucius Institute in Asian Country R during Phase 4.3. He was dispatched by Hanban to work in a CI in the UK in 2015. During his two-year assignment in the UK, he was responsible for teaching Chinese to different types of students, such as university students (course type [4]), local residents from various sources who were interested in Chinese (course type [5]), and children aged 3.5–16 years who attended the weekend Chinese language

school affiliated to the CI (course type [3]). Meanwhile, he was actively engaged in a number of CI-organised cultural activities and took the leading role in teaching a traditional Chinese skill (this skill will not be specified here because it is highly likely to reveal Leo's real identity). Leo formally participated in my research in February 2017, his second year of working in the UK.

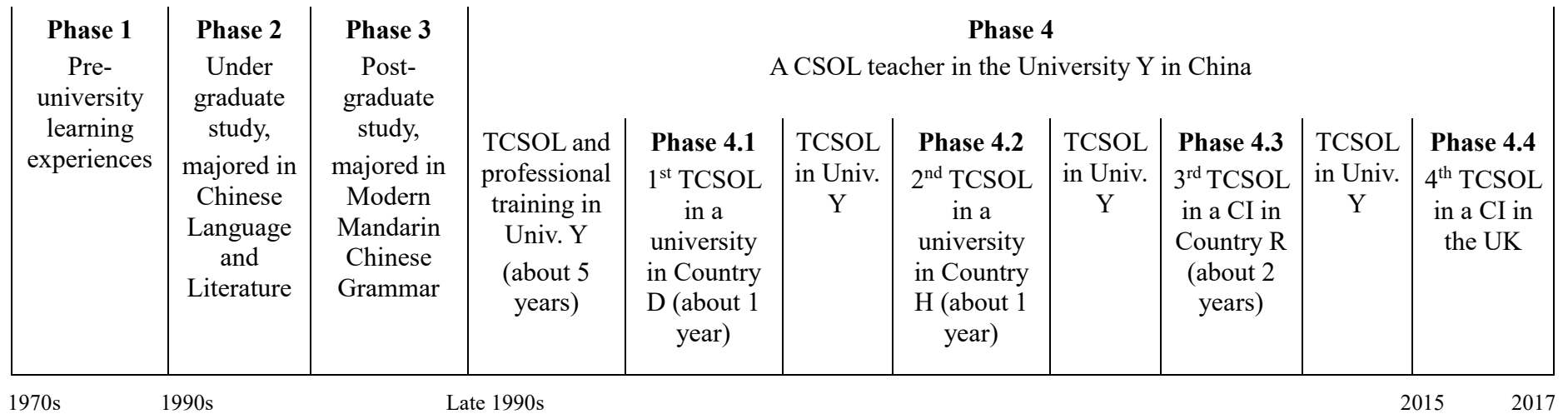


Figure 6.1: Timeline of Leo's experiences

6.2 Professional identity

This section gives an account of the developmental process of Leo's professional identity, and describes a gradual increase in his commitment to the profession of TCSOL and a growing sense of identity as a CSOL teacher.

6.2.1 Interest in linguistics

Leo majored in Chinese Language and Literature, a programme which included courses in both the areas of linguistics and literature during his undergraduate period (Phase 2). Leo did not explicitly say that during that period he intended to become a teacher in the future; instead, he talked about how he had gradually developed a strong interest in linguistics. As he explained,

“When I was in the university, I came across a teacher who was very talented but unpretentious. He was not only good at doing academic research but also taught very well. He was *passionate* when giving classes and was *full of personal charisma*. He *inspired my intense interest in linguistics* and made me *realise what a great amount of interesting knowledge there was to learn in the area of linguistics*.” (Interview 02/May/2017) [All italics in Case Leo have been added by the author for emphasis of Leo's emotions and attitudes.]

Students tend to regard university teachers' effectiveness and enthusiasm in lecturing as one of the most important motivational factors in their college study (Gorham and Christophel, 1992); Leo's account chimes with that finding. His university teacher's erudition and scholarly passion impressed Leo greatly and made him more keen to pursue linguistics as a specialism.

Meanwhile, Leo's self-perception of his natural aptitude and flair for linguistics strengthened his sense of compatibility with this discipline (Olsen, 2008). As he explained,

“Compared with my peers who found it boring and difficult to understand, one of my strengths was that I was better and quicker at comprehending the linguistics my lecturer taught at that time, such as Phonology and Modern Mandarin Chinese Grammar (MMCG). I felt I could understand almost all of the principles easily.” (Interview 07/Jul/2017)

Leo's obvious talent and skill at linguistics was recognised by his teacher. As Leo recalled,

“When I was still an undergraduate, my teacher regarded me *very very highly*, considering me as a ‘*ke zao zhi cai*’ (可造之材, a Chinese idiom literally means materials suitable for shaping, which is a metaphor referring to a promising person or a man of great potential)’. That teacher told me: ‘I decided to give three extra courses *especially for you* at that time, because *I didn’t want to waste a ‘miaozi’* (苗子, seedling, which in Chinese is a metaphor to describe a young successor who has the potential to inherit a career) *like you*, and I hoped you could successfully pass the national postgraduate entrance examination (NPEE)’.” (Interview 07/Jul/2017)

The recognition and praise from his teacher, a highly respected and renowned expert in linguistics, further reinforced Leo’s determination to dedicate himself to linguistics. With his teacher’s encouragement, Leo applied for and successfully passed the NPEE and chose to specialise in one branch of linguistics: Modern Mandarin Chinese Grammar (Phase 3).

6.2.2 Emerging and growing commitment to TCSOL

After completing his postgraduate degree, Leo shifted course to engage in TCSOL (Phase 4) and over time he developed a strong commitment to this field and a powerful sense of his CSOL teacher identity. Although this developmental process could be split broadly into three stages for the convenience of analysis, in fact the boundaries between them were not clearcut. As Leo himself said, “it is difficult to trace back to an exact turning point; rather, it was a gradual change” (Interview 02/May/2017).

6.2.2.1 Weak sense of CSOL teacher identity in early career

Early in his academic career, Leo did not explicitly have an interest in the teaching profession, let alone TCSOL. Right up until the time when he obtained his master’s degree, he had not yet envisaged a clear future career plan. As he recalled,

“When I was young, to be honest, I was not a person who had clearly planned my future. I just took one step first and then thought about what to do next.” (Interview 02/May/2017)

Leo’s candid opinion was that he entered the TCSOL field “unintentionally and accidentally” (Interview 02/May/2017) (Phase 4). He further elaborated this,

“My ideas were still very traditional and conservative at that time. Considering the major I’d studied for three years, which was MMCG, if I abandoned it and turned to work in other non-related areas, such as doing business, it seemed a big waste.

Therefore, it would be better for me to choose language, culture and education related jobs. Well, there were many opportunities in the fields such as journalism, media and press, but since I wanted to stay in a big City E (anonymised), such jobs could not guarantee the *bianzhi* (编制, tenure) and *hukou* (户口, registered permanent residence). It was only the institutions of higher education that had the advantage of resolving these two problems. *Just at that time*, there was a job opportunity to teach CSOL in University Y, and I thought *being a teacher in a university seemed a good choice, and it would be a stable job.*” (Interview 02/May/2017)

Leo’s narrative shows that his preference for language-related jobs emerged primarily from his academic background and formal education in linguistics (especially his postgraduate major in MMCG) through which he gained expertise and valuable disciplinary connections and affiliations (Pennington and Richards, 2016). Ultimately, however, it was practical circumstances which catalysed Leo’s pursuit of a CSOL teaching role: an unexpected but appropriate job opportunity in a university presented itself and brought certain extrinsic benefits – it could resolve the issues of permanent residence and tenure. Therefore, Leo’s CSOL teaching career beginnings were not associated with a strong sense of commitment to the profession itself, at least initially.

Also, although the similarities between MMCG and TCSOL – both being based on linguistics (Liu, 2000) – had given Leo a nascent connection to TCSOL, the differences between the two subjects became more salient as he began teaching and gradually they began to impact on his professional identity formation in a negative way. As Leo explained,

“My major was Modern Mandarin Chinese Grammar. My ‘*chushen* (出身, which means identity determined by one’s previous experiences or occupation or family background) was not TCSOL. I *didn’t learn* second language acquisition (SLA), classroom management, pedagogy, psychology and education, and was *not familiar with* these aspects. Therefore, I found it *difficult* to accommodate myself during the first half of the year. When I was teaching in class at that time, I had no idea how to explain and how to practise. I was so anxious that I began to sweat, but the teaching outcomes turned out to be unsatisfactory.” (Interview 14/Feb/2017)

Although Leo was formally employed as a CSOL teacher by University Y, his sense of incompetence particularly in pedagogical aspects impeded him from wholeheartedly identifying himself as a “genuine” or “credible” CSOL teacher (Bucholtz, 2003; Block, 2007). The discipline of MMCG mainly focuses on studying the structures of the

Chinese language (i.e. the pragmatic functions of a phrase or a sentence, and the rules of sentence construction) and describing and analysing linguistic phenomena in order to enhance the understanding of the Chinese language. TCSOL on the other hand is more concerned with how to apply research findings in Chinese linguistics to practical teaching strategies, especially for learners who are speakers of other languages (Liu, 2000). Therefore, TCSOL necessarily involves learning about a wide range of topics: theoretical understanding and practical skills in second language acquisition, classroom management, pedagogy, psychology and education, which are exactly the areas which Leo had not encountered before in his formal education. As proposed by Wenger (1998), an individual's membership of a community, in essence, is about competence – “we experience competence and we are recognised as competent” (p.152). Leo's lack of professional training in the teaching of Chinese to speakers of other languages and the feelings of inadequacy this generated therefore contributed to Leo's failure to build up a robust perception of himself as a genuinely qualified CSOL teacher in his early career stage.

6.2.2.2 Emerging strength in CSOL teacher identity

Progressively, Leo identified himself more closely as a CSOL teacher and grew more dedicated to the CSOL teaching profession. This stage lasted for about five years from the time of his entry into University Y until the first time he was dispatched to TCSOL abroad. As Leo recalled,

“After experiencing the initial two to three years of *'torture'* in University Y, most of the teachers in University Y, me included, had acquired the basic strategies to teach CSOL and become aware that this is the way to teach CSOL ... There was no doubt, after four to five years, with all the training we had gone through in University Y, that *wherever we go, any teacher in our university, including me, was at least a qualified CSOL teacher.*” (Interview 07/Jul/2017)

Being able to enact one's identity as a genuinely qualified CSOL teacher is inseparable from learning and particularly mastering the expertise necessary for this profession (Dressen-Hammouda, 2008; Ye, 2017). Leo's account reveals that his enhanced professional identity as a CSOL teacher and greater self-confidence were inextricable from the improvements in his pedagogical competence. These improvements could be ascribed both to the supportive institutional environment at University Y where Leo

worked, and his active investment in his own ongoing professional development and training in TCSOL.

First of all, the one-year “Master-Apprentice System” (mentoring scheme) implemented in Leo’s school informed him about the performative culture of the school (Devos, 2010) and that of TCSOL, and helped him develop his pedagogical skills. As he explained,

“Once a novice teacher comes to our university, s/he will be assigned a ‘master’ who has rich experiences in TCSOL. The master will audit the novice’s classes and guide him or her how to teach. The novice also needs to observe the master’s classes. The master and the apprentice should prepare the lessons together. With this mentoring, all the teachers came to know the basic ways of TCSOL in our school.” (Interview 07/Jul/2017)

Secondly, Leo benefited greatly from the valuable body of teaching experience and tradition built up by his predecessors and passed on to Leo through the modelling of recommended approaches (Sun, 2012). As he described,

“For nearly 60 years, the senior teachers in our university have acquired a lot of experience in TCSOL which informed us about the most effective ways to teach. Once they passed their knowledge to us, I could resolve the problems I came across immediately, and then I was able to teach CSOL with ease.” (Interview 07/Jul/2017)

Thirdly, the abundant collegial support (Guarino et al., 2006) including opportunities for peer communication, classroom observation and collaborative planning, enabled Leo to accumulate valuable experience. As he recalled,

“I observed other teachers’ classes, discussed with them and learnt a lot from them. ... In our school, it was not uncommon for teachers of the same type of courses and teachers who teach the same level of students to prepare lessons together and discuss ways of delivering classes together.” (Interview 07/Jul/2017)

Fourthly, a favourable institutional environment where strong support and encouragement was provided by the school and university also promoted Leo’s professional development. As he recounted,

“Our University Y has always been very supportive and encouraged novice teachers to give public classes. Before you formally teach, your classes will be observed by your mentor, the head of your department and your school, again and again. Therefore, when I was finally allowed to teach the university students, my classes had already become very well polished.” (Interview 07/Jul/2017)

Apart from the supportive environment, Leo's habits of effective personal reflection were also essential in the shaping of his teacher identity and facilitating his professional development (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Jay, 2003; Luttenberg and Bergen, 2008). As he reiterated,

“I kept reviewing experiences from my teaching practices in order to find out which teaching method was the most effective. ... I personally feel that it is only with reflection that you can find a set of teaching methods suitable for yourself, thus making yourself sublimated.” (Interview 07/Jul/2017)

6.2.2.3 Continually growing CSOL teacher identity

After Leo's first assignment (Phase 4.1) through to the research period (Phase 4.4), he continued to invest substantial energy in TCSOL and developed an increasingly strong sense of responsibility for his students. With the positive influence of his own university teacher continuing to resonate, Leo developed a deep sense of mission as a teacher and endeavoured to educate his students and enable them to master the knowledge and skills of the Chinese language. As he recalled,

“I had a teacher who was deeply loved and highly respected by students, because he not only taught earnestly and seriously, but also tried every means to teach. *This exerted a significant influence on me even until today.* I gradually realised that it is wrong for a teacher just to impart knowledge without caring about whether the students really understand it. *This is definitely not the viewpoint a teacher should hold. If a teacher thinks and acts like this, this is an irresponsible teacher who doesn't fulfil his or her duty.* Therefore, for many years, *I have always been thinking* about how to enable my students to truly understand and acquire what I taught.” (Interview 02/May/2017)

Teachers' inspirational models can be traced back to their own educational experiences, in schools or teacher education, leading to imitation of the models later in their own teaching practices (Clarke, 2008, p.80). These models of significant others usually play a paradigmatic role and shape the trajectory of an individual's identity formation (Wenger, 1998; Liu, 2009). Being exposed to the role model, i.e. his teacher, and identifying with that teacher's practices, Leo adopted these norms to evaluate himself and did his best to live up to the standards (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007). For example, he explained that when he was teaching CSOL in Country R (Phase 4.3),

“I was *thinking every day* how to help my students to acquire the four tones in mandarin Chinese. Later, I found that there were a lot of crows around our school,

and they cawed ‘ah ah ah’ which sounded quite like the fourth tone of Chinese. Therefore, when I heard the cawing in my Chinese classes, I seized the chance and told my students, the ‘ah ah ah’ they heard was the fourth tone, and if they could imitate and practise it, they would master the fourth tone.” (Interview 02/May/2017)

Leo maintained these kinds of teaching techniques until the time he was teaching in the UK (Phase 4.4). As he reported,

“For example, I found students here were not good at pronouncing Chinese Pinyin ‘z, c, s’, especially after adding the simple vowel ‘i’ of a Chinese syllable. Therefore, I started to think about ways to resolve this. I told my students, ‘look at the Chinese Pinyin c, and imagine it as the cap of a bottle of cola. What does it sound like when you twist off a bottle cap? ‘Ci.....’ Yes, that’s it!’ In this way, students sensed the right pronunciation.” (Interview 02/May/2017)

As the present research was conducted during the time when Leo was teaching CSOL in the selected CI in the UK, he gave more detailed description of this working period (Phase 4.4) compared to the other phases. Judging from Leo’s account, his sense of identity as a legitimate member of the CSOL teaching profession appeared to be very strong during the study period. This manifested in deeper and more extensive engagement in TCSOL and related issues on his own initiative and his frequent reflections on the development of TCSOL in overseas CIs. As he declared,

“*As a teacher*, you cannot limit your work to CSOL teaching only, and not care about or participate in any other things – *that is not being a qualified teacher.*” (Interview 07/Jul/2017)

Identity mediates agency (Holland, 2001) and motivates actions (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007). Identifying himself as a CSOL teacher, Leo thereby exercised his teacher agency and sought to validate this identity for himself and for others (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007). In addition to his assigned teaching duties, Leo was passionately involved in other activities and events happening in the CI, and voluntarily undertook the teaching of a Chinese cultural skill (not specified here as it is highly likely to reveal Leo’s identity), a skill he taught himself during his repatriation in order to better fulfil his role as a CSOL teacher. As he stated,

“The work of teaching that skill was not complicated or difficult, but for me it was more like an *motivation*, making me more sure that *it is worthwhile* investing in learning a skill and that it would ultimately benefit my work.” (Interview 14/Feb/2017)

It is clear from Leo's account that his expertise in that special skill – which he could share with students – gave him a stronger sense of competence and enhanced his self-efficacy as a CSOL teacher, which further reinforced his commitment to TCSOL.

Leo's enthusiastic investment in his work especially his keen participation in activities beyond his Chinese language teaching duties was closely linked to his perceptions of the prosperous development of the CI where he worked. As Leo explained,

“Our CI has been *well regulated*. After so many years, there is a *well-developed* curriculum, and the development of our CI has been *very comprehensive*, involving every aspect. ... Our CI has *produced some very good achievements* in promoting CSOL teaching among local residents. ... In areas like cultural communication and business events, our CI has *had great success*. *Therefore, I think I have responsibility to learn more about these, and it's also beneficial for my personal improvement.*” (Interview 07/Jul/2017)

As argued by Wenger (1998), the position of the community within broader constellations influences its members' identification and sense of belonging to it (p.169). The above narrative indicates that the CI's successes were well recognised by Leo, which intensified his pride in being a member of the CI and led to his increased willingness to be committed to TCSOL at this CI specifically.

Aligned with his commitment to TCSOL and membership of this professional community, Leo felt it was his responsibility to contemplate the development of the TCSOL profession more widely and reflect on his concerns. As he recounted,

“TCSOL in overseas environments and the specific teaching strategies in these contexts have long been my concern. Having been situated in this teaching context, if you are still indifferent to it and do not think about it, *it is an irresponsible performance.*” (Interview 07/Jul/2017)

Demonstrating his capacity for critical appraisal of the issues affecting his profession, he further added,

“I think the biggest problem lies in the mode of Chinese language promotion which was under the leadership of the state and supported by the government. Is this mode sustainable? Is it really worth investing such a huge amount of money in order to let others know about you? ... The doubts we faced were even greater. Many people viewed CIs as cultural permeation. This mode is so unique, hence it brings about some criticism. However, *xia bu yan yu* (瑕不掩瑜, a Chinese idiom which means one minor flaw cannot obscure the splendour of the jade). We have to admit that without CIs, the TCSOL career would never have developed to the

current extent, and there would not be so many people learning Chinese.”
(Interview 07/Jul/2017)

It is clear that Leo, as an insider participant dedicated to the TCSOL career, could well appreciate the CI’s successful role in promoting TCSOL and widening the influence of Chinese language and culture. These perceptions also draw on Leo’s own Chinese cultural identity and his hope that more people could learn about his home culture. It is notable that Leo tried to move away from his insider standpoint in order to critically examine the potential problems for TCSOL around the world and reflect on its function in Chinese language and culture promotion, thus fulfilling his notions of his responsibility for the development of CSOL teaching.

6.3 Instructional identity

6.3.1 Teacher-student relationship dimensions of identity

This section illustrates how Leo’s ideas and practices concerning the teacher-student relationship changed over his career. During his initial years of TCSOL, Leo treated students rather homogeneously and took for granted the idea that teachers have prestigious status in the classroom. Over time, he increased his intercultural awareness and redefined the role of CSOL teachers as service providers for students. The development of the T-S relationship aspect of Leo’s teacher identity was intertwined with his evolving cultural identity, and this process can be divided broadly into two stages: 1) homogeneity and conformity; and 2) encounter, immersion and acculturation.

6.3.1.1 Homogeneity and conformity

The first developmental stage in Leo’s student-related teacher identity mainly covered the period before his dispatch to Country D (before Phase 4.1) and was characterised by a lack of close scrutiny of his cultural and educational beliefs and by conformity to traditional Chinese educational values in his attitudes towards students. In this phase, Leo considered teachers to have prestige. As he described,

“The idea of *yi ri wei shi, zhong shen wei fu* (一日为师, 终身为父, a Chinese idiom coming from the *Analects of Confucius*, which means ‘day as a teacher, life for the father’) has always been strongly advocated in *the classrooms in China*. Teachers, especially *we Chinese teachers*, usually have a preconceived idea of *shi*

dao zun yan (师道尊严, a Chinese idiom coming from the *Analects of Confucius*, which means ‘teachers are dignified and respectable’), so it is not easy to accept doubts from students.” (Interview 02/May/2017)

Leo’s description indicates that his cultural identity played a considerable role in the process of his teacher identity formation, particularly in the way he perceived the status of teachers and the nature of the T-S relationship in the classroom during the first few TCSOL years. As introduced in Chapter 2, historically teachers in China have enjoyed prestigious social stature, almost without exception (Shi, 2019). As a Confucian-heritage society, the idea of “respecting teachers and valuing teaching” has been entrenched in China since ancient times until the contemporary era. Leo’s use of the inclusive plural form “*we Chinese teachers*” and the overgeneralisation “*the classrooms in China*” suggest that there is widespread acceptance of the principle that teachers in China should be respected unquestioningly. According to Lustig and Koester (2010), individuals who are situated in a homogeneous cultural environment “may not have explored the meanings and consequences of their cultural membership but may simply have accepted preconceived ideas about it that were obtained from parents, the community, the mass media, and others” (p.143). Viewing himself as one of “we Chinese teachers”, Leo adopted the dominant discourses and values in Chinese society in an unexamined way, and thus internalised them into his educational beliefs and practices. Leo’s attitudes towards students reflected this traditional ethos: as a teacher, he tacitly accepted his unquestionable prestige in the classroom and perceived himself as immune to challenge or criticism by students.

Before working in Country D, Leo firmly believed that “it is natural and right that students should pay for teachers as they acquire knowledge from teachers, and even if teachers blame or criticise students, it is for their own good” (Interview 02/May/2017). When reflecting on his previous beliefs about education, Leo commented,

“We never thought of these things, we have never ever had such concept. We never thought about whether the teachers could use other ways to do good for us. ... We never had these ideas before, because we were situated in traditional Chinese education settings where the relationship between teacher and students was comparable to the relationship between father and son, so I rarely had the opportunities to reflect as we could do when working in Country D.” (Interview 02/May/2017)

The four instances of “*never*” in the above extract serve to signal and emphasise the homogeneity in Leo’s cultural identity as well as in his student-related teacher identity, showing that initially Leo accepted the values and attitudes prevalent in Chinese society without examining them closely. The homogeneity in his identity, as he pointed out, could be ascribed to the homogeneous environment he was situated in. Research has shown that most components of identity, particularly those aspects related to culture, become salient only when they are activated by specific circumstances, e.g. an alien cultural context (Lustig and Koester, 2010, p.145). When Leo began teaching in Country D, his exposure to the different culture triggered greater awareness of and reflections on his own cultural identity and educational beliefs that he had not experienced before (Lustig and Koester, 2010, p.145). These aspects will be discussed in more detail in the account of stage two.

6.3.1.2 Encounter, immersion and acculturation

Stage two in the evolution of Leo’s student-related identity commenced when he began working and living in Country D (Phase 4.1). His intercultural awareness was awakened and spurred him to explore and question his own cultural beliefs leading to a shift in his cultural identity. This scenario aligns with the findings of other researchers: “The opportunity to see and interact in a foreign classroom environment gave teachers a window through which they might look more deeply at their own educational context and question the ways that education unfolds in schools and classrooms at home” (Smolcic and Katunich, 2017, p.52, based on Lee, 2009). When Leo was immersed in the cultural and educational environment of Country D, he came to discover that “ideas advocated in China such as ‘teachers are dignified and respectable’ didn’t work in CSOL classrooms especially outside of China” (Interview 02/May/2017). He started to question why teachers have to be so severe with their students: “Do teachers have to blame or even physically punish students? Isn’t encouraging and praising students a good way to educate them?” (Interview 02/May/2017). His appraisal of these ideas led to a significant change in view: “since the students have paid the tuition fees to study, teachers should teach them well and treat them well, rather than reproaching them” (Interview 02/May/2017).

As Leo’s narratives show, encountering a different sociocultural environment “dislodged” him from his taken-for-granted worldview, and made him receptive to new

interpretations of the conventions in his home culture and his role as a teacher (Cross, 1978; Phinney, 1993). Leo did not refer to a particular “turning point” or “critical incident” that led to a sudden enlightenment; instead, his changes in attitude towards students began with a growing awareness and reinterpretation of everyday experiences (Lustig and Koester, 2010, p.144). As Leo explained,

“I worked in Country D for one year and then went to other countries later, including the UK. After extensive visits to a number of countries, I finally realised, isn’t ‘equality’ the most valuable thing? People might be different in their wealth, appearances and social statuses, but the most important thing is ‘equality in personality’. Bearing this idea in mind during my reflections, I asked myself, since everyone is equal in personality, how can you patronise your students and consider yourself superior to your students? The students have paid for your services and spent their time on your classes, so you need to teach them properly.” (Interview 02/May/2017)

Leo’s narration suggests that the experiences of sociocultural immersion in the host countries led him to question the rationality of a hierarchical relationship between teachers and students, and to revise his core beliefs so that he came to appreciate and advocate principles of equality. This reinforced the argument made by Smolcic and Katunich (2017) that intercultural awareness “arises through self-reflection that leads to a critique or re-examination of one’s own beliefs, in particular cultural stereotypes that may have been hitherto unexamined” (p.52, based on studies of Addleman et al., 2014; Causey et al., 2000; Domangue and Lee, 2008; Lee, 2009; Malewski et al., 2012; Tang and Choi, 2004).

Leo redefined the role of a teacher during his repatriation period after Phase 4.1 and developed his own teaching maxims, viewing teachers as providers of services in education. As he described,

“An idea came to my mind: education is essentially a service industry, and teachers are actually the ones who provide services, but a special kind of service, to students. What teachers provide are knowledge and skills. The students are the customers you serve as well as being like the products you process. You need to take good care of their emotions in order to help them better acquire the knowledge and skills. In this way, we can improve the quality of the products.” (Interview 02/May/2017)

These principles espoused by Leo are in marked contrast to the traditional educational values once imprinted on his mind before he lived and worked outside of China. Leo observed that this kind of thinking “was quite advanced around the year of 2005 in

China” (Interview 02/May/2017), reflecting a newly acculturated cultural identity as well as a new direction in his student-related teacher identity.

6.4 Summary

This chapter describes the developmental process of Leo’s teacher identity, involving changes in three aspects, namely his professional, instructional and cultural identity. At the end of this chapter, I will provide two figures to depict the complexity in this process.

6.4.1 Professional identity

The developmental process of Leo’s professional identity can be divided broadly into three stages and characterised overall by a growing commitment to TCSOL and an increasing identification with his CSOL teacher identity (see Figure 6.2). During the first stage (after joining University Y), Leo had little sense of affiliation to TCSOL and this appeared to be linked to his extrinsic motivations for entering the CSOL teaching profession at the time (i.e. to get tenure and registered permanent residence in a particular city in China). Moreover, his feelings of incompetence about his pedagogical skills also hampered Leo’s capacity to self-identify as a “genuine” and “credible” CSOL teacher (Bucholtz, 2003). In the second stage, which lasted for approximately five years, Leo’s professional identity formation benefited from good institutional and collegial supports coupled with Leo’s skills in effective self-appraisal and reflection. Opportunities for systematic professional training also reinforced his sense of competence and identity as “at least a qualified CSOL teacher”. In the third stage, Leo’s commitment to TCSOL grew further. Inspired by a significant other in his earlier years, i.e. his university teacher whom Leo seemed to view as his “ideal self” (Dörnyei, 2000; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Lauriala and Kukkonen, 2005), Leo developed a strong sense of agency as a teacher, thus investing more energy thinking and reflecting about teaching and being more responsible for his students. When working in the CI in the UK, Leo actively engaged in cultural activities as well as CSOL teaching and his enthusiasm here was closely linked to his sense of investment in the prosperity of the CI which in turn boosted his feelings of pride as one of its members. Leo’s reflections on this phase also show that he was critically appraising the development of the TCSOL

profession around the world, demonstrating a strong sense of membership of this profession and even a degree of responsibility for contributing to its success.

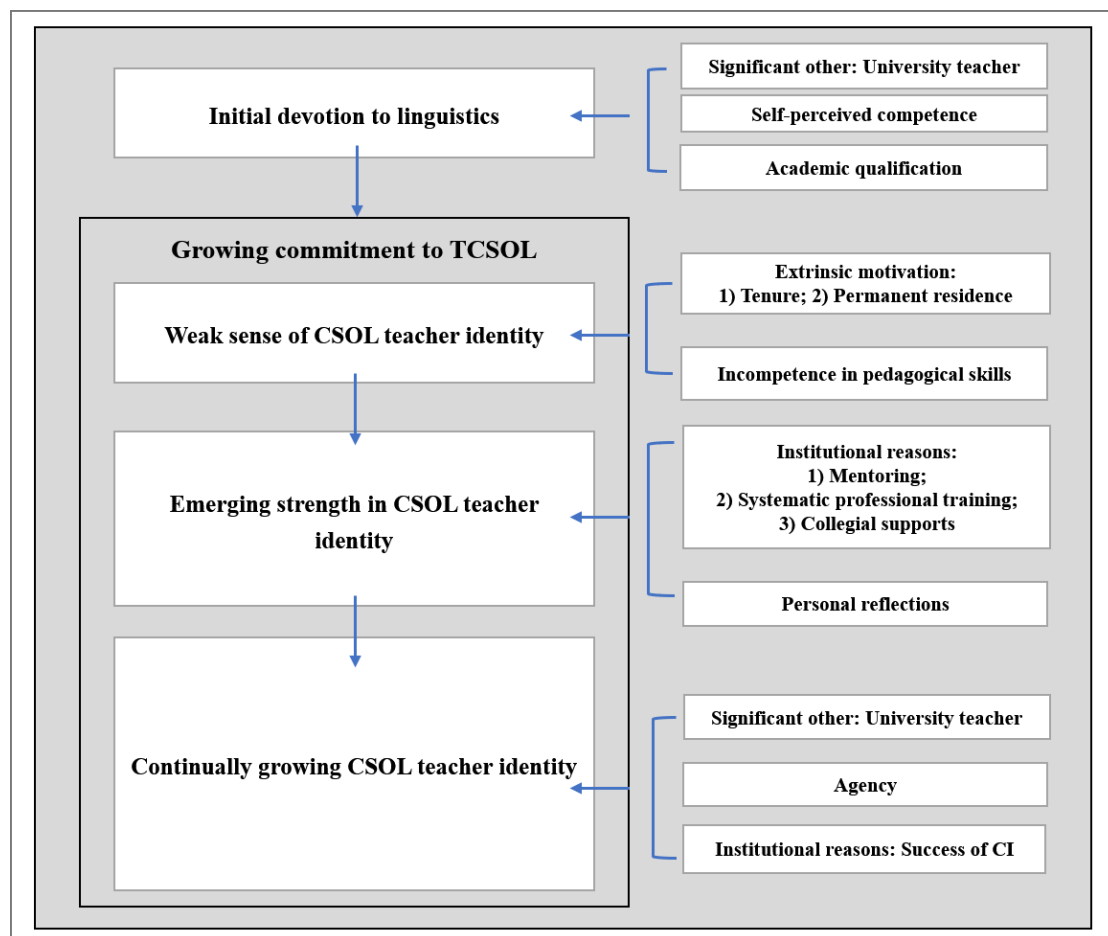


Figure 6.2: Leo's professional identity

6.4.2 Instructional identity

Leo experienced a shift in his instructional identity from a teacher-centred attitude to a more student-centred ethos. Underpinning this development were changes in Leo's cultural identity (see Figure 6.3). Originally conforming to Chinese educational beliefs ingrained in Confucianism in an unexamined way (Phinney, 1993), Leo staunchly believed that teachers inherently command prestige and respect, so in his early CSOL career Leo's approach was automatically to put teachers' authority at the centre of teaching and learning in the classroom. Later, Leo's immersion particularly in western cultural environments – which were less hierarchical and more oriented to equality – stimulated his intercultural awareness, helped to free him from his entrenched worldview (Phinney, 1993) and made him more receptive to new interpretations of the

teacher-student relationship which were a radical departure from the traditions prevailing in his home culture. In this way, Leo gradually transformed aspects of his instructional and cultural identities to conceptualise teachers as professionals who provide educational services to students whose learning experiences are paramount.

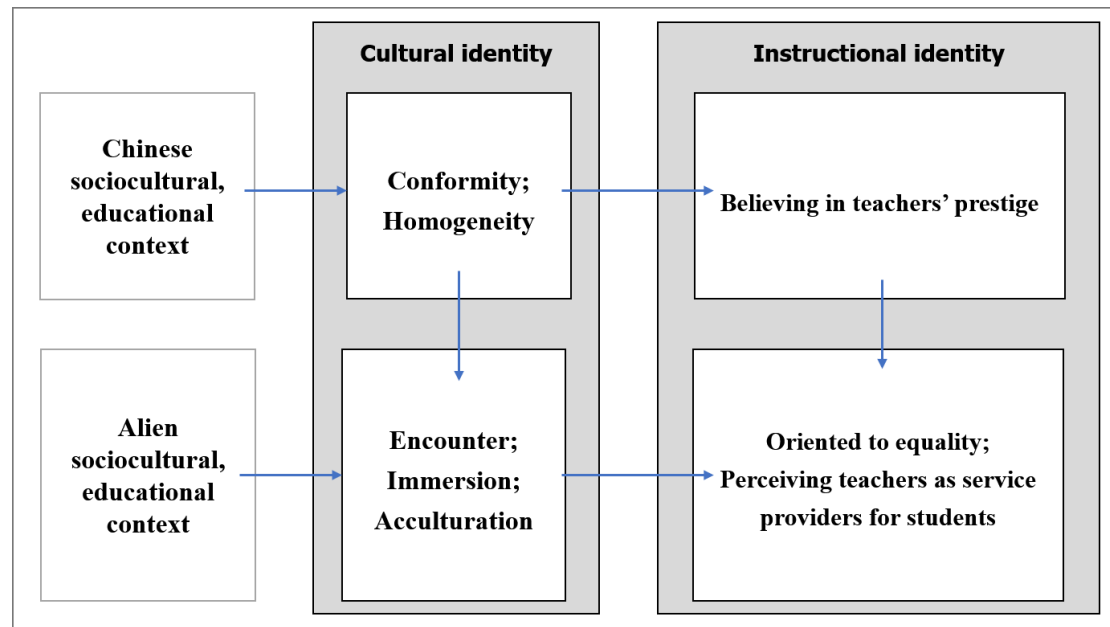


Figure 6.3: Leo's cultural and instructional identity

CHAPTER 7

CASE LILY

This chapter presents the story of Lily, a local CSOL teacher in the CI being studied. The first section of this chapter provides background information about Lily, briefly introducing her experiences in different phases of her life and career, followed by an analysis of the developmental process of her professional identity and instructional identity with a discussion about the factors impacting on this process.

7.1 Profile of Lily

Lily was born in the 1970s. She did her undergraduate university degree in the late 1980s and majored in Early Childhood Education (Phase 2) during which time she had a one-year internship in a kindergarten in a large city in China (Phase 2.1). After graduating, Lily became a kindergarten teacher of children aged between two and seven years. From the early 1990s to the early 2000s, she worked consecutively in two kindergartens, each in a different city in China (Phase 3). Then she decided to move with her family to the UK where she has stayed since (Phase 4). Several years later after arriving in the UK, she became a mother to a daughter (Phase 4.1). When her daughter reached school age, Lily decided to find a job and soon she was employed by a CI in the UK and became a local CSOL teacher there (Phase 4.2). Lily has been mainly responsible for preparing and delivering Chinese lessons to children aged 3.5 – 16 years in the weekend Chinese school affiliated to the CI, which is basically a supplementary school. Most of her students have come from families with Chinese as the heritage language. Lily has also frequently been involved in CI-organised Chinese cultural activities. She participated in my research in her fifth year of working in the CI. Figure 7.1 shows the timeline of Lily's experiences.

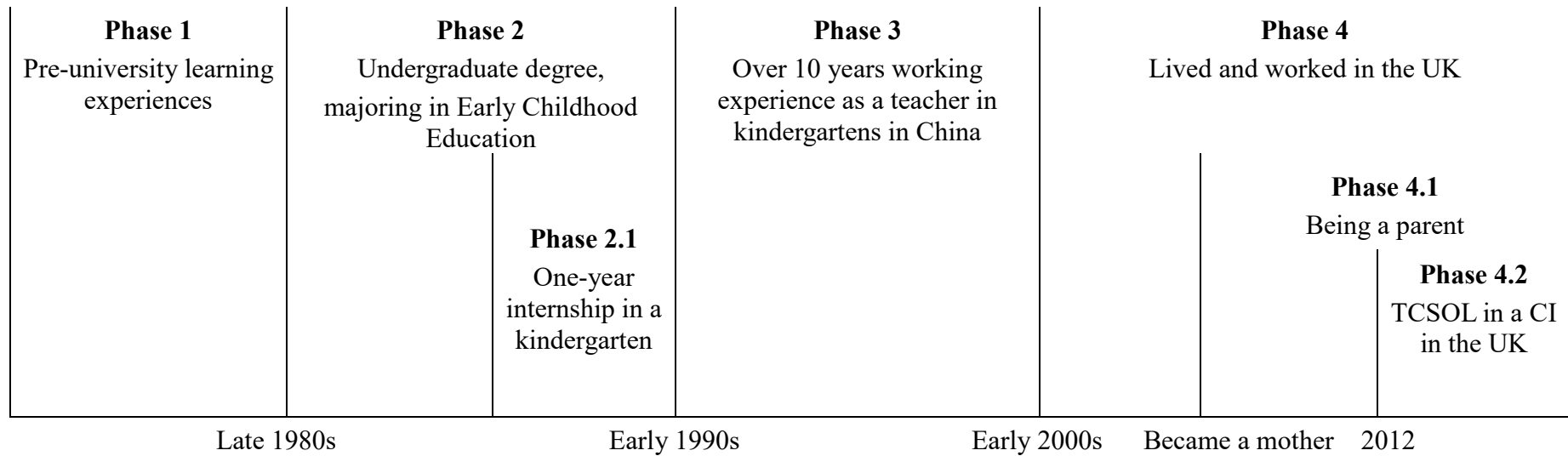


Figure 7.1: Timeline of Lily's experience

7.2 Professional identity

This section investigates the developmental process of Lily's professional identity, examining her connections with two professional fields, namely early childhood education and TCSOL, and illustrating how these connections shifted across time and jointly formed significant aspects of her professional identity.

7.2.1 Commitment to early childhood education

Lily was engaged in early childhood education, including her own education and training as well as practical teaching, for over 10 years. When asked to talk about the reasons why she chose to major in Early Childhood Education at university (Phase 2), why she decided to become a teacher, particularly a teacher of children, and why she continued in this work for so long (Phase 3), she expressed a deep and sincere love for children which had emerged early in her life (Phase 1). As she explained,

"I'm particularly fond of children. Especially when I saw my elder sister's child, I thought children were really cute. ... Personally, I love children very much. This is my biggest interest. It was exactly because of this interest that I decided to study the major I was passionate about, which was Early Childhood Education. I wanted to communicate with kids. I thought being a teacher for children would be a good choice, and I like being a teacher. Therefore, I needed to gain knowledge on this aspect." (Interview 05/Mar/2017) [All the italics in Case Lily were added by the present author as an emphasise of her emotions and attitudes.]

As the above excerpt illustrates, Lily's experiences of children during her adolescence triggered her sense of affinity with children and led to her pursuit of a career teaching them (Phinney, 1990). The intrinsic enjoyment obtained from interacting with children served as the primary motivating factor underlying her positive attitude to early childhood education and her active investment in this area (Pennington, 2015; Dörnyei, 2000; Ye, 2017).

Clearly, Lily loved children and she reported that the affection was mutual:

"I'm always welcomed by children. It's true! Wherever I went, the kids would actively come to me and ask me to hug them or pick them up. They like me very much." (Interview 05/Mar/2017)

It has been suggested that an individual's perception of their own personal compatibility with the job of teaching may lead to self-selection into teaching (Olsen, 2008, p.31).

This was the case for Lily: knowing she was popular with children reinforced her conviction that she was suitable for the teaching profession. She explained,

“This made me *more assured* that I’m *really suitable* for this career. I sincerely felt that my career choice as a teacher was *perfectly right*. [Lily laughed out loud at this point during the interview] *Yes! Yes! I like to be a teacher very much*, and I thought that being a teacher was my *first career choice*.” (Interview 05/Mar/2017)

Here Lily was explicit that teaching children was her “first career choice”; the repeated “yes” underscores her enthusiastic commitment to the teaching profession.

Pursuing her passion to become a teacher of children, Lily chose the undergraduate major of Early Childhood Education at university (Phase 2). During this period, she completed a year-long internship in one of the best kindergartens in the city where she studied (Phase 2.1). When interviewed, Lily narrated a key event during this work placement:

“I remember when I was doing the placement, frankly speaking, I was not exactly outstanding, but the head teacher [also Lily’s mentor] in my class, I didn’t know why, encouraged me to deliver a demonstration drawing lesson. Actually, drawing was also not my specialty. I was good at dancing and music. But because the head asked me to, I gave a drawing lesson and to my surprise, the lesson turned out to be *quite good*. *This affirmed my determination – I’m very very suitable to be a teacher*. I was *very happy* to continue with the major I chose, and my choice was *exactly right!*” (Interview 05/Mar/2017)

This story aligns with the observations of Martel and Wang that “the influence of a significant other can be vividly revealed in many of the critical incidents” (2015, p.291). As Lily’s description shows, the mentor’s recognition and trust were highly motivating and helped to strengthen Lily’s belief in her own abilities and potential to become a good teacher. Moreover, Lily’s unexpected success in delivering the demonstration lesson boosted her confidence even further. This critical incident during Lily’s internship shaped the early trajectory of her teacher identity formation (Liu, 2009) by reinforcing her sense of her own aptitude for teaching children. In Lily’s own words, “at that time, I became *assured of my direction, my target and my future job*” (Interview 05/Mar/2017), conveying her deepening commitment to the profession.

On graduation from university, Lily became a qualified teacher of children and from that time worked in a couple of kindergartens for over ten years (Phase 3). She described one period of her kindergarten teaching experiences:

“When I was working in a kindergarten in City S [name anonymised], it had just been founded. The work there was *hard and tiring*, and we ran short of a lot of things. The salary was low, the working conditions and the accommodation were just bearable. But we were young and *passionate* at that time, and we *didn't care about* that. The headmaster in our kindergarten asked us to sew the quilts and pillows ourselves, and we sewed every night. I felt it was *interesting*, although it was *really tiring* and we had to work overtime. But when I saw the children asleep in bed with all the quilts and pillows sewed by ourselves, I felt deep in my heart that all our investment was *worthwhile*. Indeed, although we could get some funding from the Education Bureau, if we teachers made all the things by ourselves, the children would feel more cherished. ... At that time, we also needed to participate in a lot of professional training and teaching competitions and also give demonstration classes. To be honest, I was *really tired* at that time, we all felt it was *stressful*, but we *improved very quickly*. Through these training programmes, I *improved a lot!*” (Interview 05/Mar/2017)

According to Lily, the teacher role in the kindergarten went beyond classroom duties because she was asked to do a lot of extra chores including handicrafts. She was also required to undertake regular professional training. However, driven by an intrinsic motivation (the sincere love she had for children) and her sense of agency, Lily was able to weigh up the situation and see the competitive advantages of her continued professional development (CPD) while downplaying its toll on her mental and physical energy. In summary, despite the stressful nature of the teaching position, the relatively poor working conditions, heavy workload and meagre salary, Lily focused on the positives including the pleasures of working with the pupils (Clarke, 2008, p.76).

7.2.2 Commitment to TCSOL

Lily moved to the UK in the early 2000s (Phase 4) and gave birth to her daughter not long after that (Phase 4.1). As she explained,

“As my child was still very young, I stopped working and stayed at home to take care of her. When she was around two years old, and with certain self-care ability, I went out to look for a job.” (Interview 05/Mar/2017)

Although Lily had been away from teaching for a few years, when the chance arose she did not hesitate to apply for a teaching job, but this time she decided to be a CSOL teacher working in a CI in the UK (Phase 4.2). As she recounted,

“When I came to this city, I got to know there is a CI which has a Chinese language school. I said to myself, ‘this job suits me perfectly!’ Working in the school to

teach children is my favourite thing, and teaching Chinese is also my favourite. Therefore, at that time, I was very willing to and was very eager to come to the CI.” (Interview 24/Jul/2018)

Lily’s aspiration to work with the CI and take a TCSOL job can be attributed to two primary factors. First of all, Lily’s prior experiences of teaching in kindergartens had strengthened her sense of teaching competence, contributing to her prediction that TCSOL was highly likely to be suitable for her (Olsen, 2008). As she said,

“Because I was once working in the kindergartens, and I had experiences related to teaching. I told the CI of my experiences, and I felt it would be smooth for me to get the job. Later, when I came to the CI, I started to teach in the reception class, with children who were around five and six years old. *That suited me well!*” (Interview 24/Jul/2018)

Secondly, Lily’s cultural identity played a considerable role leading her to the CSOL teaching profession and consolidating her commitment to the TCSOL. When asked why she became a CSOL teacher, Lily did not answer the question directly. Instead, she talked a lot about her thoughts and feelings of being an immigrant Chinese parent. As she said,

“As parents, *we* are fully aware that since our children grow up here in the UK, English will be their first language. But meanwhile, *we don’t want them to forget our own language. Personally, I feel Chinese is the most beautiful language, and Chinese characters are the most beautiful characters – although they are difficult, they are the most beautiful.* Although I came to this country, and my child was also born here, *I don’t want her to forget Chinese traditional culture*, and I hope there can be an environment for her to study Chinese. As a parent, my power to achieve this alone is not strong, but luckily we have the Chinese language school which provides the best environment and educational resources for children. As a parent, I am very happy there is an educational base like this for my child to study Chinese. I’m also very happy I could be a Chinese language teacher and teach children all the knowledge I have about Chinese language. I did hope I could work in the Chinese language school and *teach Chinese language to Chinese children who live in the UK*, and study with them together.” (Interview 05/Mar/2017)

A person’s cultural identity usually involves a recognition and identification with the language and traditions of a culture (Lustig and Koester, 2010, p.142-143). In the excerpt above, Lily explicitly referred to an ardent love for and a strong identification with the Chinese culture and language, as she personally thought that “*the Chinese language is the most beautiful language*”. Cultural identity is central to a person, but

this core element of one's identity tends to become salient only when it is activated by specific circumstances (Lustig and Koester, 2010, p.145). Living in a different host culture awakened Lily's cultural identity and made her strong identification with her home culture more visible to her. Meanwhile, judging from Lily's use of the inclusive "we" in her description, it seems widespread that many immigrant Chinese parents place great value on their heritage language (HL) and make substantial efforts to maintain the Chinese culture and language in their children (Zhang, 2008). Similar to Zhang's (2008) findings, in Lily's circles many immigrant Chinese parents deliberately immersed their children in environments with other Chinese speakers (e.g. sending them to weekend Chinese language school) in order to create opportunities for communication in their home language (p.119-120) and to facilitate the transmission of Chinese cultural values (Park, Tsai, Liu and Lau, 2012). It is noteworthy that when Lily explained her motive for being a CSOL teacher in the CI, she placed emphasis on teaching Chinese as a HL language "to Chinese children who live in the UK". However, this is just one dimension of the work of a CSOL teacher, so at this juncture Lily seemed to identify strongly as an immigrant Chinese parent as she envisaged the nature of the job. It was her appreciation of the significant role of the CI and CSOL teachers in preserving the Chinese language and culture in her second-generation child, along with her sense of self-efficacy in being able to contribute to this work, that led to Lily entering and committing to the CSOL teaching profession. In her own words,

"I think I will continue with the TCSOL in the CI as long as my personal conditions allow. I enjoy being with the students very much. I feel I learnt a lot from them. I think as long as the CI needs me, I can do anything for it." (Interview 24/Jul/2018)

Lily's dedication to the CSOL teaching profession is undeniable here, combined with a sense of allegiance to the CI. However, her words "*as long as my personal conditions allow*" indicate that her commitment might be conditional, reflecting a problem that the CI in this study has faced for a long time – a relatively high turnover in local CSOL teaching staff. Lily did not specify what "personal conditions" might result in her (or other local CSOL teachers) leaving, but based on my own findings, the reasons can include the relatively low remuneration (see also Wu et al., 2010), the CI's inability to provide more secure employment contracts and formal working visas for local CSOL teachers, and teachers moving to better jobs in other locales in order to provide their children with better education. The conditional commitment by the local teachers to the

CSOL teaching profession is also reflected in the cases of Mary and Rose, which will be detailed in Chapters 8 and 9.

7.3 Instructional identity

7.3.1 Teacher-student relationship dimensions of instructional identity

This section describes the evolution of Lily's teacher identity, particularly with regard to her relationship with students which was characterised by a progressively increasing student-centredness. Lily did not explicitly refer to herself as a "student-centred" teacher, but the contents and recurring themes of her four interviews revealed a distinct and growing student-centredness in her teaching mindset and her ways of getting along with the students.

7.3.1.1 Initial inclinations to student-centredness

Since early in her teaching career, Lily has been inclined to student-centredness. When she was working in kindergartens in China during the 1990s (Phase 3), the educational environment she experienced was considerably regulated, homogeneous and strict in its approach to children's development. Lily explained that "at that time, the kids were required to be compliant with the instructions of teachers and follow the curriculum developed by the kindergarten. Whether the pupils liked it or not, they had to take the courses arranged for them". Children in the kindergarten where she taught "were assessed on termly base". "There were a lot of restrictions and fetters" and every child had to "reach the standards" set for mathematical and language skills, as well as physical development including weight. The kindergarten "exerted a lot of control over pupils", even for very minor actions such as how to draw a line in the art class. Therefore, "the students had little space to draw as they wished and imagined" (all the quotes above came from Interview 27/May/2017).

The educational conventions at that time emphasised the school-set curriculum while ignoring students' actual needs and interests, evaluated students with unified standards without considering the individual differences in their physical characteristics and cognitive abilities, and controlled students' behaviours and suppressed their creativities. These conventions aroused strong dissatisfaction in Lily. As she summarised it,

“I was *really averse* to the rule of ‘reaching the standard’! I *hated* it so much!”
(Interview 21/Jul/2017)

Her antipathy towards such conventions in the kindergarten was especially apparent in a critical incident she narrated:

“There was a boy in my class who was good at everything except drawing. Whenever the kindergarten assessed students, he was blamed for his poor ability in drawing. The child was *really suffering*. When it came to drawing time, he started to pull his hair. When I saw it, I went to find our head teacher and *argued* with her for a long time. Maybe the child didn’t have gifts in drawing, but *it doesn’t matter*! It was unnecessary for him to become an artist. He can be an athlete or a mathematician. If he was really not interested in drawing, then as teachers, *we should not force him*.” (Interview 21/Jul/2017)

As this excerpt shows, Lily clearly conveys a student-centred educational ethic, calling for recognition of pupils’ different abilities and interests and allowing for their free development based on their own characteristics and preferences rather than the unified requirements imposed on them. Moreover, according to Lily’s narration, her student-centredness had gone beyond a mindset and manifested as concrete action: defending the pupil’s rights in front of the head teacher, the highest figure of authority in the kindergarten.

On the one hand, Lily consciously attributed this action to her rebellious nature characterised by “a dislike of being required and controlled by others” (Interview 27/May/2017); on the other hand, she referred to the profound influence of a “significant other” (Martel and Wang, 2015), i.e. her mathematics teacher at university, on her attitude towards students. She explained it like this,

“*I think when dealing with the issue of that child, I drew on the way my math teacher treated me in the university*. She knew I was poor at math, but she didn’t blame me, instead, she gave me another chance to take the exam. She didn’t force me as she knew I’d already tried my best, and my specialty was indeed not in math but other areas.” (Interview 21/Jul/2017)

The thing that students usually describe about their past teachers is kindness (Clarke, 2008, p.111), exactly the quality that Lily experienced and learnt from her own math teacher. As Lortie (1975) pointed out, “teachers’ models of teaching are strongly affected by their own experience as students” (Richards and Pennington, 1998, p.187). Lily’s narratives suggest that she actively imitated her role model and assimilated into

her own teaching the approach and practices that once exerted a positive effect on her as a student.

7.3.1.2 Further development in student-centredness

When Lily began teaching CSOL in a CI in the UK (Phase 4.2), her student-centred orientation became more obvious, influenced by a combination of factors including her parenting experiences of raising her own child who was born and being educated in the UK, the knowledge gained from living in the UK for over ten years, and the relatively relaxed learning environment in the Chinese heritage language school compared with schooling in China.

Firstly, through observing her daughter's educational life, Lily acquired more background insight into her students who were in similar situations. When she discovered that students "usually have a lot of homework to do when they are in their English mainstream schools, and they also need to be engaged in a lot of club activities" (Interview 05/Mar/2017), Lily became more flexible in her requirements for the students' Chinese learning. Instead of blaming students who did not finish their Chinese language homework, she showed more understanding and sometimes even consoled them:

"You can finish part of them first, and *it's ok* to continue with the rest in the next week, *it doesn't matter*." (Interview 27/May/2017)

Secondly, having seen how her daughter "strived to finish at least ten pages' Chinese homework every week which made her really tired" and "even though sometimes she felt sleepy, she still had to finish both English and Chinese assignments" (Interview 27/May/2017), Lily became more realistic and considerate in assigning homework, judging how long the assignments might take and ensuring they were achievable (MacDonald, 1999). As she described it,

"The workbook required students to copy a Chinese character six times, but I usually asked them to copy three or four times. Apart from decreasing the amount of homework, I also assigned different types of homework. For instance, I gave them three types of homework, one type was compulsory, for the rest two tasks, the students could choose one they preferred, and the other one they could ignore if they really didn't have time, *it doesn't matter*." (Interview 27/May/2017)

Thirdly, having lived in the UK for quite a long time, and as an immigrant Chinese parent herself, Lily has developed a good understanding of the living and working

conditions of the immigrant Chinese people around her, and thus could comprehend how the social and familial environments influenced her students' Chinese learning (MacDonald, 1999). She explained how she adjusted her attitude accordingly:

“In my class, some of the students come from families in which parents have always been busy with their business and spared little time helping their children with their Chinese homework. For students who came from these kinds of families, *I would not hold a too high expectation for them, it is already pretty good* if they finish the homework every time. But if possible, I still hoped they could make greater progress.” (Interview 05/Mar/2017)

Fourthly, through raising and educating her daughter, Lily became more aware of the difficulties and dilemmas that children based in the UK faced when learning Chinese (Zhang, 2008). She recalled,

“My daughter always complained to me, although she liked attending Chinese school and speaking Chinese, Chinese was still difficult for her. It was just at that moment I came to realise how great the pressure the children in the UK had, especially when they were born in a multilingual family and need to learn another language apart from English. As a parent, I was too anxious in expecting my daughter to achieve quick success, I cannot ‘ba miao zhu zhang’ (拔苗助长, a Chinese idiom which literally means trying to help the shoots grow by pulling them upward. It is usually used to describe a person, impatient for success, thus acting to spoil things by excessive enthusiasm).” (Interview 27/May/2017)

By transferring this understanding and empathy to her CSOL teaching, Lily became more tolerant and considerate with her students (Claesson and Brice, 1989), reflected in her modified expectations and requirements of students' Chinese learning. As she declared,

“At the beginning, I had *100%* expectation on them – they *must 100%* master the content of a lesson. Then my expectation lowed to *80%*, now it is *50%*. To be honest, if they could reach *50%* of my requirements, *that is already pretty good.*” (Interview 27/May/2017)

The so-called “lowering expectations and relieving demands” on students manifested in almost all the facets related to CSOL learning. In terms of speaking, Lily encouraged her students to “*try your best* to speak Chinese in the class ... When playing together during the break time, *try your best* to use Chinese ... If there are some words which are really difficult, then just use English to replace them, *it doesn't matter*”. As for reading, Lily thought “*it was already pretty good* that they were able to read some

simple Chinese books”. For writing skills, Lily “didn’t expect them to be as good as students of the same age in China”. Although her students “were at a relatively high grade, their writing abilities in Chinese just roughly equalled that of students in year one or two in China”, Lily felt that “for them, it was already pretty good!”. About the requirements for learning to write Chinese characters, Lily told her students “if there are 12 Chinese characters appearing in the list in a lesson, it is pretty good if you can learn six of them”. She also reminded herself, “as a teacher, I should not push them too much.” On students’ attendance, Lily thought “if these students could keep attending Chinese school and arrive on time, that is already pretty good and big progress for them.” (all quotes are from Interview 27/May/2017)

In the quotes above, the underlined phrases are those which appeared frequently: “not push” (one instance), “not expect too high” (two instances), “try your best” (three), “it doesn’t matter” (three) and “that is already pretty good” (six). These ideas convey a student-centred orientation in Lily’s teacher identity. The motivations behind her student-centredness seem to have layered origins. The narrations of her early career kindergarten experiences in China indicate a strong inclination to take the perspective of the child, particularly when a child is struggling, and to take action on the child’s behalf. Secondly, building on this compassion, the process of raising and educating her own child in the UK has given Lily first-hand experience of the great challenges facing second-generation children of immigrant Chinese families in learning the Chinese language (Zhang, 2008). The student-centredness in Lily’s teaching beliefs and practices as a CSOL practitioner reflects a pragmatic response to the pupils’ social and educational realities. As Lily explained,

“Most of the children we teach were born and grew up in the UK. What they have contact with every day is British culture, and what they use to communicate every day is English. The grammar and even the ways of thinking are different between Chinese and English language. In addition, although they learn Chinese in the Chinese language school every weekend, it is just two hours. When the classes are over, and they go back home, they still talk in English.” (Interview 05/Mar/2017)

Although Chinese is the HL for most of Lily’s students, it is challenging for these children to study the language due to the distinct differences between Chinese and English, the insufficient school time for Chinese classes and the lack of a facilitative Chinese-speaking environment (Zhang, 2008). It was Lily’s keen awareness of these

factors that contributed to her flexibility, empathy and consideration for her students and their learning needs.

Lily's use of language such as "*I should not push them*" and "*that is already pretty good*" indicates her agentic skills to consciously remind herself of the children's contexts and adjust her expectations and demands on students. This is noteworthy, given Lily's formative experiences in the educational environment in China. There, the educational philosophy illustrated by maxims such as "a strict teacher produces outstanding students (*Yan shi chu gao tu*, 严师出高徒)" and "if teach students without severity, it is the laziness of the teacher to blame (*Jiao bu yan, shi zhi duo*, 教不严, 师之惰)" is still prevalent (Shi, 2019; Hao, 2019). Lily's expression "if possible, I still hope they can make greater progress" suggests that she still holds high expectations for her students, revealing the influence of her Chinese cultural identity with its high-aspiration education norms (Lustig and Koester, 2010) but crucially Lily has been able to modify this influence to accommodate her students in the UK educational context.

Moreover, compared with the national education context in China where formal targets are stipulated, i.e. passing the NCEE (see section 2.3.2 in Background), the CI's institutional context (especially the Chinese language school where Lily taught) involved much less official pressure. This afforded Lily more freedom and scope in her work to take a student-centred approach and focus on her young pupils' different characteristics and learning interests.

7.4 Summary

This chapter has described the developmental process of Lily's teacher identity mainly focusing on professional and instructional aspects. The key points are summarised below, along with two figures to depict the process.

7.4.1 Professional identity

Lily's professional identity is characterised by a strong commitment to the teaching profession even across different branches of subjects and pupils (see Figure 7.2 below). Lily had an affinity with children from an early age and so was eager to join the teaching profession to educate young children. Her confident self-perceptions that she was very

suitable for the role of a teacher contributed to Lily's career choice and helped her sustain a long-lasting commitment to the profession, a finding which echoes the argument that "the more central a belief and more connected to their emotions, the more influential it is to their identities" (Barcelos, 2017, p.147). The encouragement from her mentor and an unexpected success in giving a demonstration class during a kindergarten work placement secured her commitment to dedicate herself to early childhood education. In spite of the poor working conditions, Lily invested a lot of energy in her first teaching jobs and expressed an intrinsic enjoyment of her work, demonstrating her strong sense of teacher agency to mediate the negative aspects of the work setting. Subsequently, changes in the sociocultural environment prompted Lily to alter her career direction to become a teacher of CSOL. To some extent, this decision reflected her newly invigorated cultural identity in an alien context which helped her appreciate her home culture and made her keen to contribute to the preservation of Chinese cultural values in the second generation of immigrant Chinese in the UK. It is significant that despite these motivations and a sustained passion for teaching work, Lily felt that her commitment to TCSOL had become conditional largely due to certain restrictions of life in the UK.

7.4.2 Instructional identity

The most salient feature in Lily's instructional identity is a sustained and growing student-centred ethos (see Figure 7.3 below). This has its origins partly in Lily's personality with two dominant traits being her kindness and empathy for children and students and also a dislike of being controlled and an appreciation for autonomy. The importance of kindness was underscored by her university teacher who helped shaped Lily's student-centred orientation in the initial stage of her professional life. This leaning was reinforced by her experiences as a parent and as an immigrant in the UK and also by the relatively unpressured learning environment in the CI, which enabled her to be very patient and considerate of her students' personal contexts and individual learning needs in their Chinese language and cultural education.

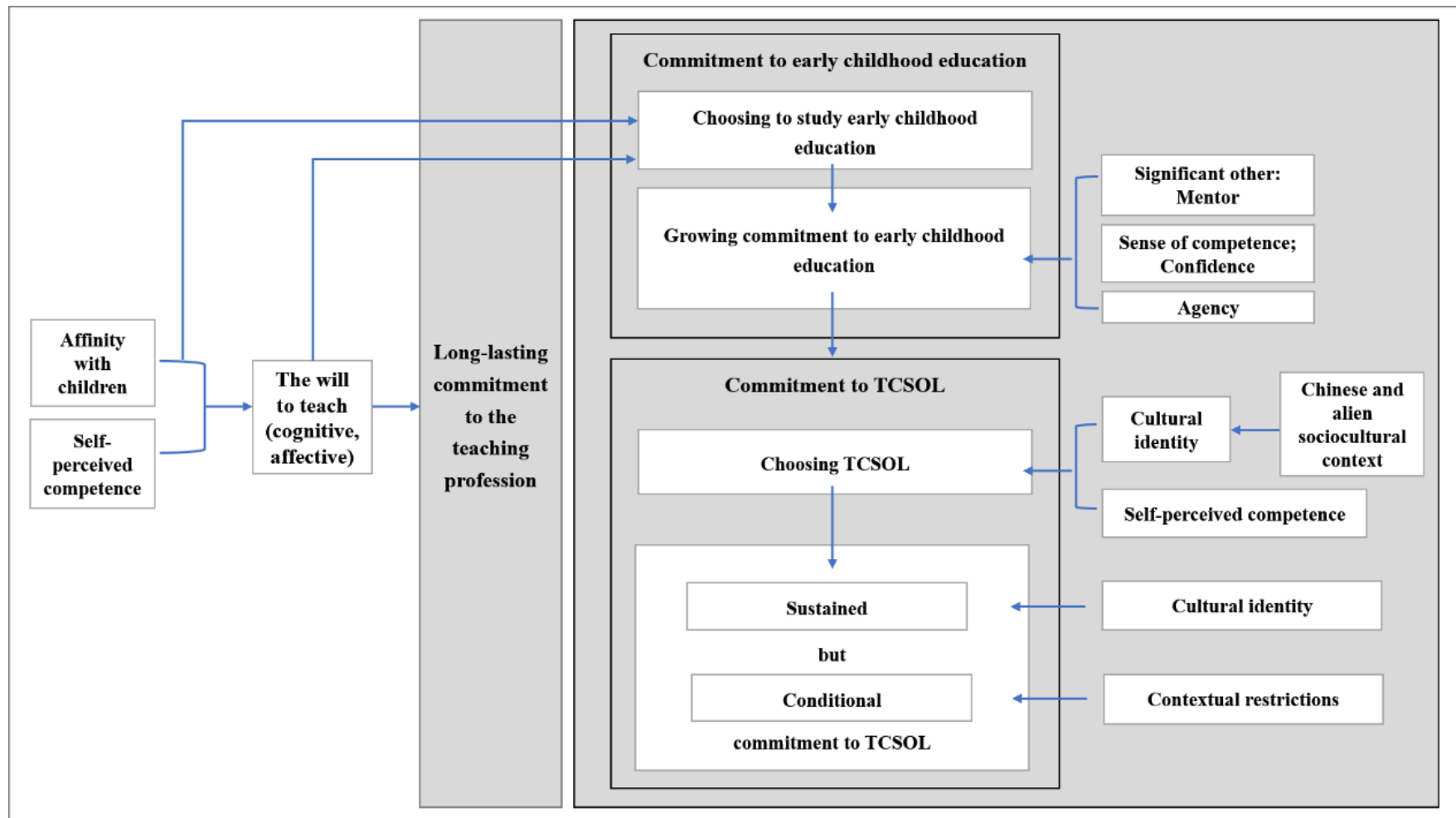


Figure 7.2: Lily's professional identity

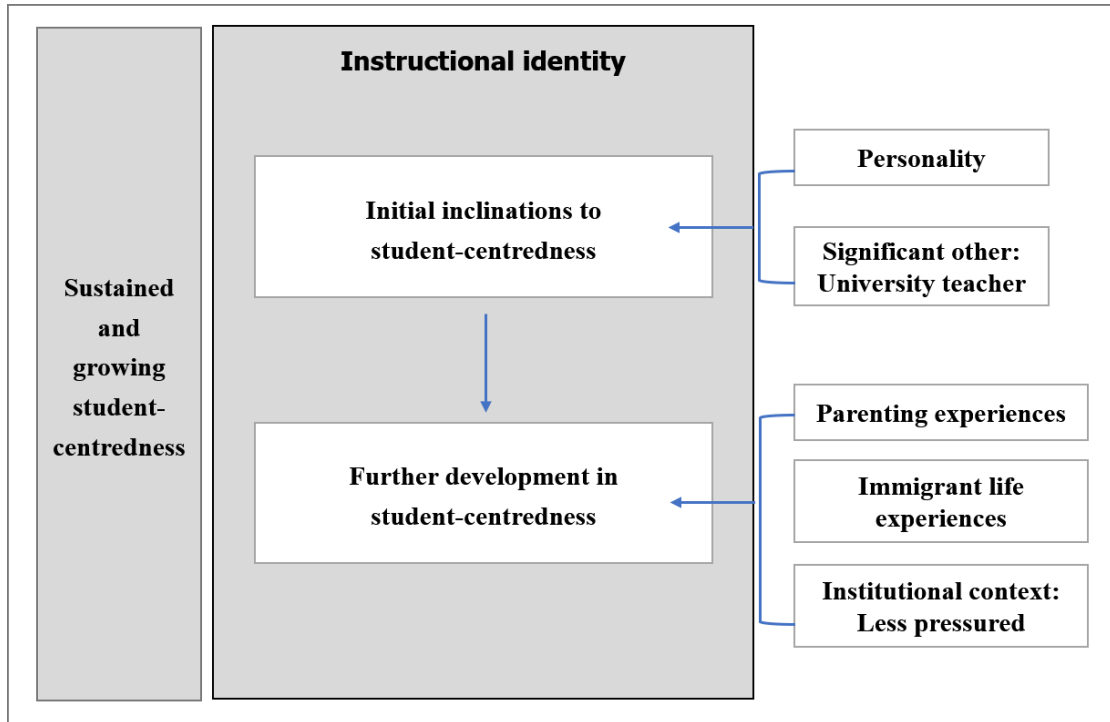


Figure 7.3: Lily's instructional identity

CHAPTER 8

CASE MARY

This chapter presents the story of Mary, one of the local CSOL teachers in the CI being investigated. Firstly, I provide a brief profile of Mary with the background information relevant to the present study. Secondly, I describe the developmental process of her professional identity, followed by a detailed account of how her instructional identity and cultural identity intertwined in their evolution. A number of factors which exerted influence on the formation of Mary's teacher identity will also be discussed.

8.1 Profile of Mary

Mary was admitted into a university in China in the mid-2000s and took her major in E (specialism anonymised) (Phase 2). After graduation, she became a teacher in the university where she studied (Phase 3). After working there for around one year, she left the university, went back to her hometown, signed up for an IELTS course and went abroad to participate in a short-term learning programme (Phase 4). Soon after completing that programme, she returned to China and found a job in an English language training institution (anonymised as Institution H), working mainly as an EFL teacher but also having responsibility for some marketing work there (Phase 5). She taught IELTS in Institution H for about a year, and then went to the UK to do a postgraduate degree in a marketing-related area (Phase 6). After getting her master's degree, Mary came back to China and was offered a job as an EFL teacher in another English language training institution (anonymised as Institution N) and was involved in some marketing work at the same time (Phase 7). Not long after this, Mary left China and went to the UK for her second postgraduate programme in a marketing-related field (Phase 8.1). Since that time, she has remained in the UK. After getting her second master's degree, she began seeking work in the UK and soon had the opportunity to be employed by a CI in the UK as a part-time CSOL teacher (Phase 8.2). Mary was mainly responsible for preparing and delivering Chinese lessons to children aged 3.5 – 16 years in the weekend Chinese language school affiliated to the CI, which is basically a supplementary school. Most of her students came from Chinese as heritage language

families. She was also frequently involved in CI-organised Chinese cultural activities. Mary participated in my research around 18 months after she joined the CI, and we had three interviews in the following 18 months, from February 2017 to May 2018. Figure 8.1 shows the timeline of Mary's experiences.

Phase 1 Pre-university learning experiences	Phase 2 Under-graduate period, Studied Major E	Phase 3 Being a university teacher	Phase 4 Learning IELTS, Short-term overseas learning	Phase 5 EFL teacher in Institution H in China	Phase 6 Master's degree 1 in the UK, majored in Marketing related area	Phase 7 EFL teacher in Institution N in China	Phase 8 Lived and worked in the UK		
							Phase 8.1 Master's degree 2 in the UK, majored in Marketing-related area	Phase 8.2 CSOL teacher in a CI in the UK	
Mid 2000s							2015		

Figure 8.1: Timeline of Mary's experiences

8.2 Professional identity

During the interview, Mary offered some commentary on her career life as a whole, which established an important theme for her professional identity:

“Since graduation from the university, in my career development, *marketing and education have gone together, qi tou bing jin* (齐头并进, a Chinese idiom which means to advance side by side) ... In my career so far, being involved in teaching actually accounted for nearly 60% to 70% of my work, while marketing only took up about 30% to 40%. ... My major was marketing. I mean, in terms of my academic background, it was *definitely* marketing. However, in terms of the energy I invested in, I would say it was still in education and teaching that I allocated more energy.” (Interview 27/May/2018) [All the italics in Case Mary were added by the present author to emphasise Mary’s emotions and attitudes]

Identity is multidimensional, with the different dimensions together manifesting struggle and harmony (Barkhuizen, 2017, p.4). Mary’s comment above shows that her self-perceived professional identity is two-fold: one element centres on the marketing profession and the other the teaching profession (including TEFL and TCSOL). This section illustrates how Mary developed her professional identity through the negotiation of these two primary elements and managing the relationship between them.

8.2.1 Sustained commitment to the marketing profession

The marketing profession has appealed to Mary since she was young (Phase 1), as she stated,

“Originally, my personal interest was in marketing.” (Interview 27/May/2018)

Mary thought she “has always been good at communicating with others” (Interview 27/May/2018) and “good at organising and running things” (Interview 27/May/2018). In Mary’s opinion, these attributes were necessary for success in marketing, thus she was convinced of her own suitability for this profession (Olsen, 2008).

Although Mary could not pursue her passion for marketing as her undergraduate major (due to family opposition), she deliberately sought out and participated in opportunities at the university for marketing-related practices (Phase 2). As she recalled,

“When I was in the university, I joined the Student Union (SU). ... Later, I became the minister of Liaison Department of SU. I always came up with some ideas, and

went out to communicate with merchants or business people, and sought their financial sponsorship of the activities we organised.” (Interview 27/May/2018)

As Dörnyei (2000) pointed out, human motivation is “responsible for why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity, and how hard they are going to pursue it” (p.520). Mary’s narratives reveal that her genuine enthusiasm for marketing developed into an intrinsic motivation which drove her active investment of time and energy in marketing practices for a range of projects.

During her interview, Mary emphasised that since her graduation from the university she has always looked for or been engaged in some form of marketing work. Even when she was teaching EFL in China (Phase 5 and 7), she sustained this interest and involvement and seized opportunities to undertake marketing-related tasks. As she recalled,

“When I was teaching IELTS in Institution H, I also helped them do the promotion and expand the enrolment. The ideas I proposed for the market promotion of our custom-designed language programmes were always appreciated by my leaders, so they entrusted me to be responsible for this area. Therefore, *I have always been doing the marketing job.*” (Interview 27/May/2018)

“Institution N was a private English training school. At that time, I also assisted them to do marketing work. It was to help them enrol more students. I did *enjoy* it. I thought a lot about how to design some interesting activities for the demonstration classes in order to attract the kids and their parents to sign up for our school. With the techniques I taught, children could acquire more than 10 English words in merely one lesson whereas they could only master a few when learning on their own.” (Interview 27/May/2018)

In contrast to the three participant ESL college teachers in Farrell’s (2011) research who felt uncomfortable with the sales dimension to the role assigned by the institution, Mary was ready and willing to undertake such a role – “selling” the language course programmes and her teaching methods by convincing parents and students alike of the effectiveness of the approaches, and feeling proud of her achievements in this promotion work. Here Mary enveloped the sales and marketing role into her teacher identity, to some extent realising her unfulfilled wish to be a marketing professional.

It is significant that Mary successfully completed *two* postgraduate programmes in the UK, both of them in the area of marketing and business (Phases 6 and 8.1). Formal education in marketing not only strengthened her sense of connection and affiliation to

the discipline (Pennington and Richards, 2016, p.13) but also equipped her with sufficient cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984) to perceive herself as a legitimate member of the marketing profession (Block, 2007, p.25). This explains why Mary asserted, “my major was marketing. I mean, in terms of my academic background, it was *definitely* marketing” (Interview 27/May/2018). Although her actual engagement in marketing work only accounted for 30% or 40% of her career, the discipline was keenly felt in her sense of identity.

8.2.2 Shifting identification with the teaching profession

In contrast to her strong and sustained sense of belonging to the marketing profession, Mary’s identification with the teaching profession developed softly and changed over time. In the beginning (Phase 2), Mary showed no interest in teaching as a job. She recalled,

“When I was at university, I *never thought* of being a teacher one day.” (Interview 27/May/2018)

Interestingly, Mary reported that “being involved in teaching actually accounted for nearly 60% to 70%” (Interview 27/May/2018) of her later career. However, when talking about her four periods of working as a teacher, she kept reiterating its emergence as a “coincidence”.

After graduating from the university, Mary became a teacher in that same institution (Phase 3). She explained,

“Maybe it was a *ji yuan qiao he* (机缘巧合, a four-character Chinese word consists of two parts: the first half ‘*ji yuan*’ means good timing and lucky chance, and the second half ‘*qiao he*’ means coincidence). You know, I had relatively rich experiences in communicating and working with students as I spent many years in the SU, and at that time, our university was just newly established and was short of teachers. Therefore, the leaders in our university talked to me and then they *forced and pushed* me to be a teacher.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

When reflecting on becoming an EFL teacher in institution H (Phase 5), Mary again stressed that it was not a calculated decision:

“To be a teacher for me was an *accident every time*. When I was learning IELTS before studying abroad, I found that the education sector, particularly English training for students who planned to study overseas, was a very profitable area, and I did want to *earn more money*. *Just at that time*, Institution H was seeking a

person who had overseas study experience, so they employed me. It was really so coincidental!” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

In Mary’s eyes, her entry to Institution N (Phase 7) was an accident, as she highlighted,

“Actually, *every time* was a coincidence, even Institution N. I never planned to be a teacher there before. I tried to apply for other marketing-related jobs at that time, but got no reply. Therefore, I submitted my CV to Institution N. *Truly*, it was just a *casual act*, but unexpectedly, I was employed.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

For Mary, becoming a TCSOL in the CI was quick and unexpected, and could be traced back to a lead offered by her friend during a casual chat over afternoon tea (Phase 8.2). As she recalled,

“I never thought about it! I just feel that being a teacher was a coincidence for me *every time*. ... To be honest, it was a wu xin zhi ju (无心之举, a Chinese idiom which means an unintentional act). I never thought that the second time I went to the UK, I would still be a teacher. Oh, to me, there were *chance happenings everywhere*. *Every time* was a coincidence. Wu xin cha liu liu cheng yin (无心插柳柳成荫, a Chinese idiom which means a willow which is not intentionally planted in turn grows up to be prosperous).” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

In the above quotes, the underlined words and phrases “*coincidence*” (four occasions), “*accidents*” (two), “*unexpected*” (one) and “*never thought/planned*” (three) reveal Mary as someone with a keen sense of ‘lost’ or misplaced vocation. Mary might feel at a deep level that she was/is not a teacher in the truest sense, or at least that teaching was only an interim measure and that her real vocation was marketing, notwithstanding that on a rational level she clearly thought teaching was an acceptable or even a relatively good job option.

According to Wenger (1998), ‘engagement’, being the investment of ourselves in both what we do and our relations with others, is an important source of identification (p.192). It is undeniable that Mary invested great efforts in teaching. For example, she recalled that when she was teaching at Institution H, she “analysed about 10 years’ test papers, and summarised a variety of techniques and skills” (Interview 17/Jun/2017) in order to help her students with their IELTS tests. Meanwhile, she also derived sincere enjoyment from teaching and declared that she “felt very happy and really liked interacting with children” (Interview 17/Jun/2017) when she was working at Institution N. However, Mary’s investment in teaching practice did not necessarily lead to growth of a sense of sincere belonging to the teaching profession. As she said,

“In my earlier life, I was either being engaged in studying or working as a teacher, but *honestly, I really hope to try something else*. Because after all, my major is marketing and business, *I still want to do the job I should have done*.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Mary’s expression “*the job I should have done*” actually refers to work that is directly relevant to her educational background. Her systematic formal education as well as her genuine interest in marketing played a fundamental role in shaping her identification with and sense of belonging to the CoP of the marketing profession. This aligns with Barcelos’ (2017) argument that “the more central a belief and more connected to their emotions, the more influential it is to their identities” (p.147).

In addition, from the excerpts above, it is clear that Mary becoming a teacher was largely driven by a number of external factors. When reviewing the first time she became a teacher in the university (Phase 3), she felt that she was “*forced and pushed*” by the leader in the university. This suggests a passive element (Gordon, 1986) in her attitudes towards teaching and her yielding to power. Salary potential is also significantly related to a person’s vocational choice (Bacolod, 2007). Mary’s decision to work at Institution H (Phase 5) was also driven by economic reasons, in light of her comment that teaching may enable her to “*earn more money*”. Joining Institution N (Phase 7) was to some extent driven by the then job market and specifically her lack of success in getting a marketing-related job. Therefore, teaching EFL was more or less an expediency. Developments in the education industry in China, particularly the burgeoning in the last two decades of English training courses for Chinese students who intend to study overseas, created a large number of job opportunities (Lyu, 2014). Therefore, there was usually a high demand for EFL teachers particularly in private English language training institutions, and there were plenty of posts suitable for Mary. Meanwhile, her education-related experiences and job opportunities in the teaching profession formed a self-reinforced chain (Olsen, 2008): her prior experiences such as communicating with university students (Phase 2), EFL learning in the language training institutions and overseas learning (Phase 4) all enhanced her compatibility for EFL teaching; meanwhile, every time she invested in a teaching-related job this contributed to a greater possibility of being selected into teaching again the next time. Therefore, according to Mary, teaching “became the only job I was systematically eligible for” (Interview 17/Jun/2017).

Although Mary regarded becoming a CSOL teacher and working in the CI as largely accidental, she expressed a sincere intention to be a dedicated staff member during her initial two years there. As she explained,

“If I just want to laze away for a couple of days in the CI, whether I teach well or badly, it doesn’t matter; but *now I want to teach CSOL in the CI for a long period of time*, so I must find a route to integrate my way of teaching into British local education.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Moreover, through her actions, Mary demonstrated a genuine commitment to TCSOL. As she described,

“I participated in a lot of professional training organised by the CI. Apart from the CI-led trainings, if there were other professional training events or academic conferences, *as long as I felt useful, I would attend at all costs, without thinking about the distance, and even if I needed to self-fund.*” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

In fact, the two teaching plans Mary provided during the research period (described in the Methodology chapter) confirmed that in 2017 she did participate in a CSOL teacher training programme which lasted for several months and required her to travel long distances to another city.

However, Mary’s attitude towards the job of CSOL teaching fundamentally changed during my interview with her in May 2018. When I referred back to the June 2017 interview and asked her whether she still considered TCSOL in the CI a long-term career plan, almost without any hesitation, she gave me a negative answer – “no, it is not in my career plan”. She further explained,

“When you interviewed me last time, *I didn’t find other jobs, so I didn’t have other considerations*. However, after working for a long time in the CI, many things as well as my own situation have all changed. Therefore, the previous idea I told you last time has changed. For this job, there were only a few classes in a week, and your *salary was limited*. It was *impossible* to totally rely on it to feed yourself. If I want to stay in this profession for a long period of time, I must consider whether my work and my life could balance together. Teaching Chinese in the CI can only be *a complementary job*, but it will not be my long-term plan. I know that you are familiar with the *system in the CI*. For local teachers like me, you have no way to change CSOL teaching into a full-time job. As it is a part-time job, it means that it is *not secure*, so whether or not I could do it for a long period of time, *it all depends*. Therefore, everything is *uncertain*. Furthermore, in the CI, as you can *never get a stable job*, you will *never truly from your inner heart feel that you belong to this group, because only the staff dispatched by Hanban have job security, and*

teachers like me do not have this stability. I feel that even if I had been employed as a local teacher, there are still some people in the CI who *looked down on local teachers.* Do you know? Many teachers like me did previously aspire to stay in the CI, with great enthusiasm, but in the end, it was also the CI that made us *feel disappointed.*” (Interview 27/May/2018)

This account, compared with her demonstrable dedication to TCSOL during her first two years in the CI, showed that Mary’s identification with the job of TCSOL had substantially declined, due to both contextual and personal reasons. As the number of Hanban-assigned teachers and volunteers was already sufficient to handle the daily routines in the CI, no full-time job vacancy was ever generated for local teachers. The lack of potential for a secure job and the related lack of stability led to Mary’s diminishing sense of belonging.

Teachers’ satisfaction with salary, according to the findings in Canrinus et al. (2012), is another significant factor influencing their occupational commitment and their sense of their own professional identities, i.e. “teachers’ perceptions of themselves as teachers based on their interpretations of the context in which they function and their interaction with this context” (p.127, based on Kelchtermans, 2009). The meagre salary which failed to meet Mary’s basic living needs led to her questioning the value of the role of TCSOL in the CI and labelling it merely as a “*complementary job*” (similar to Wu et al., 2011, p.51), and chipping away at her teacher identity (Schaefer, 2013).

As Burns (2016) suggested, generating and keeping a sense of belonging to a community involves finding collegial recognition, or being reckoned as legitimate by colleagues (p.134). However, the unpleasant collegial environment Mary experienced in the CI where she felt “*looked down upon*” dampened her enthusiasm, thus weakening her sense of belonging and triggering her feelings of alienation from the institute (Schaefer, 2013). Membership, in its essence, is a display of competence and being recognised as competent through the engagement in a CoP (Wenger, 1998). To be accepted as a legitimate member of a community, one has to acquire enough cultural capital such as educational assets or qualifications (Block, 2007). However, Mary had not gained any education-related qualification, particularly relevant academic degrees. As she explained,

“Not like my colleagues whose educational background was linguistics or second language acquisition (SLA), *I never learnt these before.* When they referred to the

SLA during our chatting, I could only reply ‘oh, really?’ *I was ashamed to tell them that I had not majored in education, but truly I didn’t understand it.*” (Interview 27/May/2018)

This excerpt reveals a clear sense of inferiority due to a lack of relevant academic qualification (Block, 2007) and subject knowledge in education (especially in TCSOL) and this may have contributed to why Mary felt she was “*looked down upon*” by some of her colleagues.

Apart from the contextual reasons, certain changes in her personal situation, especially a better, alternative opportunity in the labour market (Bacolod, 2007), i.e. she “found a job related to marketing in the UK, with responsibility for negotiating the Chinese and English markets” (Interview 27/May/2018), led to her hesitation in leaving the TCSOL profession. This also reinforces the idea that Mary has always experienced an internal struggle between her allegiance to the teaching profession and the allure of marketing.

8.3 Instructional identity

8.3.1 Identity via pedagogical beliefs and practices

This section describes the process by which Mary’s instructional identity was formed, particularly with respect to her pedagogical beliefs and practices, which were inextricable from the influences of the changes in her cultural identity. Although cultural identity is not given a discrete sub-section in this chapter, it played a fundamental role in mediating the development of Mary’s instructional identity as will be seen below.

8.3.1.1 Homogeneity and conformity

When Mary had just started to teach CSOL in the Confucius Institute, she thought,

“No matter whether I was teaching in the University (Phase 3) or teaching IELTS in Institution H (Phase 5) or working in the Institution N (Phase 7), the people I was teaching were all Chinese students, and I was in contact only with *Chinese ideas and traditional Chinese-style education*, and the teaching methods I used were *completely Chinese-style* as well. I was a *completely Chinese-style teacher* at that time.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Culture is vital for one's identity, as it is "central to a person's sense of self" (Lustig and Koester, 2010, p.145) and it serves as an important "means to the semiotic mediation of self as a recognised social type" (Holland and Lachicotte, 2007, p.114). When Mary talked about her pedagogical practices in the classroom, she naturally adopted culture as a construct to define her instructional identity. In her description above, Mary seemed to be self-conscious about the apparent homogeneity in her teacher identity and her conformity to what she perceived as "*Chinese-style education*", and she professed to be a "*completely Chinese-style teacher*".

Growing up in China, Mary experienced the "Chinese-style education" as a mode of education with the following characteristics:

First of all, Chinese teachers usually highlighted students' obedience to classroom rules and imposed relatively strict requirements on students' physical postures in class. As Mary suggested,

"In Chinese classrooms, teachers often stressed discipline. From the kindergartens to schools, students were required to sit up straight and put their hands behind their backs. These are the so-called standard postures. Besides, before answering questions, students must raise their hands first." (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Secondly, based on Mary's depiction, in China, children's real interests were usually overlooked. Instead, it was their parents' preferences or choices that actually carried weight. As Mary described,

"In China, parents said that this was 'my child's interest', but that was just a camouflage, it was actually parents' well-intentioned lies. The common trick for parents was when they felt that acquiring a certain type of specialty might be useful, they asked their children to have a try." (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Thirdly, from Mary's observation, learning for tests was widely advocated and the learning outcomes especially the examination scores were highly valued by schools and parents. As she explained,

"Chinese people particularly valued test scores. Therefore, the schools usually organised some examinations. Whether or not the children have progressed, just have a look at their test results." (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Fourthly, in Mary's account, Chinese students were usually under great pressure to learn. The demands made of them were quite high, both in terms of the volume of content they needed to master and in the level of expected attainment. As Mary explained,

“Chinese students had a lot of knowledge to learn in each lesson, just like spoon-feeding, they had a lot of things to master every day. Moreover, Chinese teachers had strict requirements of their students, demanding them to master all the content in the textbooks.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Teachers may consciously and unconsciously assimilate into their own teaching practices the aspects which are inherent to their educational systems (Eisenstein-Ebsworth and Schweers, 1997; Richards and Pennington, 1998). According to Mary’s narrative, her teaching beliefs and practices resonated with and showed a certain degree of conformity to the education she experienced and observed in her home cultural environment.

Firstly, Mary required students to behave well (especially physically) and comply with her instructions and the rules she set in her classes. As she recalled,

“In my previous teaching, I required my students to comply as follows: sitting up straight, putting hands in the right place, and raising hands before answering my questions. When we were in class, they must do as I said.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Secondly, she genuinely appreciated and embraced the practice of evaluating students’ attainment and progress via quantified results, i.e. test scores. Furthermore, she was good at helping students cope with tests and achieve high scores, and she evidently felt proud of this. As she specified,

“Previously, I was teaching IELTS. I summarised a variety of techniques and skills for students, enabling most of them to get a band score of 5.5 or 6 with whatever poor foundation in English. ... I told my friends before, *my style of doing things was advocating quantification, so did I in teaching. I emphasised accuracy and expected to see a definite result.*” (Interview 27/May/2018)

Thirdly, influenced by the requirements in her previous workplace, Mary also imposed rather high demands on her students particularly to ensure that they had acquired all the knowledge she had taught. As she said,

“When I was teaching EFL in Institution N, I have to say that because the educational style of the Institution was rather high-handed, so was I. ... Apart from supervising students’ classroom performance, I also asked my teaching assistants to make phone calls to students’ parents to ask them to urge their children to make up for their insufficiencies.” (Interview 27/May/2018)

Judging by the above quotes, Mary’s depictions of “Chinese-style education” were full of over-generalisations such as “in Chinese classrooms, teachers...”, “in China,

parents...”, “Chinese people...”, “Chinese students...”, and “Chinese teachers...”. These conclusions, however, were problematic because they were mostly based on Mary’s personal experiences and perhaps information gained from the community, the mass media and elsewhere (Lustig and Koester, 2010). Having grown up in China and having had most of her education (from basic to high) in China, and having worked in the educational context there for several years, Mary felt that she had a very good knowledge of Chinese education. The knowledge, however, was just a set of essentialised notions of Chinese culture and education (Clarke, 2008). Although her descriptions did contain some elements of truth (Coleman, 1997) about the educational contexts in China, such reductionism is a sort of “formulaic stereotyping and over-generalising” (Clarke, 2008, p.22) and failed to do justice to the complexities in Chinese education systems and practice, in terms of the different historical periods as well as the different characteristics of each region. By unquestioningly accepting the prevailing discourses about Chinese education in China, Mary developed a rather stereotypical conception of Chinese education, perhaps also betraying a lack of critical evaluation, and thought that what she had seen, heard and experienced was an accurate representation of education in China. So, Mary internalised the Chinese teaching philosophies and practices she herself had experienced and automatically employed the stereotypes to evaluate her teaching practices; thus she labelled herself as a “completely Chinese-style teacher”.

8.3.1.2 Disorientation

Disorienting experiences are a crucial first step for transformation in perspectives and practices (Trilokekar and Kukar, 2011, p.1141). As Mary recalled,

“It was true that *I once was fearful*. Do you know? I *struggled* at that time. On the one hand, I wanted to demonstrate my attributes in teaching, and on the other hand, *I didn’t know* how to teach, so *I lost my confidence* and *felt at a loss*.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

“Self-doubt and loss of self-esteem are typical feelings among sojourners as they struggle to make themselves understood” (Brown and Holloway, 2008, p.38, based on Hofstede, 1991). The expressions “I didn’t know” or “I lost confidence” appeared several times when Mary narrated her CSOL teaching experiences during the initial academic term (around three months) in the CI. She again stressed,

“For me, this was a situation *I hadn't come across before*, I had *little confidence*, and *didn't know what to do*.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Facing alien physical and cultural surroundings and unfamiliar conventions may cause disorientation (Giddens, 1991) in new sojourners or immigrants, which further lead to their sense of helplessness and loss of self-confidence (Brown and Holloway, 2008). The main causes of Mary's loss of confidence were the remarkable differences between Chinese and British culture and a lack of knowledge of the educational environment and life for students in the UK. As she pointed out,

“Because we're two different countries, and two different cultural environments. In China, you were confident with whatever you said. However, now you are in the UK, the environment has changed, and even the country you are situated in has been different. Therefore, I didn't have any confidence with what I said. ... I totally had no idea of what British education looked like, what British students were thinking of, how I should teach and whether the Chinese teaching methods were suitable for British children or not.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Mary had left behind favourable conditions, prestige and advantages as a teacher in China which intensified her sense of loss. As she recalled,

“In Institution H, I always got guidance from my predecessors, especially my mentor Nancy (name anonymised). She shared her experiences with me and taught me how to teach, which helped me a lot.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

“When I was in Institution N, the reference materials for teaching were provided for teachers in advance, and most of the time, we just needed to follow the references. ... Many parents were very polite to me at that time. They asked me, ‘teacher, could you please pay more attention to my kids?’, especially when I was in those English training schools.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

As can be seen from Mary's words, the plentiful collegial support, mentor guidance and teaching references available in her workplaces in China made her feel secure and competent in carrying out her teaching practices (Schaefer, 2013; Borman and Dowling, 2008; Guarino et al., 2006; Macdonald, 1999; Smith and Ingersoll, 2004). Moreover, as introduced earlier (see Chapter 2), teachers enjoyed prestige and relatively high social status in the Chinese cultural context (Shi, 2019), thus they had the symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984) to gain the respect and gratitude of parents. Therefore, Mary had a strong sense of self-esteem as an EFL teacher when she was in China. However, the situation changed when she taught in the CI. According to Mary,

“The headmaster just gave me a book and asked me to teach, there were not even any reference materials for teaching. ... I *never* observed other teachers’ classes. I just helped for a short period of time in the summer school before I formally started to teach. Therefore, *I didn’t know* how a formal CSOL class should be delivered.” (Interview 27/May/2018)

Apparently the lack of induction programme (Guarino et al., 2006) and lack of knowledge of the institutional environment and the culture of teaching in the CI made Mary feel confused and helpless in the beginning, which intensified her self-doubt (Hofstede, 1991) as a CSOL teacher.

8.3.1.3 Immersion and acculturation

With an awareness of the homogeneity in her instructional identity and the fact that her pedagogical methods were probably not suitable to adapt for students in the UK, Mary actively sought to develop herself professionally through participating in various CSOL teacher training activities organised by the CI and elsewhere. As she declared,

“*I didn’t have any idea of what British education looked like and what British students were thinking of. That was also the reason why I participated in a CSOL teacher training programme later.*” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

During the programme, Mary visited a number of British local schools, learning about how the teaching activities were organised and communicating with plenty of experienced CSOL teachers who have taught in the UK for decades. In these ways, Mary was able to gain insights into the British education system and the pedagogical methods widely advocated in British local schools. In her narrations, she particularly mentioned the idea “put yourself in your students’ shoes” learned from one of the tutors on the professional training programme and this triggered her to look at teaching from an entirely new perspective. As she explained,

“It was at that time I came to realise that I should not treat myself as a teacher, but should view myself as a student, adopting the students’ stance to think, then I would know what teaching methods they might prefer and what activities they would like to join in. It was really useful and I employed it in my teaching soon after the programme. ... So now I think about students’ needs first, and then design my teaching plan, rather than designing a teaching plan first and then forcing students to follow my ideas.”

Additionally, through the “situated learning” (Lave and Wenger, 1991) via classroom observation in British schools, Mary came to sincerely appreciate the importance of

letting students “learn through play” rather than force-feeding them with knowledge. She then invested a lot of energy in promoting students’ engagement and enthusiasm in class by employing a variety of activities and games. As she recounted,

“After I came back from the programme, I adjusted my teaching style. It was completely ‘learning through playing’. For example, when learning a poem, if it could be adapted into a dance, then we danced; if it could be sung, then we sang it.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Moreover, Mary was able to modify her previous beliefs that test scores and quantified results are paramount. She began to focus more on helping to improve students’ language abilities and observing those improvements in ways that did not necessarily involve hard data from tests. As she explained,

“Initially, some of my students looked at me with a blank face when I talked to them in Chinese, but gradually, they got to know what I said and could even spoke to me with some simple sentences. This means they were actually improving in their listening and speaking ability, and this ability could not be quantified or be evaluated by only one test.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

It has been shown that experiencing a new educational context in a different cultural environment may promote teachers’ self-awareness and new cultural learning (Smolcic and Katunich, 2017). The opportunity to engage with an unfamiliar classroom environment gave Mary an opportunity to consciously re-examine her existing ideas about teaching and learning and ultimately led to her finding new directions in her teaching practices as part of a wider process of acculturation.

8.3.1.4 Resistance and preservation

Having been immersed in the UK cultural and educational environment for a while, Mary did make some changes in her teaching approach, particularly by means of visiting British mainstream schools, communicating with their teachers and deliberately setting out to understand the local educational philosophies and practices. This illustrates the claim by Lustig and Koester (2010) that most of the “individuals who engage in intercultural contacts for extended periods of time ...will find themselves incorporating at least some behaviours from the new culture into their own repertoire” (p.317). Interestingly, however, it was also due to her “extensive visits” to British schools, that Mary began to question aspects of the British education system she was observing. As she argued,

“After extensively visiting and learning about the British schools, I found that whether or not to adopt a British-style teaching method actually *did not have the significant influence* on CSOL teaching as I imagined. Besides, I think that British students were not ‘born’ naughty and not listening to teachers’ instructions. It was the ‘liberal education’ advocated in schools that spoiled students and made them like that. I was wondering whether their so-called ‘happy education’ was really good for children? I felt *I could not completely agree with this belief.*” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Moreover, Mary asserted,

“With the knowledge of how students were educated in British mainstream schools, you would know how to connect your CSOL teaching with their wider education. However, it is *not very important*. Since the students have already chosen to come to the Chinese school, *they must accept my way of educating*, accept the classroom rules and the requirements I set.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Further probing of Mary’s declared “*way of educating*” led to the following findings. Firstly, although Mary did not impose policies regarding students’ physical postures, she did emphasise strict behavioural and learning discipline and compliance with her rules. As she described,

“I didn’t treat them as strictly as I did in China. But they must follow my classroom rules. The method I currently use is giving both rewards and punishments, i.e. ‘carrot after stick’. This method is useful in controlling my students’ behaviours.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Secondly, as mentioned above, Mary sought to motivate students’ engagement with Chinese in the classroom by implementing “learning through playing”. In the event that students did not respond with interest in Chinese learning, she stressed that as their teacher she should “embed” and even “intrude” the Chinese language knowledge into their minds. As she explained,

“For the children and teenagers, I could not indulge them to study with their temper. ... If you came to the Chinese school, you were considered to be not a person who *just felt interested in* Chinese but a person who *must learn* Chinese. ... The initial stages of Chinese learning *must be mandatory*. I was very clear about that.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Thirdly, although Mary was gradually focusing more on improving students’ abilities, especially their oral communication skills, as explained earlier, when she was asked to reflect on the rationale for her change of emphasis she was explicit that it was to enable

students to pass the language tests such as General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) or A level. As Mary recounted,

“You see, the UK and even many other countries in the Europe have reformed to include Chinese into their language testing systems, which means that they have accepted the influences of Chinese. If the students I taught could pass the GCSE or A level test relatively earlier, it would be of great benefit for their future and make them more competitive. ... The training work for the GCSE test is similar to the approach in my previous job in China.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Fourthly, Mary put rather strict demands on her students and pushed them hard. As she detailed,

“I didn’t let them breathe because I felt if I didn’t develop their mental abilities, they would leave their brains for games. ... Don’t feel that children are really tired, it is impossible! As long as you give them work or assignments, they can finish them. ... Children are just like the water in sponge, the harder you push them, the more surprises they will give you. ... They must learn now, so I told my students, ‘everyone must read, must recite’.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

When I asked her in the interview, “don’t you think your practices were contradictory to British educational conventions such as ‘happy education’ that you just described?”, Mary argued,

“But they were aligned with Chinese educational beliefs. Just think about the time when we were in primary school in China: we had eight different lessons every day, and we even attended other tutorials at night. Besides, we also had to do the homework, but we still got through it.” (Interview 17/Jun/2017)

Some obvious tensions could be observed in Mary’s pedagogical beliefs and practices when we compared her descriptions in the previous section 8.3.1.3 and the present section. Her knowledge of British education obtained from professional training did not lead to an automatic full transformation in behaviour and action (Ennsner-Kananen and Wang, 2016). Instead, Mary found some justification to retain some of her more traditional ways of teaching (Ennsner-Kananen and Wang, 2016), thus demonstrating resistance to the instructional methods she observed in the British school context (Lustig and Koester, 2010). She continued to believe in and argue the case for many of the conventions embedded in the Chinese educational system she once experienced. Although her exposure to British educational practices sparked Mary’s intercultural awareness and she aligned some aspects of her teaching with the British approach, it seems that the robustness of her acculturation and modified practices is still

questionable (Palmer and Menard-Warwick, 2012). This could be in part due to the limited time she has spent in the UK and the part-time nature of her work commitment. According to Lustig and Koester (2010), culture is a basic and broad influence on many aspects of a person's ideas and behaviours (p.145). As described in Chapter 2, the prestige of the teaching profession in Chinese society has been entrenched since ancient times. In her narratives, Mary highlighted that students "must accept" her way of education, including her rules and requirements, and this seems to reflect the profound influence of the educational philosophy rooted in traditional Chinese culture.

"Beliefs established early on in life are resistant to change, even when they are demonstrated to be inadequate" (Ye, 2017, p.78, based on Nisbett and Ross, 1980, p.20). When justifying her practice of imposing high pressure on students' learning, Mary naturally cited her personal educational experiences in primary school in China as a justification, even while there might be some potential problems. Additionally, Mary's previous professional experiences as a teacher in English language training institutions in China also produced a latent impact on her. Rather than viewing the Chinese language school (part of the CI) as a place for Chinese language learning in the broadest sense, Mary saw the core function of the language training school to be helping students pass Chinese language tests, and so she automatically brought this priority into her teaching in the CI.

8.4 Summary

This chapter has given an account of the process of Mary's teacher identity formation. Next, I will provide a summary of the main points, along with two figures to depict the changes during the developmental process.

8.4.1 Professional identity

Mary has a dual professional identity, with the two dimensions being largely in opposition but occasionally harmonious and complementary (see Figure 8.2 below). Mary's passion for marketing since childhood produced a strongly affective sense of affinity and commitment to this discipline. To support this, her formal education including two master's degrees in the field afforded Mary sufficient legitimacy to claim

her membership of the marketing profession. However, owing to a lack of relevant employment opportunities, her actual take-up of marketing-related posts accounted for only a small proportion of her job history. In spite of this, she did her best to enfold certain marketing skills into her teacher identity, such as enacting a business development type role in order to promote and ‘sell’ courses on which she taught.

According to Richards (2012), to be seen as a legitimate member of the language teaching profession, one needs to meet certain entry requirements, i.e. evidence of a “specialised knowledge base obtained through both academic study and practical experience” (p.52). Although she did not have academic qualifications in education or language teaching-related subject knowledge, her own education, experiences, contacts and reputation seemed to lead her towards compatible teaching-related jobs which emerged at opportune times. Although she took the teaching itself seriously, she appeared not to develop a genuine, full sense of belonging to the teaching profession, perhaps in part due to the lasting power of her passion for marketing work and its role in her professional identity. However, her diminishing identification with TCSOL became very apparent when she was in the CI, due to its perceived administrative deficiencies, the low pay and the unpleasant collegial environment. Ultimately, a better job opportunity did come along for Mary in marketing (but using her language skills) marking her psychological shift away from TCSOL.

It has been proposed by Wenger (1998) that our identities form trajectories; however, “by choice or by necessity, some trajectories never lead to full participation. Yet they may well provide a kind of access to a community and its practice that becomes significant enough to contribute to one’s identity” (Wenger, 1998, p.154). Although Mary could not be a ‘full’ member of either the teaching or marketing profession, both spheres constituted significant dimensions of her professional identity and she demonstrated resilience in navigating her changing career path.

8.4.2 Instructional identity

The case study findings reveal that the changes in Mary’s instructional identity were inextricably linked to her cultural identity, and the evolution had broadly four stages (see Figure 8.3). Conforming to the educational philosophies embedded in her home culture, the first stage of Mary’s instructional identity was characterised by

homogeneity in her pedagogical beliefs and practices. Disorientation came next due to the unfamiliarity of the cultural and educational environment in the UK, together with a lack of sufficient instructional support. In the third stage, Mary sought to acculturate and make changes to her instructional practices to fit her educational environment in the UK. Despite a level of acculturation in her instructional identity, she held firm to certain practices at the heart of the Chinese cultural and educational tradition, evidencing the powerful role of culture in shaping one's identity.

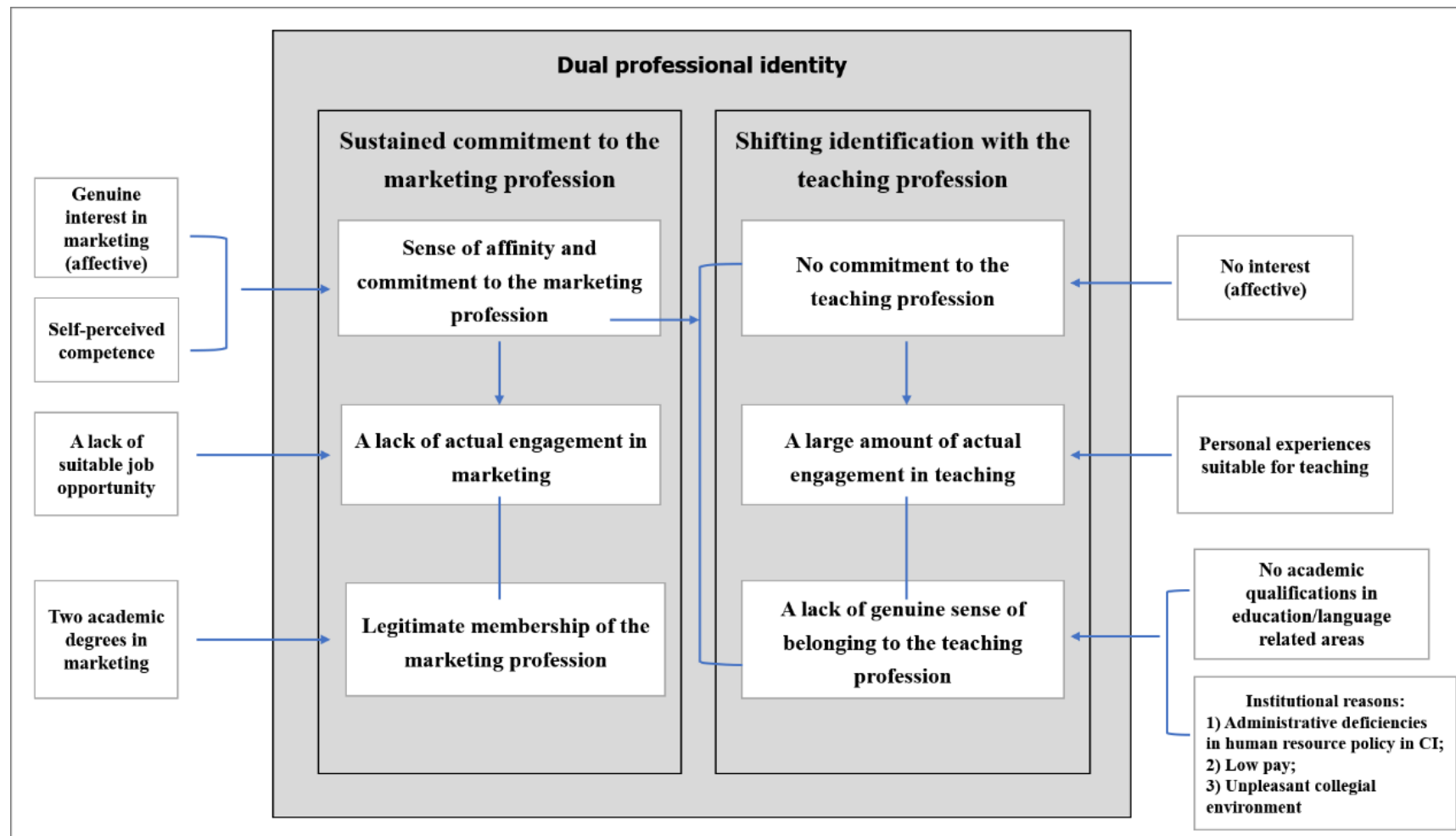


Figure 8.2: Mary's professional identity

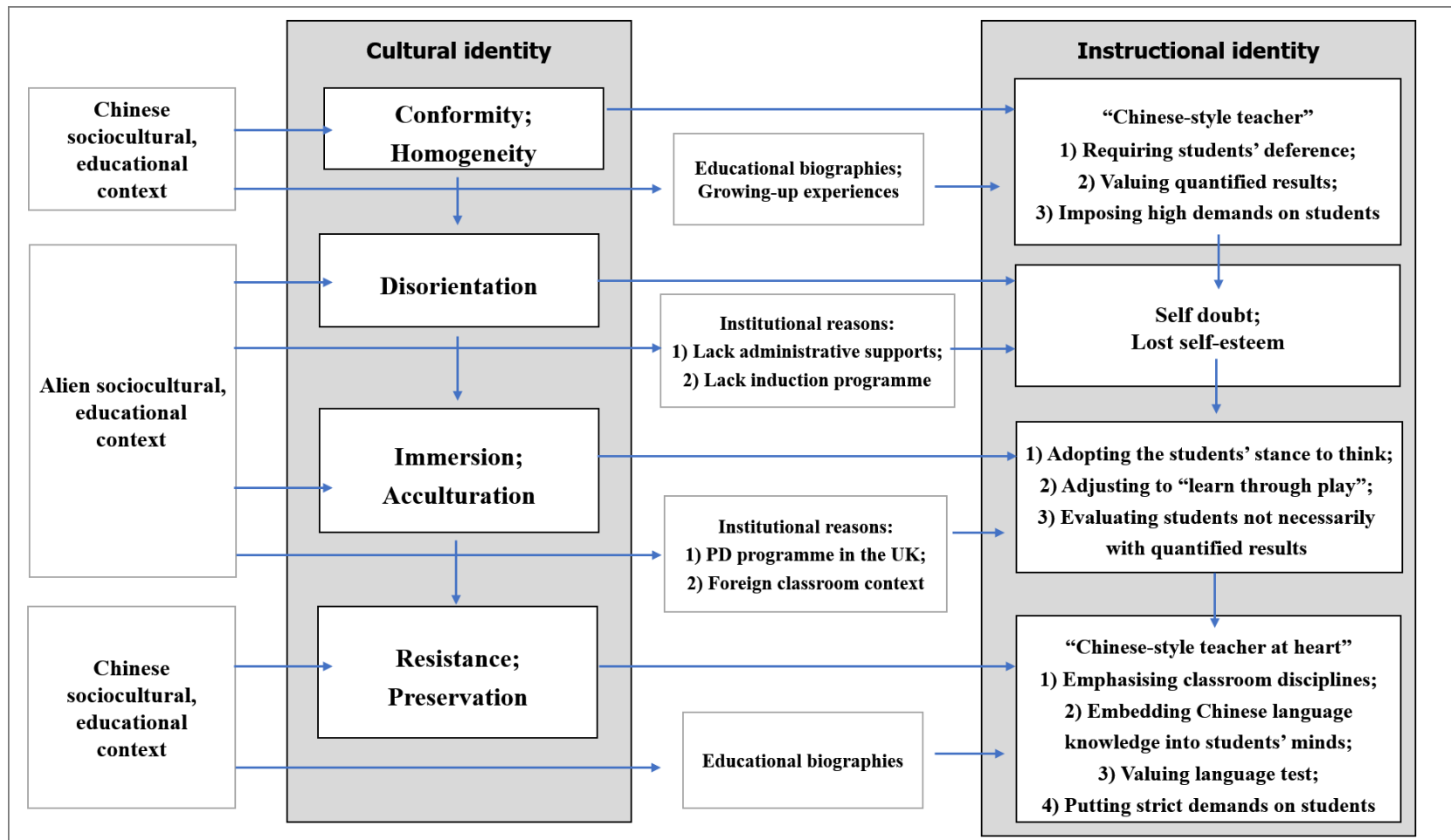


Figure 8.3: Mary’s cultural and instructional identity

CHAPTER 9

CASE ROSE

This chapter presents the story of Rose, one of the local CSOL teachers in the CI being investigated. Firstly, I will introduce Rose's personal background along with a general timeline of her working and living experiences. Then, I will give a detailed account of the developmental process of her professional identity and instructional identity, indicating how changes in her cultural identity played a pervasive role in this process. An analysis of the factors which influenced Rose's teacher identity formation will also be provided.

9.1 Profile of Rose

Rose is a local CSOL teacher who is in her early 40s. She was educated and lived in China from early childhood to her undergraduate period. She started to learn English when she was still in primary school and since that time has participated in a number of English-related activities (Phase 1). She was successful in passing the Chinese National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) and was admitted to a Chinese public university (anonymised as University A), majoring in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) (Phase 2). During her fourth year at University A, Rose was assigned as a student teacher to teach EFL in a Chinese public middle school (anonymised as School B) (Phase 2.1). After graduation from University A in the late 1990s, she took a job as an EFL teacher in a Chinese public secondary school (anonymised as School C) (Phase 3). She quit this job two years later and switched to become a teacher of Chinese to speakers of other languages (CSOL) in a branch of a world-renowned language school (anonymised as Language School D) located in China, where she taught for nearly five years (Phase 4). She then left Language School D and soon found another job in a language training centre (anonymised as Language Training Centre E) in China, and again as a CSOL teacher (Phase 5). She taught there for around one year and then moved jobs to work for a foreign company in China (Phase 6). Not after long after this, she was offered a full-time position in an international British school (anonymised as International British School F) in China, so for this role she reverted to being a CSOL

teacher (Phase 7). She then successfully applied for a one-year master's programme in education at a university in the UK (anonymised as University G) and came to the UK in the early 2010s to complete her MA (Phase 8.1). After obtaining her master's degree, she gave birth to her daughter. To take full-time care of her child, she was a stay-at-home mother for around three years (Phase 8.2). This phase reached a turning point when she was invited by her neighbour to participate in a Chinese cultural event organised by the local Confucius Institute. After this event, she applied for and accepted a part-time role as a CSOL teacher based in the study CI until the period of this research (Phase 8.3). Rose has been responsible mainly for CSOL teaching to children aged 3.5-16 years in the weekend Chinese school affiliated to the CI (essentially a supplementary school). Her students have come from families with Chinese as the HL as well as families with other language backgrounds. Rose was also frequently engaged in CI-organised Chinese cultural activities. Figure 9.1 shows the timeline of Rose's experiences.

Phase 1 Pre-university learning experiences	Phase 2 Undergraduate, majored in TEFL in University A Phase 2.1 TEFL internship in Chinese public school B	Phase 3 EFL teacher in Chinese public school C	Phase 4 CSOL teacher in Language School D in China	Phase 5 CSOL teacher in Language Training Centre E in China	Phase 6 Worked in a foreign company in China	Phase 7 CSOL teacher in International British School F in China	Phase 8 Lived and worked in the UK Phase 8.1 Master's degree in education in the UK, at University G Took care of her child Phase 8.2 Being a mother Phase 8.3 TCSOL in a CI in the UK	
Early 2000s						Early 2010s		2014

Figure 9.1: Timeline of Rose's experiences

9.2 Professional identity

This section describes the developmental process of Rose's professional identity, illustrating how her dedication to the professions of TEFL and TCSOL shifted across time under the influence of a complex set of factors which jointly contributed to her professional identity.

9.2.1 Aspiration to be a teacher

When Rose was still a child (Phase 1), she aspired to become a teacher and remained committed to her ambition to join the teaching profession. As she expressed it,

“I have had a dream to be a teacher since my childhood.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

Rose's decision to become a teacher can be attributed to a number of factors, both contextual and individual. Family influence constituted the primary reason behind her choice, as she explained,

“There is a relative in my family who was a teacher, and *this had a quite significant influence on me*. Whenever I went to his home, I could feel that this is a ‘shu xiang men di’ (书香门第, a Chinese idiom which means an intellectual family with rich scholarly atmosphere). Moreover, his words always sounded very rational and wise.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019) [All italics in Case Rose have been added by the author for emphasis of Rose's emotions and attitudes.]

Having a teacher in the family meant that Rose had a role model (Clarke, 2008, p.76), stirring her aspiration to teach as well to experience the life associated with being a teacher. Contact with this relative also influenced her growing persuasion that teachers represented prestige and authority. This was further strengthened by the social environment in China, as Rose explained,

“Since ancient times, China has developed a rich atmosphere of ‘zun shi zhong jiao’ (尊师重教, a Chinese idiom which means respecting teachers and valuing their teaching), and teachers usually enjoyed high social status in China.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

As introduced earlier (section 2.3.1), teachers have historically enjoyed prestigious social status in China (Shi, 2019), and being a teacher means possessing symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984) and enjoying the respect of others. This stature is reflected in the attitudes of Rose's family to their relative in the teaching profession, whose discourse was felt to be authoritative. As she recounted,

“Although he was just a distant relative of us, my parents were always convinced of him. It made me feel that he is a person of high status in our family.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

Thus, Rose’s belief that “being a teacher is a good choice in the domestic environment in China” (Interview 15/Apr/2019) was reinforced by pervasive Chinese social norms (“respect teachers and value teaching”) (Shi, 2019) as well as her parents’ high esteem for the profession.

Apart from the contextual factors, Rose’s self-perceptions of her own competencies also affirmed her belief that she would be well-suited to teaching. As she described,

“I have been very good at speech since my childhood. My writing ability was outstanding as well. Furthermore, I was also chosen to be a hostess and to perform on the stage when I was in school. Therefore, *I thought I had the right attributes to be a teacher.*” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

It is common that “children and young adults may decide what teaching is as they are simultaneously deciding what they are good at, allowing for a self-confirming circle of reciprocal reinforcement” (Olsen, 2008, p.31). Rose’s words indicate that she applied professional criteria largely generated by herself (albeit inseparable from the influence of the social and cultural environment) and self-selected into the teaching profession.

9.2.2 Emerging and growing commitment to TEFL

9.2.2.1 Initial interest in English

During her interviews, Rose conveyed that her original interest was in English language learning and teaching, not Chinese. She had gradually established a strong interest in English after beginning her study of the language in her school years (Phase 1). As she claimed,

“Personally, I *like* English *very much.*” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

Rose’s enthusiasm for English was inextricable from the guidance and influence of her parents who themselves were responding to the social reality in China at the time. With the economic reforms in China since 1978 and the globalisation of the English language, there was increasing demand in the labour market for individuals with good English skills. Also, English language teachers in China possessed linguistic capital (Bourdieu,

1977, 1984) and had advantages over teachers of other subjects. This was also reflected by Rose's account:

“I entered the university in the late 1990s. At that time, there was a high demand for EFL teachers in the job market. When the schools employed teachers, EFL teachers usually accounted for the majority.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

In light of this social and economic context, Rose's parents strongly encouraged her to cultivate her English skills by being more involved in English-related activities when she was still in school. As she stated,

“They gave me clear guidance from the beginning, which was job-market-oriented, and I was expected to study an English-related major. They signed me up for some extra English courses. All the summer schools I attended were English classes, such as Linguaphone and Super Kids English.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

Fortunately, Rose grew genuinely interested in EFL learning and got actively involved in English-related activities. As she recalled,

“I was *very interested* in English. ... I remember I also applied to be the Chinese-English bilingual hostess in our school and was appointed later.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

9.2.2.2 Growing commitment to TEFL

Driven by her aspiration to be a teacher as well as her enthusiasm for English, Rose chose to major in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) at university (Phase 2), in the hope of becoming an EFL teacher in the future. “Choosing teaching is a particularly significant statement of belonging” (Clarke, 2008, p.76). Rose's sense of being a good fit for the EFL teaching profession was consolidated when she was on placement in a public secondary school in China (Phase 2.1). Casting herself into a prospective role as an EFL teacher, Rose declared that she has “always been trying to move from a student's perspective to a teacher's perspective” (Interview 23/Sep/2017) in both attitude and practice. She explained,

“I was a university student before the internship, so my main duty was to learn. ... However, *now my stance has changed*. I was going to teach, and the things I needed to master were teaching skills. *As a teacher, I have always been considering* how to organise a class and how to deliver the knowledge I already knew to the students.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Furthermore, Rose seized every opportunity offered by her mentor to improve her

teaching practices, as she stated,

“As a teacher, I endeavoured to learn more about my students’ varied learning abilities, and prepared my courses in a targeted way.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

The narrative indicates that in Rose’s case “identities motivated actions” (Holland, et al., 2007, p.108). Although Rose was still in preparation to become a teacher, in the two excerpts above she explicitly asserts her identity “as a teacher”. Envisioning herself as an EFL teacher in the future, Rose actively undertook the duties of a teacher – thinking carefully about the instructions and management in the classroom and trying her best to act as a formal teacher does.

After graduation from university, Rose became a qualified EFL teacher and without any hesitation she found a teaching position in a Chinese public secondary school C (Phase 3), fulfilling the ambition she had held since starting university. Although she was a novice EFL teacher at that time, School C did not provide her with extra support for her development. Rose was treated by the school as “a formal employee” and “a general teaching staff member equal with teachers”. She “taught independently” and “had to deal with a class of more than 50 students which was a great responsibility” for her (all quotes in this paragraph are from Interview 23/Sep/2017). Although there was a so-called mentor, she did not observe and audit Rose’s classes sufficiently. Despite the limited support available in the workplace, Rose believed “it was more challenging to be an independent teacher teaching all by yourself, meanwhile you learnt more” (Interview 23/Sep/2017). This chimes with the suggestion by Holland et al. (2007) that humans are able to modify the environment’s stimulus value for their own psychological states via active construction and use of symbols (usually in the linguistic form) (p.109). As can be seen from Rose’s words, although she was required to teach independently and without much guidance or support, she did not view this situation negatively. Instead, she exercised her agentive skills to manipulate the challenges embedded in the teaching environment and focused on the benefits brought about by these challenges in promoting her professional development. In this way, Rose became more closely identified with her role as an EFL teacher and demonstrated a stronger commitment to the EFL teaching profession.

9.2.3 Changing commitment to TCSOL

9.2.3.1 *Choosing TCSOL*

In the modern era, globalisation, commercialisation and other social and cultural changes have put human beings in a position of facing opportunities and risks simultaneously (Liu, 2009, p.263, based on Giddens, 1991). As Rose recalled, she entered university in the late 1990s, and “at that time, there was a high demand for EFL teachers in the job market” (Interview 23/Sep/2017). However, by the early 2000s, after Rose had worked for two years as an EFL teacher in the public secondary School C (Phase 3), there were significant changes in the national and social context in China which propelled her away from her original career track of TEFL and towards a new path to become a CSOL teacher. As Rose stated,

“I thought I went the way of TCSOL which was *closely related to the Chinese national situation.*” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Since China acceded to the WTO in 2001, there has been a growing number of foreign companies setting up branches in China (introduced in section 2.3.4). As Rose recounted,

“At that time, there was an American Company P (name anonymised) which set up a new branch in Guangzhou¹, and it sent a lot of senior management and IT staff to work in China. Most of them were Americans or Indians, so Company P signed a contract with a Language School D² (name anonymised), asking it to offer Chinese courses to staff and their families in order to help them adapt to life in China. In this case, Language School D decided to employ a large number of COSL teachers. Then, a head-hunter contacted me and recommended me to Language School D.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Accordingly, Rose explained that “it was because of our country’s opening up policy which encouraged the establishment of foreign companies that I switched from being a second language (L2) teacher who taught English as L2 to someone who taught Chinese – my mother tongue – as L2. In these circumstances, I felt actually *it was NOT me who chose to be a CSOL teacher, BUT the then job market did*” (Interview 23/Sep/2017).

¹ Guangzhou (simplified Chinese: 广州), also known as Canton and formerly romanised as Kwangchow or Kwong Chow, is the capital and most populous city of the province of Guangdong in southern China.

² Language School D is one of the branches of a global language education company located in China. Its headquarters are in the USA.

A teacher's work-related identity and his/her level of satisfaction and identification with the teaching profession (including TCSOL) can be impacted by economic factors – including whether s/he is paid fairly and considers teaching as a rewarding job (Pennington, 2015, p.44). For Rose, salary was another attractive facet contributing to her decision to become a CSOL teacher. As Rose explained,

“I chose to work in Language School D at that time, *because the salary was relatively high.*” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

9.2.3.2 Growing commitment to TCSOL

Although she was initially motivated mainly by external social and economic factors to become a CSOL teacher, Rose gradually developed a genuine commitment to the CSOL teaching profession. This dedication was reflected in her clear self-identification as a CSOL teacher and her pro-active investment in practices to improve her CSOL teaching skills. At Language School D, Rose employed the direct teaching method stipulated by the institution. This method was oriented to spoken communication skills but largely neglected writing, particularly Chinese character writing. Moreover, Language School D only provided textbooks to support the first four levels of learning; there were no teaching resources for higher-level Chinese learners, and this posed great challenges for Rose. As she recalled,

“The students kept asking me: ‘I want to continue to learn and what should I do?’ *As a teacher*, if you treat ‘being a teacher’ only as a job, then these students have already not been my students, I could just ignore them, and just teach the first four levels. However, in terms of my *sense of responsibility*, it is my *bounden duty as a teacher* to make sure my students could continue to learn as they hoped. I have worked so hard in teaching them the first four levels, and they have developed a solid foundation under my instruction. However, they could not continue to improve. For me, *I felt frustrated. I felt it would be a pity.*” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Rose's account shows that teaching for her had gone beyond a mere job and was a “*bounden duty*”, a term which connotes a more intrinsic motivation. “One pursues opportunities to enact one's claimed identities and thereby validates them for oneself and for others” (Holland et al., 2007, p.108). Rose's strong self-identification as a teacher motivated her to invest more in her TCSOL development. The workplace challenges Rose encountered had the effect of triggering her agency and reinforcing her sense of responsibility as a teacher. Perceiving and articulating her identity “as a teacher”, Rose actively internalised the duties and qualities she thought should be

associated with the role of a teacher. These characteristics of a teacher, however, did not emerge from a vacuum (Clarke, 2008, p.24). They were shaped by the discourses and values mainly (but not exclusively) rooted in Chinese culture and society. In Chinese culture, teachers are expected to impart professional knowledge and resolve doubts (Shi, 2019) and try every means to help students achieve their goals (Pennington, 2005, p.43). In evaluating her role as a teacher against these prevailing ideas in Chinese culture, Rose unsurprisingly “felt frustrated”. “When an individual is committed, he gambles his regard for himself on living up to this self-conception” (Burke and Reitzes, 1991, p. 241; see also McCall and Simmons, 1978). In order to fulfil her own conceived ideas of her duties as a teacher and help her students resolve problems in their Chinese learning, Rose began independently to explore suitable textbooks and teaching materials. She also voluntarily signed up for a CSOL teacher training programme although this was not required of her by Language School D. It is evident that Rose was gradually deepening her commitment to the CSOL teaching profession as she sought to satisfy her students’ learning needs and agentively progress her own professional learning. In these ways she was living up to her own conceptualisation of what it was to be a good CSOL teacher.

9.2.3.3 Fluctuations in commitment to TCSOL

Since entering the TCSOL field over ten years ago, Rose has been dedicated to this specialism but her professional development was not without fluctuations during this period. After five years of teaching in Language School D, Rose had developed a commitment to her profession but she felt that she “met a bottleneck” (Interview 23/Sep/2017) and started to hesitate about her career path. Ultimately, she chose to stay in the CSOL teaching profession and this was mainly for two reasons. Firstly, she again cited the national environment in China, as she felt that the job market was no longer as buoyant for people who specialised in English. Secondly, she described more personal and affective motivations. After five years as a TCSOL, Rose felt that she had established a strong sense of connection to the CSOL teaching profession and investment in her career. As she asserted,

“I thought to myself, I’ve embarked on TCSOL. I’ve taught CSOL for nearly five years and accumulated a lot of experiences and developed my personal understandings. I have read so many textbooks, and I intentionally participated in

so many TCSOL related trainings. I *didn't want to waste all my efforts*. Therefore, I continued with TCSOL.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

After leaving Language School D, Rose moved jobs several times, but almost all the positions she found were related to TCSOL, during which time she sustained her commitment to the CSOL teaching profession and demonstrated stronger agency as a CSOL teacher. During her period of teaching at Language Training Centre E in China (Phase 5), Rose actively sought to modify and improve the teaching design and approaches, demonstrating her capacity as a CSOL teacher to make independent decisions about pedagogies (Webb et al., 2002). As she explained,

“I adopted the advantages of the direct methods and encouraged communication, meanwhile avoiding its shortcomings by integrating Chinese character writing.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Although Rose was briefly employed in a non-teaching role (Phase 6), she returned to TCSOL as soon as she had a good opportunity – accepting a job in a British school located in a Chinese city. As she claimed,

“I was still *very willing* to be a teacher, and I thought teaching students was *very rewarding*.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Rose's return to TCSOL resonated with the findings of Pennington (2015) that teachers' commitment and dedication to the students and the teaching profession usually “includes an affective component related to the intrinsic satisfaction obtained from serving and helping others to meet their needs” (p.43).

When Rose was teaching at International British School F located in China (Phase 7), she faced a series of professional difficulties. As she recounted,

“I had never taught CSOL to children before. *That was really a big challenge!* ... The British school didn't provide us with textbooks, and we were asked to self-design textbooks. *That was the biggest challenge!* ... The academic board required us to differentiate our CSOL teaching according to students' varied learning abilities. *Wow, it was another challenge for us!*” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Nevertheless, Rose maintained a positive attitude to embrace the challenges and exert her agency to shape her responses to these testing situations (Ye, 2017, p.29, based on Duranti, 2004) and keep her eye on the potential rewards. As she declared,

“I began to feel tired in my mind. I worried a lot. I rarely slept well during that period of time. *However, the greater challenges you faced up to, the greater achievement you would attain.*” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

9.2.3.4 Ambivalence in commitment to TCSOL

After teaching in International British School F for one year, Rose moved to the UK (Phase 8) where she got to know the CI and soon applied for the job of TCSOL there (Phase 8.3). However, there remained an element of ambivalence in her commitment to TCSOL and this was closely linked to certain aspects of CI employment, including social position, administrative support, salary level and the work schedules. When Rose talked about beginning work at the CI, she explicitly referred to how important the TCSOL role was to her. As she reiterated,

“Honestly, I *valued* this job. Yes, I *really valued* this job.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Her strong identification can be linked to the following two factors. First of all, Rose had observed that in her local community the CI was held in great esteem, and this bolstered her sense of identity as a member of the CI. As she explained,

“Among all the weekend language schools in our city, our Chinese language school is *very highly valued by our leaders*. It ran quite like a formal school and has developed into a considerable scale. We used the venue of a first-class university and shared its first-class equipment. The management in our school was quite formal, and we even have unified textbooks. I still remember the first year I worked here, the CI provided us with a lot of professional training, which I thought was *very useful*.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

The position of an institution with respect to broader constellations or communities can influence how the members working inside view their own identities (Wenger, 1998, p.169). As introduced in Chapter 4, the CI where this study was conducted has experienced rapid development in recent years. Apart from providing a wide range of Chinese language courses and Chinese cultural activities, staff have enthusiastically participated in a number of public events in the local community. Thus, people spoke highly of the institute and it had a certain social stature. Also, the CI’s well-equipped physical environment and its efficient operation compared favourably with its counterparts, i.e. other supplementary language schools in the city. The feeling of being supported by the CI and valued as a member all contributed to Rose’s strong sense of self-esteem and self-identification as a CSOL teacher in the CI.

Additionally, the abundant support and recognition that Rose received from the CI managers played a considerable role in enhancing her sense of belonging and achievement, and helped ensure her loyalty to the TCSOL role in the CI (Guarino, Santibanez and Daley, 2006, p.197). As she reiterated,

“Our manager did a lot of things which were beneficial for our PD. For example, she used the WeChat group to unite us together, which enabled us to *establish a sense of belonging*. Besides, the senior manager in the CI encouraged our teachers to join management committees, and this helped ensure the satisfaction and retention of outstanding teachers and it did *give us a sense of achievement*... Our manager also frequently used positive language to encourage us and gave us awards. These also *gave us a sense of achievement*. ... The CI also organised get-together dinners when it came to important festivals or when some of us were leaving the CI. I thought this also *gave us a sense of belonging*.” (Interview 24/Feb/2018)

However, underlying Rose’s commitment to TCSOL in the CI there was an element of doubt. As she suggested,

“The weekend language schools like our Chinese language school affiliated to the CI are *still supplementary schools*, a bit like cram study sessions. They are *still not mainstream schools*.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

As is mentioned above, Rose’s commitment to the TCSOL was significantly influenced by the status of the CI in regard to broader institutional arrangements (Wenger, 1998, p.169). Although the Chinese language school ran quite well, it was essentially a “supplementary” school when placed in the British education system according to Rose. The word “supplementary” itself has already indicated its nature as “supplementing the ‘mainstream’ state schooling and, perhaps, presented as subordinate to the mainstream” (Thorpe, 2011, p.2). Working in such an institution lowered her self-esteem, thus was looked down on by Rose.

Compared with Hanban-assigned teachers and volunteers who were better organised and more closely administrated, the relatively ‘loose’ management of the local CSOL teacher workforce had the effect of making Rose’s sense of belonging quite vulnerable because there was a lack of staff cohesion. As she highlighted,

“The Hanban-assigned teachers might have a *stronger sense of belonging*, in part due to contracts which obliged them to work a certain number of hours a week in the CI office. They were usually together, were able to bond, and thus had common topics. Their sense of belonging was *much stronger* than ours. We local teachers

only met when we had classes, and who we met were all our students.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Poor remuneration was another factor which made the job of TCSOL disappointing and less attractive (Perrachione, Rosser and Petersen, 2008). Salary was clearly a significant issue for Rose and it negatively impacted on her retention in the CI (Bacolod, 2007). As she commented,

“Now teachers in our CI are draining away. I think the salary is a big issue. On many occasions, we teachers were asked to do the activities *for free*.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

The annual teaching calendar, particularly the holiday periods, is similar to children’s school timetables and this is typically a reason why women, particularly mothers, choose teaching as a career (Claesson and Brice, 1989; Olsen, 2008). However, Rose was responsible for the weekend Chinese language school, so her work commitments unavoidably clashed with her family life. As Rose complained,

“I should have kept Saturdays for my family and my child, but now I need to teach CSOL in the CI.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Therefore, it was not altogether surprising when Rose revealed in an interview that “I’m currently considering changing to another job which could be more stable and not in conflict with my family life” (Interview 23/Sep/2017), indicating a shaky allegiance to TCSOL in the CI.

9.3 Instructional identity

This section will describe Rose’s instructional identity with reference to her pedagogical beliefs and practices as well as her ways of negotiating the teacher-student relationship.

9.3.1 Identity via pedagogical beliefs and practices

The focus of this section is on the transformation in Rose’s instructional identity in terms of her pedagogical beliefs and practices, underlying which her cultural identity played a considerable role.

9.3.1.1 *Homogeneity and conformity*

When reflecting on her past EFL teaching experiences particularly in the Chinese public schools (Phase 2.1 and 3), Rose considered herself as a “Chinese-style” teacher. As she put it,

“If I had not attended the MA programme in Education in the UK, or if I had not worked in Language School D and International British School F, I think my educational beliefs would have still been *quite Chinese style*.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

In her review, Rose consciously understood and highlighted the homogeneity in her teacher identity during her period of working in Chinese public schools, especially through the contrast with the changes she experienced at later stages in different educational and sociocultural environments. Her narration conveyed three salient aspects to her teaching beliefs and practices during Phase 2.1 and Phase 3:

Firstly, she demonstrated a test-oriented focus in her teaching,

“I attached great importance to my students’ test results and their improvement at that time, and all these required quantification. ... From primary school to high school, I have been learning English for tests. Looking back to that time, most people learnt English for examinations. Therefore, I’ve *got used to* having examinations and quantifying the test results.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

Secondly, Rose expressed a dependence on textbooks in an automatic, default way. As she explained,

“We teachers who were trained in the Chinese education system were highly dependent on textbooks. ... In my growing-up experiences, there have always been compulsory set textbooks, so I have *got used to* it. I have *got used to* letting others make decisions for me.” (Interview 09/Jan/2017)

Thirdly, she emphasised rote learning and was accustomed to providing standard or model answers to students in her earlier teaching, as she depicted,

“My original practices were *very Chinese style, very traditional*, which was letting children read and recite repeatedly ... Besides, I would give them a correct answer, helping them prepare for tests.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Rose’s narratives describe her early career conformity to the “Chinese-style” pedagogies she had experienced, revealing the implicit role her cultural identity played in shaping her identification with the educational traditions of her home country. The

national educational context during that era in China had a profound impact on Rose, shaping her educational biography including her role as an EFL teacher in Chinese public schools. Test-oriented education prevailed in China from the 1980s to the early 2000s (see section 2.3.2). English was a compulsory course in the Chinese MOE-stipulated curriculum and was required to be tested in the Chinese NCEE. To ensure fairness in the NCEE, school textbooks (including English textbooks) have long been standardised throughout China. Thus, the same textbooks were obligatory in all Chinese public schools and served as the definitive and authoritative resources for teaching and learning. As most of Rose's own educational and teaching experiences in China coincided with the period when test-oriented approaches were prevalent and obligatory textbooks were highly valued, it was unsurprising that she had "*got used to*" (reiterated three times in the quotes) these traditions. Thus, she internalised these conventions and manifested them in her own teaching in an unexamined way (Lustig and Koester, 2010). Additionally, the institutional environment of Chinese public schools in the context of national test-oriented education further reinforced the homogeneity and conformity in Rose's teacher identity. As Rose recalled,

"At that time, our teaching was conducted under the pressures of the NCEE. A monthly test and a test for each unit were required ... If the proportion of your students with excellent grades was high, your bonus would be doubled. If the proportion of low-attaining students in your class was high, then you would only get the basic wage. The salary was linked to teachers' achievement. Therefore, I attached great importance to my students' test results and their improvement at that time, and all these required quantification." (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

So, using wages and bonuses as leverage, these institutions were able to ensure that teachers (including Rose) maintained an examination-oriented ethic, strengthening the perceived importance of quantified test results.

9.3.1.2 *Immersion and acculturation*

After leaving Chinese public school C, Rose began a process of educational re-acculturation through her experiences in Language School D (Phase 4) and International British School F (Phase 7). This process continued during her later postgraduate learning and immigrant living experiences in the UK (Phase 8). As she claimed,

“I think I have been *greatly influenced by Western education*. ... Now, I felt I have *changed a lot*.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

The re-acculturation and changes in her pedagogical beliefs and practices over time had four key aspects. Firstly, departing from the test-oriented approach, Rose gradually became more focused on learners’ skills. This change was ignited when she started TCSOL in the American-run Language School D (Phase 4) where the direct teaching methods advocated had the primary aim of cultivating students’ communicative abilities. As she explained,

“The direct method was *totally different* from my prior focus. For me, it could be termed as a ‘*huo ran kai lang* (豁然开朗, a Chinese idiom which means ‘suddenly seeing the light’, a metaphor for sudden enlightenment). I just felt, ‘*wow! A language could be taught in this way!*’. It was unnecessary to deal with examinations. That was a *great lightbulb moment* for me. Therefore, since that time, I have also paid much attention to cultivating my students’ communicative skills.” (Interview 09/Jan/2017)

Secondly, after one year of TCSOL in the International British School F (Phase 7) where she was required to design teaching materials in collaboration with her colleagues, Rose evolved from a teacher who scrupulously followed the assigned textbooks to a teacher with increasing autonomy, especially on the selection of the teaching content. As she declared,

“I think I have become more autonomous in deciding what to teach by myself. Now, even if I have a textbook at hand, I would not rely on the specific textbook.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Thirdly, drawing on the lessons from her scholarly experiences as a postgraduate student in University G in the UK (Phase 8.1) when she was encouraged to read a large number of books and journal articles and independently interrogate the literature, Rose came to realise and appreciate the importance of “exploratory learning”. As she reflected,

“I started to *question myself*, is it necessary to provide them with a correct answer? ... Autonomous reading is *really important!* I hoped my students could explore knowledge autonomously after class rather than just being restricted to the Chinese textbooks given in classes.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

Fourthly, contrary to viewing examination success as the ultimate learning goal as was the case in Chinese public schools, she began to prioritise her students’ interests in

learning and therefore placed less importance on tests and competition in her classes (Phase 8.3). As she stated,

“The *primary thing* I did was design my classes to be the ones that could *hook students in*. I must attract students and get them interested in my classes. This is the *basic thing*. I cannot turn my Chinese lessons into test-oriented ones. It’s wrong if I teach CSOL only for examinations. I don’t want my students to feel that this is a test-oriented teacher.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

The encounter and experiencing of cultural differences in education, through both situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and formal teacher education in alien contexts, prompted development in Rose’s instructional identity as well as her cultural identity (Smolcic and Katunich, 2017, p.52). The opportunities to interact in a foreign educational environment triggered her awareness, helping her to deliberately reflect on her own pedagogical practices (Olmedo and Harbon, 2010; Phillion et al., 2009; Zhao et al., 2009) as well as the teaching philosophies embedded in the educational context in her home culture (Lee, 2009). As the quotes above show, Rose consciously questioned her previous practices of teaching language for testing and emphasising standard or model answers. Moreover, the immersion experiences in the UK also enabled Rose to assimilate the educational conventions in the host culture to inform and adjust her own teaching. When talking about the reasons leading to her change from valuing testing results to thinking more about students’ interests, she explained,

“Because I know, this is the ‘*Western standard*’. If your class fails to attract students, that is a failure. When Ofsted evaluates teachers in British schools, what they value is whether the students are engaged by the teachers. ... Here in the UK, the focus is *not just on tests*. *Test is JUST an experience, NOT a final destination*. However, in China, test is the final destination.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

Additionally, this change in her instructional identity was also influenced by the regional socio-political context in the host country, as Rose specifically asked me to highlight in this study. The CI is located in a city and county where there are no grammar schools (i.e. state schools which admit students on the basis of ability, using entrance exams) – unlike other parts of England. The idea of selective schools and selective testing has been unpopular in communities where historically Labour representatives have been elected to government.

9.3.1.3 Resistance and preservation

Rose absorbed many new teaching beliefs and practices from her so-called “Western education”, as specified above. Notwithstanding these marked changes, Rose still asserted,

“Considering my own growing-up experiences, I think I’m still *a Chinese-style teacher in my heart.*” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

She even commented,

“Actually, no teacher in our CI, from their inner heart, is a totally British-style teacher.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

Although she was now prioritising students’ needs and interests in her pedagogical practices, Rose still retained a core but modified belief in the value of examination and test results. As she reiterated,

“First of all, my classes must get students hooked in, but on the other hand, I still cannot give my classes without tests and requirements for marks. I will never go to the stage of not having examinations and not quantifying their test results. ... I cannot accept that my students are engaged by my classes but fail to pass the tests, or that the pass rate in my class is low.” (Interview 15/Apr/2019)

As Lustig and Koester (2010) pointed out, cultural identity is central to a person’s sense of self, and the influence of culture on one’s identity is basic and profound (p.145). One’s identity as a (language) learner shaped in the past by his/her home culture can be resistant to dramatic change and persist into the present within the identity of the language teacher (Donato, 2016, p.29). Rose’s narratives show that her early life experiences in the test-oriented Chinese educational context have continued to exert a fundamental influence on her identity as a CSOL teacher. Therefore, she still considered herself a “Chinese-style teacher” at heart.

9.3.2 Teacher-student relationship dimensions of identity

This section gives an account of how Rose’s teaching approach benefited from her experiences of being a mother, helping her to become a more student-centred teacher with more patience, empathy and consideration for her students, putting their interests first and recognising their individual differences.

9.3.2.1 Initial leanings towards student-centredness

Rose did not provide much detail about how she interacted with her students when she was an EFL teacher in the public secondary schools in China (Phase 2.1 and Phase 3). However, judging from her description of her CSOL teaching in the Language School D (Phase 4), she was already showing much consideration for students' emotional needs and the psychological features of adult learners. As she recalled,

“Most of my students at that time were management staff of the Company P. When giving classes to adults, I was particularly careful to avoid asking too personal questions, such as their age or their family members, because I knew some of them might have divorced. Also, when raising questions, I was very careful about the courtesy. For adults, I must take account of their ‘face’³.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

9.3.2.2 Further development in student-centredness

When describing her experiences of CSOL teaching in the CI in the UK (Phase 8.3), Rose explicitly referred to herself as a student-centred teacher, as follows:

“I’m more a teacher who places students at the centre.” (Interview 23/Sep/2017)

In Rose’s narratives, her growing student-centredness reflected three main changes which are described below. Interestingly, when explaining the changes, she habitually referred to her experiences of motherhood.

The first change which emerged was Rose becoming more tolerant and understanding of students even in the face of unsatisfactory academic performances (Claesson and Brice, 1989). Comparing her teaching practices in the CI (Phase 8.3) with those in the Chinese public secondary schools (Phase 2.1 and Phase 3), Rose perceived that she “was totally different from before” (Interview 09/Jan/2017). For example, she said, “now if I saw that a student was not learning very well, I would not criticise him/her” (Interview 09/Jan/2017). An exploration of the factors leading to this change revealed that the hardships of bearing a child had triggered and intensified Rose’s love for her child. Rose appeared to be instinctively transferring her affection for her own child to her attitudes towards her students (Ye, 2017) and she showed more mercy to her students. As she added,

³ ‘Face’ is a sociological concept in Chinese culture, which can be understood as one’s prestige, honour, respect, dignity, status, reputation, social acceptance or good name.

“From the time I got pregnant to the time I gave birth to my child, the bonding between us has already changed me into a person totally different from before. I became very tolerant when interacting with my own child as well as my students.” (Interview 09/Jan/2017)

Another change linked to her projection of maternal love to her instructional role was her strong emphasis on meeting young students’ physiological needs in the classroom, thus showing another facet of student-centredness. As she stated,

“The biggest difference between a teacher who is a mother and one who is not is that the former always puts children’s needs, such as their eating and drinking, in first place. I felt that *when I had my own child, I gained a better understanding of this*. If you ask me not to allow students to have a drink or go to the toilet in order to save more time for learning, I would rather slow down my language teaching pace.” (Interview 09/Jan/2017)

Thirdly, echoing the findings in Claesson and Brice (1989, p.10), Rose developed a different kind of awareness and sensitivity to the children in her classroom after she became a mother herself. By experiencing the developmental sequence of her own child, Rose believed she had developed a better understanding of students’ characteristics. She gradually realised that “the growth of children is a long process, and the individual differences in children can be huge” (Interview 09/Jan/2017). The knowledge gained from raising her child was then translated into a range of more considerate practices with her students. As Rose explained,

“I became *more patient* with my students and *respected more* their personal characteristics. I felt it should be for me to accommodate my students rather than the opposite. The children are innocent, they develop themselves as such, they need sufficient time to comprehend and digest what they’re learning. Therefore, I usually allow them to study at their own pace.” (Interview 09/Jan/2017)

Fourthly, inspired by her own child’s reaction to school, Rose came to appreciate her students’ feedback and to evaluate teaching from an entirely new perspective, i.e. considering students’ interests in learning as the most important indicator of a successful education. As she explained,

“I saw that my kid was sometimes unwilling to go to school and crying at home, which prompted me to explore the reasons. Thinking of my students’ reactions, I began to re-evaluate the success of a class as this – as long as the students feel happy, have confidence, have a sense of achievement, and are willing to go to school, then this education has been quite successful, as the children would not disguise.” (Interview 09/Jan/2017)

This excerpt conveys that being a mother enabled Rose to adopt a parent's stance and reflect on the kind of education that parents may expect their children to have (Ye, 2017). The effect was to redefine her approach to teaching, placing students' satisfaction and positive learning experiences at the centre.

9.4 Summary

This chapter has described the developmental process of Rose's teacher identity. Next I will give an overview of her case along with several figures to illustrate the factors that influenced the developmental process.

9.4.1 Professional identity

Figure 9.2 below depicts the process of Rose's professional identity formation. With a sincere love for teaching since childhood at the core of her career decisions, Rose sustained a strong commitment to the teaching profession as she changed direction from TEFL to TCSOL and frequently switched jobs and workplaces. A genuine interest in the English language led to Rose's initial enthusiasm for TEFL and during this segment of her career her sense of identity and agency as a teacher continued to grow. Driven mainly by external factors including higher remuneration and changes in the Chinese social and economic climate, Rose switched paths from TEFL to TCSOL. The adversity she experienced when teaching CSOL intensified Rose's sense of teacher agency and professional dedication to improving her TCSOL-related skills in order to fulfil her students' learning needs. Thus, the strong sense of CSOL teacher identity which Rose developed was largely built up through her investment in her own teaching expertise and student relations. After five years of working in TCSOL, her commitment had some fluctuation but she elected to stay in the profession mainly due to her intrinsic enjoyment of the work as well as the socioeconomic context in China at the time. However, an element of ambivalence accompanied her to her role in the CI in the UK. For Rose, work at the CI represented a complex set of advantages and limitations. On the one hand, the overall success of the institute, together with recognition and praise from her managers there, contributed somewhat to her sense of identity and belonging to TCSOL at the CI. On the other hand, the CI's position in the wider context of the British education system, the restrictions in human resource policy which prevented her

from getting a secure job with the institute, the low pay and a work schedule which appropriated her family time, jointly diminished her commitment to TCSOL in the CI. These barriers call for improvements to the way the CI deploys and manages teachers, as will be detailed further in Chapter 10.

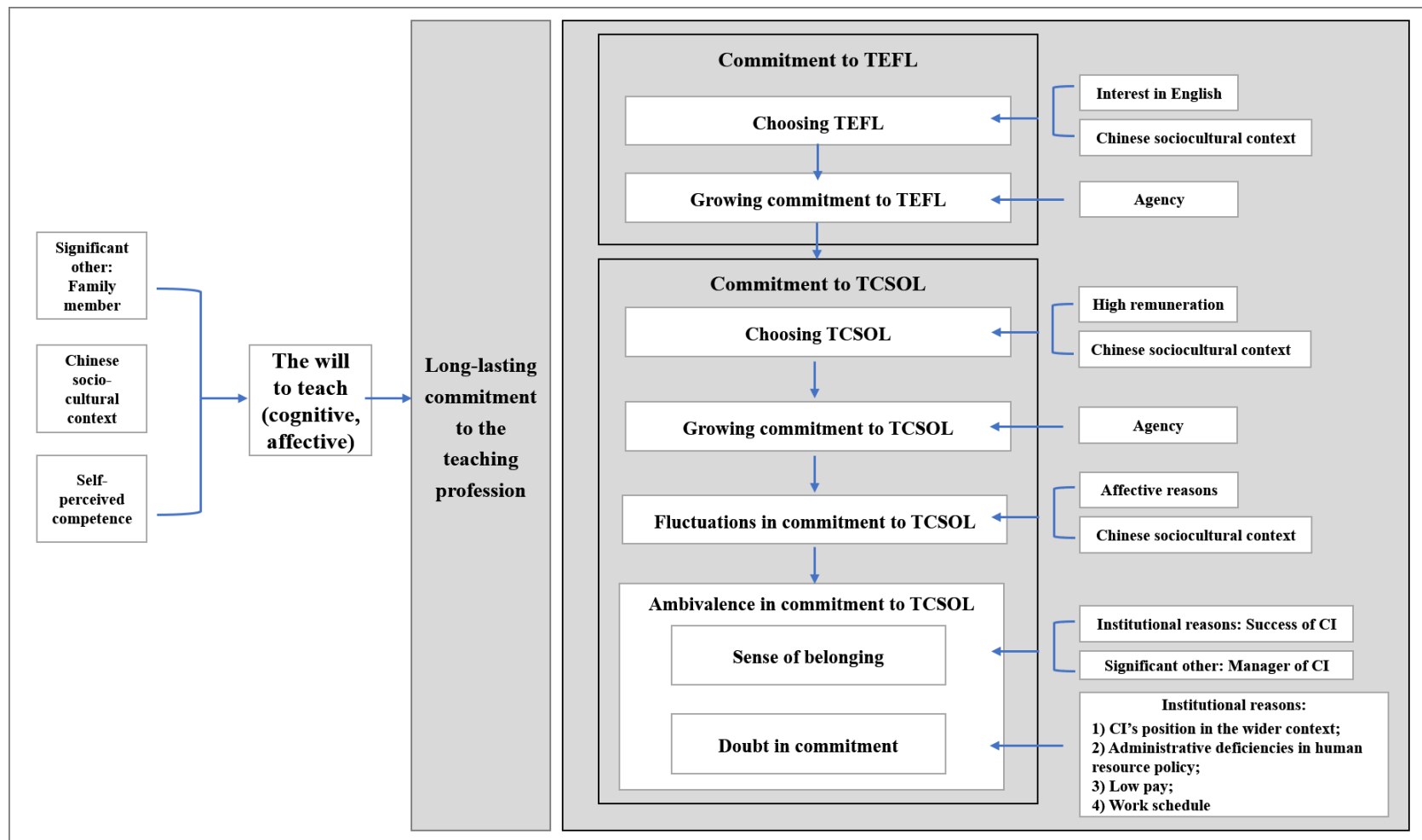


Figure 9.2: Rose's professional identity

9.4.2 Instructional identity

The growth of Rose's instructional identity took place through changes in her pedagogical beliefs and practices and the way she understood and manifested the teacher-student relationship.

A. Identity changes via pedagogical beliefs and practices

The shifts in Rose's pedagogical approach were intertwined with the developments in her cultural identity (see Figure 9.3). Rose's cultural identity had been forged in the Chinese sociocultural and educational context, which meant that she had internalised and unquestioningly conformed to the traditional beliefs and practices embedded in that context. Thus, Rose claimed her early career instructional identity to be a "Chinese-style" teacher who placed high value on test results, standardised set textbooks and rote learning. This instructional identity was further strengthened by the institutional environment in Chinese public schools, particularly during her EFL teaching period. The acculturation process in Rose's cultural identity alongside her instructional identity took place thanks to her substantial interaction with so-called "western education" through years of situated learning as a CSOL teacher in foreign language classrooms, as well as her MA education and living experiences in the UK. Although Rose manifested a lot of changes in her pedagogical beliefs and practices, such as prioritising students' interests and preferences, encouraging exploratory learning, and being more autonomous in planning lesson content and delivery, the influence of her deep-seated cultural identity did retain some power over her work. Thus, she did not undergo a complete transformation of instructional identity, and in Rose's own words, she was still a "Chinese teacher at heart".

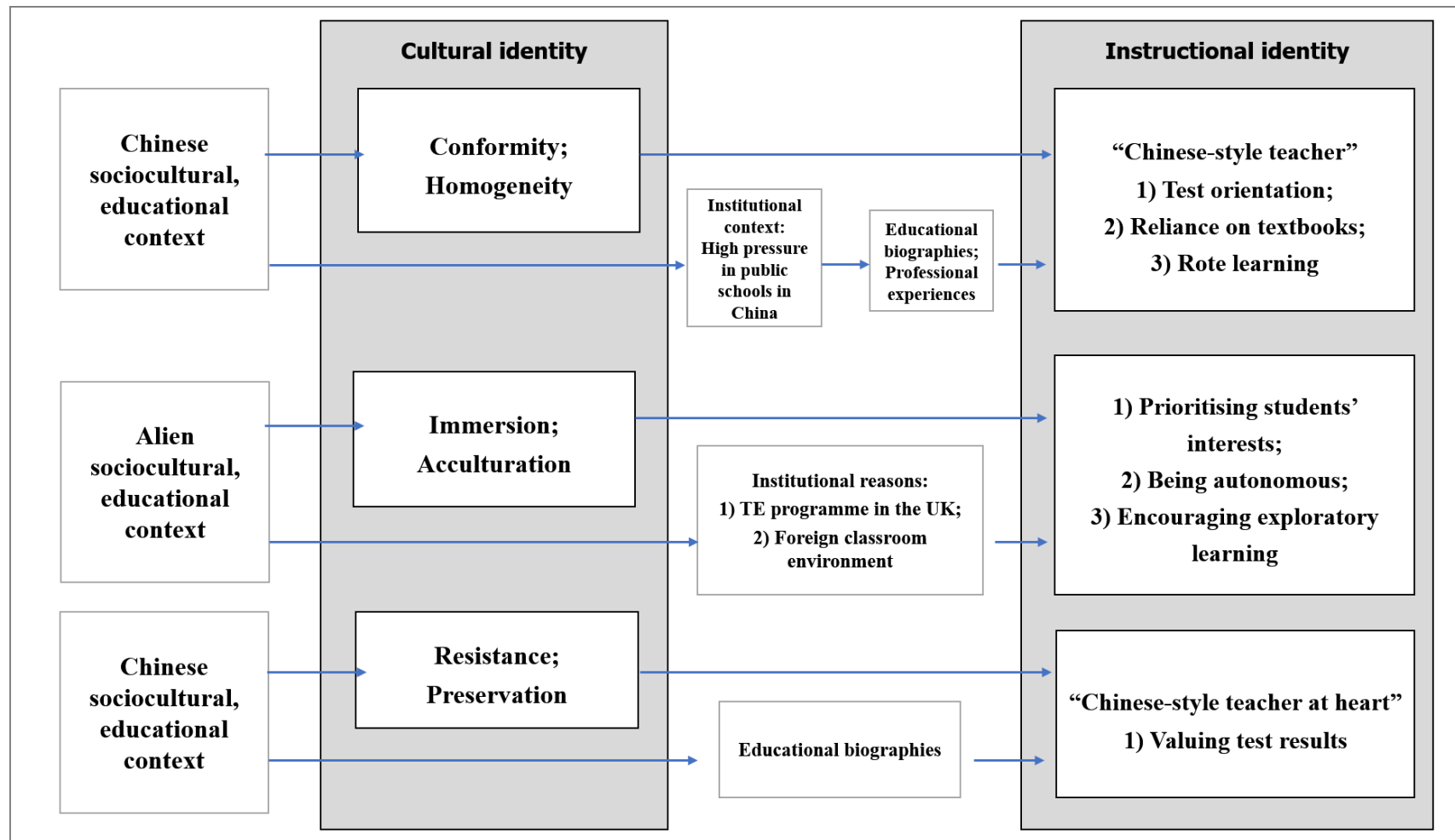


Figure 9.3: Rose’s cultural identity and instructional identity via pedagogical beliefs and practices

B. Teacher-student relationship dimensions of identity

The development of Rose's instructional identity was peppered with helpful insights and lessons learnt from being a parent (see Figure 9.4). There was a clear transfer of experiences between her personal and professional lives. Rose's powerful sense of personal identity as a mother, her child-rearing experiences and her profound affection for her daughter seemed to facilitate the development of Rose's student-centred instructional identity, affording her more patience and empathy for her young students and greater awareness and sensitivity to students' different characteristics and needs. This made her more open to adopting new teaching and learning criteria which prioritise children's satisfaction when evaluating the effectiveness of education.

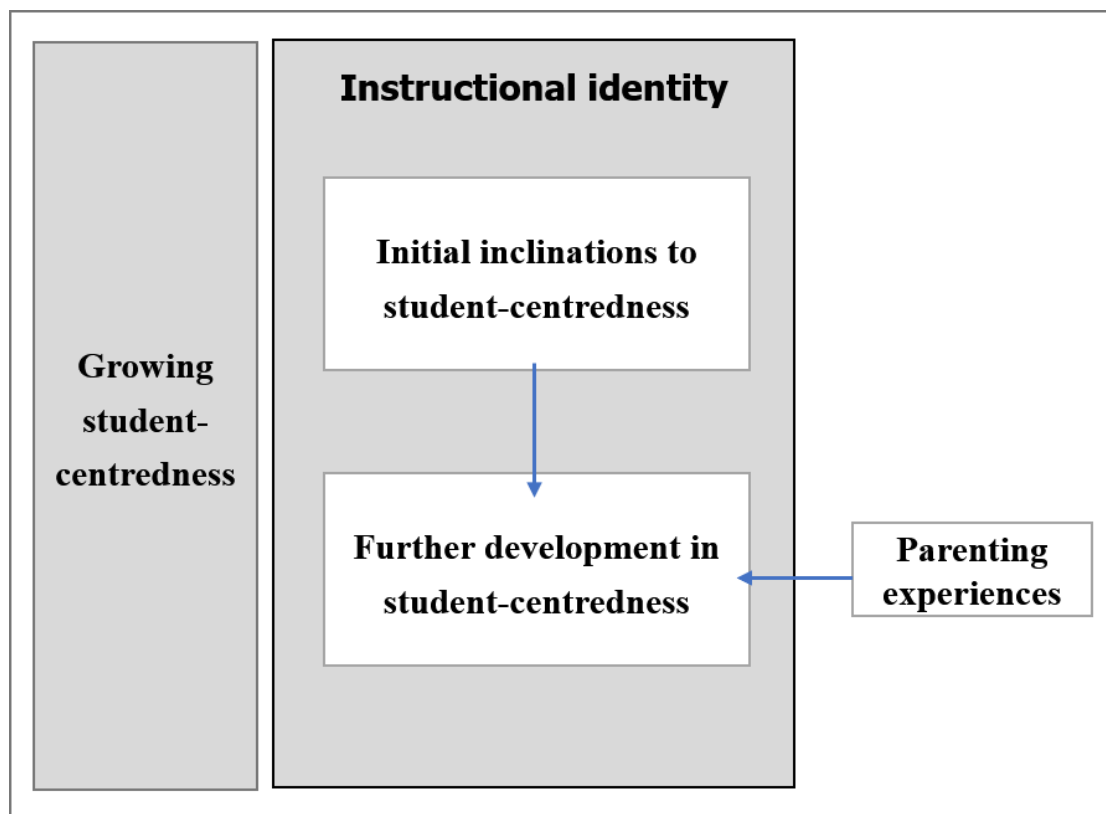


Figure 9.4: Rose's instructional identity on teacher-student relationship aspect

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

10.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the overall conclusions from the research findings and specifies the implications and contributions of the study as well as its limitations. First, I will revisit each of the four research questions and summarise the key findings. Drawing on the identified trajectories of the CSOL teachers' identities and their influencing factors, certain recommendations will be made to help improve the professional development of CSOL teachers. The contributions and limitations of the study will then be set out. Finally, the chapter concludes with my personal reflections on the study and how it will inform my future research.

10.2 Overall summary of findings

10.2.1 RQ 1: What kinds of identities do CSOL teachers develop, based on their *self-report*?

To address this question, thematic analysis was adopted. Based on the data collected, the participant CSOL teachers' identities had three main components, namely professional identity, instructional identity and cultural identity (see below Figure 10.1).

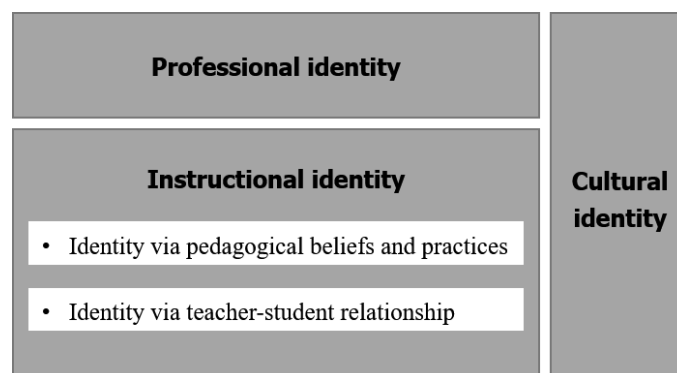


Figure 10.1: Components of CSOL teachers' identities

Professional identity was a major part of the participant CSOL teachers' identities. This component involves the ways the participants conceptualised and negotiated their relationship with the teaching profession – not exclusive to TCSOL, but including other areas of teaching they had been engaged in such as TEFL and early childhood education. The narrative evidence relating to this aspect demonstrated how each participant's sense of identity as a teacher shifted with the passage of time and with changes of setting and context.

Instructional identity is central to the identity of teachers and relates to their particular fields. This component largely defines the teacher's classroom persona and the ways she or he carries out the acts of teaching (Pennington, 2015). In the present study, participants' instructional identities had two main facets: 1) their pedagogical beliefs and practices; and 2) their ideas about the teacher-student relationship and the ways they manifested these. The narrative data collected showed that Mary's instructional identity pivoted more with the shifts in her pedagogical practices, while for Coco, Leo and Lily, the changes to the T-S relationship were more salient. Developments in Rose's instructional identity were linked closely to both facets.

Cultural identity refers to one's sense of belonging to a particular culture or ethnic group and it involves learning about, accepting and internalising the beliefs, values, norms, traditions, thinking patterns and social practices of their culture, and identifying with that culture as part of their self-concept (Lustig and Koester, 2010). Although cultural identity is central to one's overall identity, when people are situated in a homogeneous environment they are not usually consciously aware of this important dimension of identity. It becomes more salient to the conscious mind when it is triggered by specific circumstances (Lustig and Koester, 2010). Due to the special nature of TCSOL work, all the participant CSOL teachers were immersed in 'alien' cultural and educational environments involving encounters and interactions with new and different people, institutions and ideas. Such experiences serve to activate an individual's sense of their own cultural identity. In this research, cultural identity was

found to evolve in itself, but it also permeated other aspects of identity and played an implicit role in mediating the changes in the CSOL teachers' professional and instructional identities. So, based on the present study, cultural identity can be conceptualised as an overarching facet of teacher identity. Accordingly, discussion of cultural identity was integrated into relevant sections rather than given separate treatment.

Changes in participants' cultural identities exerted influences mainly on their instructional identities: for some (e.g. Mary, Rose), the alien educational conventions awakened their intercultural awareness and promoted adaption in their pedagogical practices, and for the others (e.g. Coco, Leo, Lily), foreign classroom environments triggered reflection on their conformity to Chinese educational traditions and led to adjustment in their way of addressing teacher-student relationship. As for the participant Lily, the impact of her cultural identity also applied in the respect of her professional identity, but it remained tacit when she was situated in China, and it was the other factors such as her personal interests and self-perceived suitability that played a distinct role in her dedication to the early childhood education in her previous career life spent in China. However, when she moved to the UK, her affiliation to the Chinese traditions and culture became salient which led to her shift from a commitment to children teaching to a devotion to TCSOL. The complexity of the relationship made it difficult for the researcher to produce a model completely capturing the fluidity and dynamism among these three aspects of teacher identity for each participant. Here, therefore, I only provide a figure (see above Figure 10.1) displaying the components of CSOL teachers' identities.

In the section that follows, I will give an overview of how the CSOL teachers developed the three main components of their identities.

10.2.2 RQ 2: How do CSOL teachers' identities develop, based on their *self-report*?

This section will summarise the developmental process of participants' teacher identities in terms of the three aspects: professional, instructional and cultural identity.

10.2.2.1 The developmental process of professional identity

Professional identity relates to how the participant CSOL teachers negotiated their relationships with the teaching profession and how these connections became part of their teacher identities. The findings revealed that although the CSOL teachers' attachments to the teaching profession differed, broadly there were three kinds of trajectories.

Firstly, an individual's professional identity may involve a dual connection to the teaching profession and another field beyond teaching (Barkhuizen, 2017). For example, Mary's professional identity was characterised by a sustained connection with two vocations in parallel, namely teaching (TEFL and TCSOL) and marketing. These two dimensions were sometimes in conflict with each other. Mary's passion for marketing had started during her adolescence and lay at the core of her career aspirations (Barcelos, 2017; Phinney, 1990) and she subsequently acquired the appropriate cultural capital for this field, i.e. formal education and academic degrees in marketing (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984; Block, 2007). With this background, Mary sustained her strong sense of herself as a marketing professional even though her actual engagement in formal marketing roles was limited. Meanwhile, despite considerable investment of time and energy into teaching roles, Mary did not develop a deep sense of connection to the teaching profession. It was noteworthy that Mary attributed her teaching career opportunities to "coincidence" or happenstance rather than to her intentional choice or sincere aspiration. Another factor in her comparatively weak sense of teacher professional identity was her lack of requisite 'capital' to be considered a legitimate member. She did not have education-related or language-related academic qualifications, the right specialised knowledge base, or the recognised competence (Richards, 2012). Moreover, the sense

of pleasure and commitment to her work that she did have was diminished by her perceptions of the unpleasant collegial environment in the CI, organisational barriers to better pay and job security, and the continuing appeal of marketing-related job opportunities. The tensions within her dual identity therefore accompanied her evolution as a teacher who cared about her work but had thwarted aspirations to pursue a marketing career (Canagarajah, 2017). There were occasions, however, when the two sides of Mary's professional identity worked in harmony, such as her readiness to enact a marketing role within her teaching post, by using her promotional skills to attract customers to the language courses (Farrell, 2011). By choice and necessity, Mary did not develop full membership of either the teaching or marketing professions, but her connections to these two communities both constituted significant aspects of her professional identity (Wenger, 1998).

It was by retrospectively examining the origins of Mary's vocational interests and identity in her younger life, and not confining the analysis to the CI work period, that the author grew to fully appreciate the evolution of Mary's professional identity as a teacher. This approach led to an in-depth understanding of the reasons for Mary's relatively weak commitment to the teaching profession (not just TCSOL) and informed suggestions on how to facilitate her professional development and strengthen her sense of belonging to the TCSOL community in the CI (see section 10.2.4).

The second kind of trajectory found in the data concerning teacher professional identity is exemplified by cases Lily and Rose. Here, professional identity was manifested as a sustained and strong commitment to the teaching profession overall, but marked by shifts to different fields within it (e.g. TCSOL, TEFL and early childhood education).

Despite the differences in their personal interests and capabilities – Lily loved children and had a natural affinity with them, while Rose's strengths were writing and public speaking – both of them had aspired to become teachers since their youth. As Erikson (1968) observed, the personal identity constructed during adolescence may lead to a person's commitment to an occupation later in their life (cited in Phinney, 1990, p.7).

Moreover, as Barcelos (2017) pointed out, “the more central a belief and more connected to their emotions, the more influential it is to their identities” (p.147). Therefore, although both participants changed the subjects they taught (Lily moved from early years teaching to TCSOL, and Rose switched from TEFL to TCSOL) and had to acclimate to changes in their sociocultural environments, both of them sustained a strong sense of commitment to teaching throughout their whole careers.

Both Lily and Rose had formal education and training related to teaching (early childhood education and TEFL respectively) which helped equip them with the expertise necessary for their teaching careers and strengthened their connections to the profession (Pennington and Richards, 2016). By the time of the study, both had considerable teaching experience (over 10 years each) and their intrinsic motivation for their work had helped sustain their commitment despite the frequent changes of jobs and workplaces. However, both women expressed some conditionality in this commitment to TCSOL, indicating that external factors such as low pay, bureaucratic frustrations, and family reasons were exerting significant pressures on these CSOL teachers’ professional identities.

The third pathway for professional identity was less complicated: participants who demonstrated a sustained and continually growing commitment to TCSOL exclusively, as was the case with Coco and Leo.

Both participants had received either formal teacher education in TCSOL (Coco) or systematic professional TCSOL training in the workplace (Leo) which gave them sufficient cultural capital to be reckoned as legitimate members of the CSOL teaching profession (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984; Block, 2007) and helped instill in them a strong sense of belonging to this field. A range of significant others including teacher educators, mentors and colleagues had provided them with positive role models. By absorbing their models’ examples of effective practice and cultivating similar good qualities in themselves, Coco and Leo progressively grew stronger identities as CSOL teachers and did their best to live up to their notions of what makes a good CSOL teacher. However,

unlike Leo, by the end of Coco's assignment in the CI, her commitment to TCSOL started to wane – largely due to barriers in the TCSOL industry, highlighting a need for Hanban to address these problems.

10.2.2.2 The developmental process of instructional identity and cultural identity

According to my findings, the ways that the CSOL teachers' instructional identities were formed were inextricable from the influence of the changes in their cultural identities. Therefore, in summarising the developmental processes I will synthesise the analysis of these two aspects of identity.

The label “Chinese-style” was adopted by four participants (Coco, Leo, Mary and Rose) to define their instructional identities and differentiate themselves from “Western” or “British-style” teachers (as Rose and Mary explicitly pointed out) in describing their own pedagogical beliefs and practices or explaining their way of thinking about the T-S relationship. The choice of language points to their awakening consciousness of their cultural identity in the context of a foreign sociocultural and educational environment. Several stages could be observed in the formation of the study participants' instructional identities as well as their cultural identities.

The four participants referred to a homogeneity in their instructional identity in their early teaching careers, as they were automatically conforming to and identifying with the traditions and thinking patterns embedded in their home culture, and incorporating them into their CSOL teaching in an unexamined way (Lustig and Koester, 2010). For example, Leo took for granted the idea that “teachers are dignified” – a principle ingrained in Confucianism – thus he found it difficult to accept doubts or challenge by his students. Due to their own educational experiences, Rose and Mary were accustomed to the test-oriented approach which prevailed in Chinese education particularly from the 1980s to the 2000s (Yi, 2010), hence a sharp focus on testing was initially a major feature of their instructional identities. Reflecting the influence of the high power distance in Chinese society, Coco instinctively complied with the

authorities (Hanban) and unquestioningly followed its curriculum although it was not always very suitable for her own students' learning needs.

Immersion in a foreign culture and unfamiliar education settings led all the participants to experience cultural differences in education (Smolcic and Katunich, 2017) including novel ideas and methods in the British context. To a varied extent, the four participant CSOL teachers all began to reflect on and question the conventions rooted in their home culture, and to integrate some ideas and behaviours from the new culture into their own teaching repertoires (Lustig and Koester, 2010, p.317). Thus, they were demonstrating acculturation in both their instructional and cultural identities. For instance, Coco changed her approach in the classroom by inquiring more into students' own interests and motivations, rather than passively drawing only from the curriculum content imposed by Hanban. Leo was heavily influenced by principles of equality in the western countries where he had lived and worked. Gradually he developed his own ethos, viewing teachers as providers of services in education, and this represented a fundamental shift away from education traditions in Chinese culture which assert teachers' prestige and inherent, strict authority over students. Rose also became a more student-centred teacher, having absorbed many new teaching beliefs and practices in her so-called "western" educational environment. She began to prioritise students' own interests, putting more emphasis on the cultivation of functional language skills instead of narrowly focusing on test results, and she became more autonomous in designing lessons and selecting content rather than relying entirely on set textbooks. At first, Mary experienced a sense of disorientation (Trilokekar and Kukar, 2011) in her new cultural and education context, but over time she gradually adjusted some of her pedagogical beliefs and practices although she preserved certain aspects of Chinese-style teaching that she particularly valued. Acculturation versus resistance to change is not a strict binary opposition, as will be elaborated next.

Culture, especially one's home culture, is basic to identity and has broad influence (Lustig and Koester, 2010). The cultural identity an individual has achieved early in

their lives is typically shaped by his/her home culture and can be very resistant to change (Phinney, 1990; Donato, 2017). It might have proved difficult for the participants to transform their instructional identities which were heavily mediated by their existing cultural identities. For some participants, such as Mary who at the time of interview had lived in the UK for about three years but had comparatively limited interactions within the British educational environment, acculturation was not necessarily robust (Palmer and Menard-Warwick, 2012). As described in section 8.3.1.4, Mary's current pedagogical practices in the classroom reveal conformity to some of her old ways of instruction rooted in her education in her home culture (Lustig and Koester, 2010). Even Rose, whose intercultural experiences were much richer (including a one-year MA teacher education qualification in the UK) and who had made remarkable changes to her pedagogical philosophies and practices, still asserted her instructional identity to be a "Chinese-style teacher in my heart". Meanwhile, we should not ignore the possibility that participants' resistance to change in their instructional beliefs and practices might be a result of their intention to model a more traditional Chinese pedagogical style and so providing their students with an authentic experience of education in a Chinese fashion.

Although the terms "Chinese-style" and "Western/British-style" were frequently used by the participants to define their instructional identities, the intended connotations of these terms varied greatly among the participants because of their different growing-up, educational and intercultural experiences. It is a simplified and subjective dichotomy which to some extent reflects stereotypical notions of Chinese culture and education and an incomplete – or even illusory – understanding of other cultures and their education systems. Therefore, professional training is needed to help CSOL teachers actively reflect on their cultural identity and its impact on their pedagogical practices, and to better understand the educational environment in the host country. These matters will be detailed further in section 10.2.4.

An increasing student-centredness could be observed in all the participants' instructional identities. Apart from the strong influence of cultural experiences on this trend, other factors were in operation. For some participants (e.g. Lily and Rose), the experience of being a parent played a significant role in changing their practices to be more student-oriented. Lily and Rose both reported that motherhood had made them more patient and empathetic with students, and helped them become more considerate as teachers when setting requirements on students. The impact of child-rearing was especially resonant for them as parents of second-generation Chinese children and simultaneously as teachers of such children being educated in the UK.

10.2.3 RQ 3: What kinds of factors influence the process of CSOL teachers' identity formation, based on their *self-report*?

Based on my findings, the personal and contextual factors that shaped the TI formation of the CSOL teachers can be envisaged in four concentric layers. Figure 10.2 depicts the layers, the factors falling within each layer, and the dynamics between the different layers.

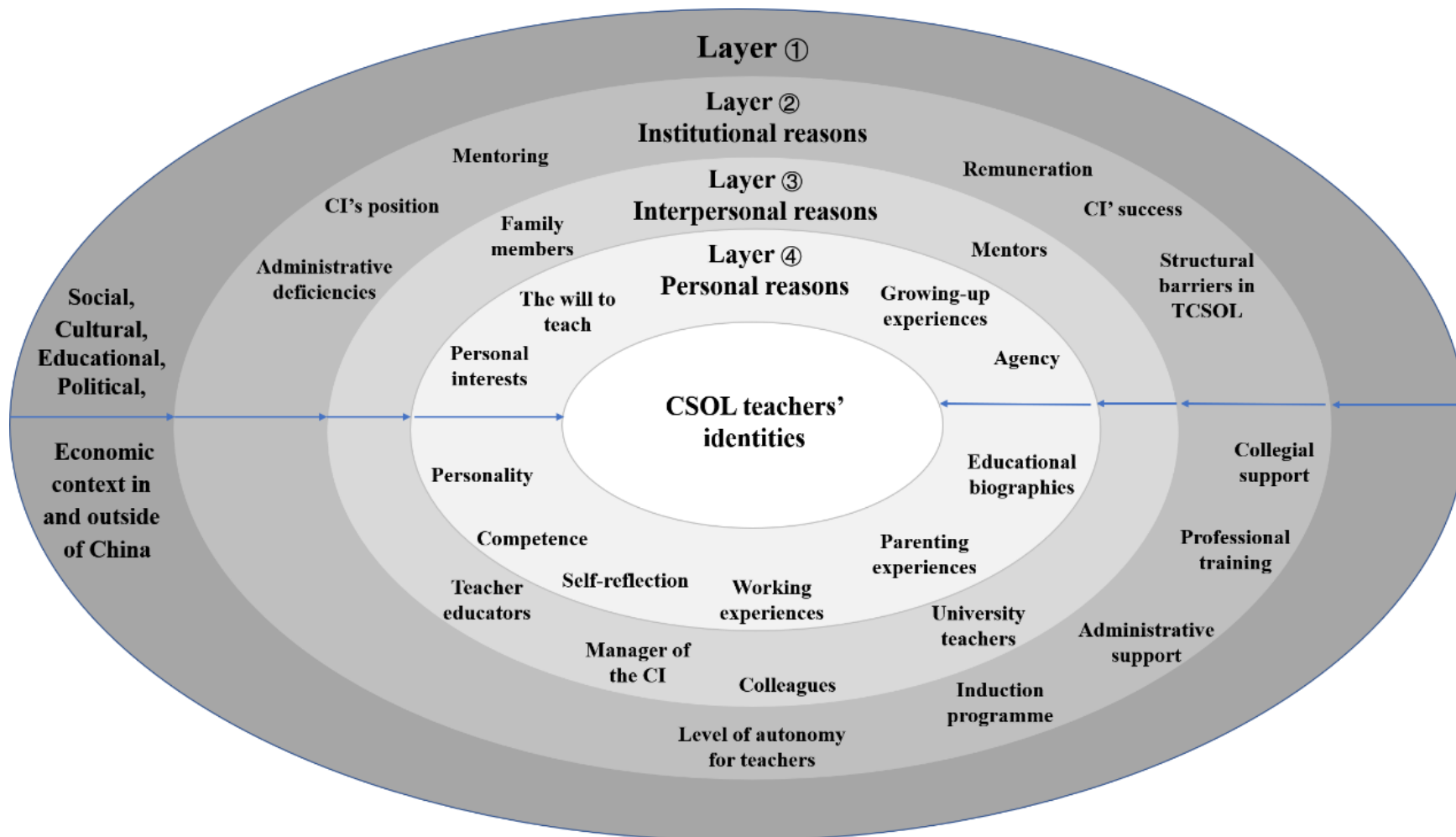


Figure 10.2: Factors shaping the TI formation of CSOL teachers

10.2.3.1 Layer ① : Social, cultural, educational, political and economic environment within and outside of China

The social, cultural, educational, political and economic context, both within and outside of China, played a significant role in shaping the participants' teacher identities, in various ways.

First of all, the changes in the socioeconomic environment in China exerted direct influence on the CSOL teachers' developing identities. For example, the Chinese economic reforms and "opening-up" policy [from the late 1970s] which promoted the establishment of foreign companies and attracted large numbers of non-Chinese speaking people to China in subsequent decades, created attractive job opportunities for many and led to Rose's career redirection to CSOL teaching. Secondly, the broader sociocultural and educational context in China, manifesting in the institutional environments of Chinese public schools, had profound influences on the participants' educational biographies and shaped their teacher identities. For example, both Mary and Rose had internalised the pedagogical beliefs and practices they had personally experienced as pupils in Chinese schools where quantified test results were all-important; hence both teachers were highly test-oriented in their instructional identities although this was tempered later in their careers. Thirdly, the Chinese sociocultural context had shaped the participant CSOL teachers' cultural identities which were imbued with Chinese values, especially the educational philosophies and traditions embedded in their home culture, and these values influenced the ongoing development of the teachers' professional and instructional identities. For example, the Chinese ethos of respecting teachers and valuing teaching had shaped Leo's cultural identity to take teachers' authority for granted, thus he automatically put teacher talk at the centre of his classroom strategies.

However, non-Chinese sociocultural contexts also had influence on the participants' cultural identities. The disparity between British and Chinese culture served to trigger the CSOL teachers' intercultural awareness causing them to reflect on and re-examine their cultural inheritance. This led them to question their conformity to established Chinese education methods and then to break up the homogeneity in their instructional practices. Hence, all the participants showed acculturation in their instructional identities to a degree. The specific UK regional sociopolitical context was also

identified as a factor influencing instructional identity. Selective testing of pupils for school admission had long been prohibited in the regional state-funded school systems, for historical and political reasons. For Rose, this local ethos contributed to her approaching student learning more holistically, rather than narrowly focused on tests. So, exposure to a new culture can trigger changes in a teacher's cultural and instructional identities. However, immersion in a new culture can also help to *intensify* an individual's sense of identification with their home culture, as was the case for Lily. Her evolving professional identity as a CSOL teacher in the UK was fired up by her dedication to the cause of helping second-generation Chinese children in the UK become fluent in the language and culture of their homeland/heritage. Interestingly, this development was in tandem with Lily's increasing distance from Chinese-style teaching methods, showing that the interactions of culture and teacher identity are multi-layered.

10.2.3.2 Layer ② : Institutional factors

Institutional factors also shaped the participant CSOL teachers' identity trajectories. Eleven such factors were identified (see Figure 10.2): 1) mentoring, 2) induction programmes, 3) professional training, 4) collegial support, 5) administrative support, 6) remuneration/salary, 7) level of autonomy granted to teachers in the institution, 8) the CI's success, 9) the CI's position in the wider context of the British education system, 10) deficiencies in human resource policy, and 11) structural barriers in terms of career progression and remuneration in the CSOL teaching profession.

Echoing the findings in Guarino et al. (2006) in their review of the evidence base, the current study has shown that mentoring, induction programmes, professional training, the level of autonomy granted to teachers, and the levels of collegial support, administrative support and remuneration received by teachers have all played important parts in enhancing teachers' sense of competence and teacher identity, and in strengthening their sense of affiliation to the teaching profession. The weekly mentoring that Coco enjoyed throughout her time at a British school, and Leo's experiences of a mentoring scheme and systematic professional training activities in China during his early career, were received very positively. These schemes helped to inform the teachers about the culture of CSOL teaching in the relevant institution and the performative culture of the new educational context (Devos, 2010; Guarino et al., 2006) and also

increased their pedagogical competence and sense of self-efficacy as CSOL teachers. Conversely, in Mary's case, the lack of an induction programme and ongoing professional and administrative support resulted in Mary's sense of cultural disorientation and feelings of self-doubt in her instructional capacity when she first joined the CI in 2015 and began teaching CSOL in the unfamiliar British context. Interestingly, however, there have been remarkable improvements in the CI's recent provision of professional and administrative support for teachers, as reported by Rose in her 2018 interview. The establishment of a communication group for CSOL teachers on a social media platform, the implementation of a secondary line management system in the CI, and frequent meetings and CI-organised get-together events have all contributed to Rose's growing sense of belonging to TCSOL in the CI. In Coco's case, her situation in a British local school with abundant collegial support helped her gain a better understanding of her students in the UK and she was able to adapt very well to the British education environment. However, Mary's experiences of the collegial environment were unpleasant, possibly due in part to not having full professional legitimacy (recognised expertise and academic qualifications in education or language, as opposed to significant work-based skill), leading to her decreasing affective commitment to TCSOL in the CI. Institutional factors in China also exerted influence. The high-pressured atmosphere in Chinese schools, reflecting the wider Chinese education context imposing national educational targets (i.e. the Chinese national college entrance examination), had forced teachers (e.g. Rose) to prioritise testing and scrupulously follow the Chinese MOE-set curriculum with little autonomy and little attention to students' real learning needs and interests. However, the change to the less-pressured institutional context of the CI afforded more space for teachers (e.g. Rose and Lily) to be more student-centred by adjusting their teaching content and methods to better satisfy their students' preferences. Of the CI's institutional shortcomings, the low pay was a very significant source of complaint particularly by the local CSOL teachers (e.g. Rose and Mary) and was reported as a large factor in teacher attrition.

The status and operation of the CI within the wider context of British society also impacted on the development of the CSOL teachers' identities. As asserted by Wenger (1998), a person's identification with and commitment to a community of practice is not only determined by his or her position within the CoP, but also influenced by the position of the community with respect to broader constellations (p.169). On the one

hand, the success and reputation of the CI and its gradually increasing influence in the local British community boosted the sense of pride and achievement of the CSOL teachers (e.g. Rose and Leo) working within it. On the other hand, the position of the CI in the wider context of the British education system, especially the status of the weekend language school (a “supplementary school” subordinate to the mainstream (Thorpe, 2011, p.2) served to diminish participants’ (e.g. Rose’s) self-esteem as CI teachers and inhibit growth in their commitment to TCSOL in the CI.

The CI’s unsatisfactory human resource policy which effectively precluded local CSOL teachers from being more securely employed by the CI, was one of the major reasons cited by local CSOL teachers (e.g. Rose and Mary) for their conditional or decreasing commitment to TCSOL in the CI. In parallel, for the Hanban-assigned volunteers (who had better contractual terms at the specific CI), the structural barriers to career progression and better remuneration in the wider CSOL teaching profession were the biggest impediments to their sustained commitment to the profession. These concerns were felt especially acutely by participants who had majored in TCSOL as postgraduates. Recommendations on these issues are set out in section 10.2.4.

10.2.3.3 Layer ③ : Interpersonal factors

The factors shaping CSOL teachers’ identity trajectories also included interpersonal forces, primarily the influences of different kinds of “significant others” (Martel and Wang, 2015; Ye, 2017). The evolution of CSOL teachers’ identities was typically peppered with lessons from “significant others” or critical incidents involving these others, which the CSOL teachers drew on as models or sources of inspiration or encouragement (Martel and Wang, 2015; Liu, 2009). The significant others identified in this present study included family members who were teachers, the participants’ own university teachers or teacher educators on the TE programme, mentors and colleagues in the workplace, and the manager of the CI. These individuals were located at different stages of the CSOL teachers’ identity trajectories.

Having a relative who is a teacher can have a powerful impact on a young person, as was the case for Rose. The teacher in her family was highly respected by other family members, so Rose had a positive image of teachers from childhood and deep-seated aspirations to join the teaching profession. Teachers encountered at schools and universities can also become inspirational models whom trainee teachers aspire to

imitate (Clarke, 2008, p.80) or cast as the “ideal self” to live up to (Dörnyei, 2000; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009). As an undergraduate, Lily had a mathematics teacher who was attentive and kind to Lily and became a significant force shaping Lily’s instructional identity to be more student-centred. Similarly, the qualities Leo absorbed from his university teacher had long-lasting positive effects, inspiring Leo to strive always to teach in ways that made the material as lucid and comprehensible to students as possible. The recognition and encouragement from teacher educators, university teachers and mentors motivated Coco, Leo and Lily to feel more competent, confident and committed to the teaching profession. With experienced colleagues in the CI as role models, Coco got a clearer idea of what kind of teacher she wanted to become. Finally, a significant other can be the embodiment of the influence of the institutional environment. For example, Rose’s account revealed that the support she had from the manager of the CI, especially encouragement and recognition in the form of positive language, was a significant boost to her sense of achievement as a CSOL teacher and her sense of belonging to the CI.

10.2.3.4 Layer ④ : Personal factors

The developmental process of the CSOL teachers’ identities was inseparable from their personal motivations and reasons. The research findings identified 10 separate factors in this layer, including: 1) the desire and will to teach, 2) personal interests, 3) personality, 4) self-perceived competence and suitability for teaching, 5) agency, 6) self-reflection, 7) growing-up experiences, 8) educational biographies, 9) working experiences, and 10) parenting experiences.

An individual’s self-awareness and exploration of his/her personality, interests and abilities especially early in life may lead to their interest in certain occupations (Erikson, 1964; Phinney, 1993), such as the desire to teach. As described earlier, Lily loved children and felt a natural, mutual affinity with children, which was the basis of her decision to pursue a career in early childhood education. Rose had dreamed of becoming a teacher since childhood and her self-perceived competence in writing and speech and her interest in the English language had together led to her self-selection into TEFL. Coco had predilections and interests during her adolescence, such as being talkative, and enjoying learning English and grammar, which contributed to her choice of a TCSOL career. Each taking a different branch of teaching, the three participants

consolidated their strong will to teach which formed the backbone of their long-lasting commitment to the teaching profession.

Each CSOL teacher's sense of agency mediated the developmental process of their teacher identity. Holland and Lachicotte (2007) observed that people, with agency, "can modify the environment's stimulus value for their own mental states" (p.109). Showing powerful agency, Coco, Leo, Lily and Rose embraced adversity and challenges in their careers (such as poor conditions in the workplace, or the trials of learning to teach TCSOL with no formal training in the pedagogical aspects) and grew in confidence and competence in claiming their identities as (CSOL) teachers. Self-reflection has been recognised as a key mechanism for shaping teachers' identities (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009) and contributing to ongoing progress in their instructional competence, as was the case with Leo.

Additionally, the CSOL teachers integrated into their TI development their own experiences of growing up, being educated, and the world of work, which had all been shaped by sociocultural and institutional contexts. For example, primed by her own upbringing and education during which phase she had a strict timetable and heavy workload, Mary tended to push her students hard to learn. Later stages of the life-span showed that parenthood could influence teacher identity. For example, for Lily and Rose, aspects of parenting were translated to their teaching roles, making them more patient, considerate and student-centred in the classroom (Claesson and Brice, 1989).

10.2.4 RQ 4: What are the implications of the findings for facilitating CSOL teachers' professional development?

This section sets out the implications of the research findings for the education, professional training, employment and management of CSOL teachers.

10.2.4.1 Implications for the education and professional training of CSOL teachers

1) Integrating cultural identity work

Echoing the findings in previous studies (e.g. Ennsner-Kananen and Wang, 2016; Zhang, 2015), the present research reveals that CSOL teachers' cultural identities shaped the development of other dimensions of their teacher identities, especially the instructional facet. However, although the participants frequently used the term "Chinese-style" to loosely refer to their own instructional identities, they did not appear to be fully

cognisant that their pedagogical practices were underpinned by their cultural identities in profound ways. Therefore, I suggest that supported cultural identity work should be integrated into the education and professional training of CSOL teaching staff, whether they are dispatched by Hanban or sourced locally, especially during the time the teachers are working in the host countries.

Cultural identity work could take the following forms. Firstly, CSOL teachers should be explicitly taught about theories of culture and cultural identities and then encouraged to consider and explain how their own cultural identities influence their pedagogical practices (Cunningham and Katsafanas, 2014). Such work could help CSOL teachers make sense of their own cultural identities – in other words, become aware of and able to examine systematically their own beliefs, practices, biases and stereotypes (Keengwe, 2010) and understand how these are shaped by their home culture as well as the culture in the host country, and in turn influence their CSOL teaching. Secondly, CSOL teachers should be equipped with important skills in interviewing, observing and communicating with students from different sociocultural backgrounds. This would support the teachers to develop intercultural sensitivity, and help them understand their students as culturally different and show dispositions of respect for those differences (Cunningham and Katsafanas, 2014). Thirdly, reflection processes should be ongoing through the entirety of their periods of CSOL teaching in the host countries. Integrating reflective activities with fieldwork in an alien context has been shown to be effective in enhancing teachers' intercultural awareness (Husu, Toom and Pakrikainan, 2008; McCormack, 2011; Sharma et al., 2011).

2) Induction programmes and other professional training activities

A lack of professional training, especially induction programmes, for some of the CSOL teachers meant that they felt disoriented when they began teaching in unfamiliar environments in the host countries (Guarino et al., 2006; Giddens, 1991). The following suggestions are made to address this issue. First of all, systematic induction should be regarded as just as important as other CPD activities organised during the course of the teaching periods (Guarino et al., 2006). Induction is the crucial first stage for CSOL teachers to learn about the performative culture of the CI and its affiliated schools and classrooms, and begin adapting to the education context in the host countries (Devos, 2010). Secondly, it is recommended that there is a period of overlap between two

consecutive cohorts of Hanban-assigned teachers and volunteers, or at the very least a platform for their communication, to ensure smooth handover and easy transition of the incoming teachers and volunteers. Thirdly, experienced local CSOL teachers should be involved in the induction programme to talk to the newcomers about their experiences of living and teaching in the host countries. All of these measures would also contribute to rapport among the members of the CI community.

10.2.4.2 Implications for the management of CSOL teachers

A positive sense of connection to the teaching profession is a significant part of CSOL teachers' identities. However, in the present study, diminishing feelings of belonging and commitment to TCSOL were observed, especially among the Hanban-assigned volunteers and local CSOL teachers. Different factors led to the reduced connections in different groups of teachers, so I will recommend targeted measures in the following sections.

1) Building up community

Based on my findings, a weaker sense of affiliation to TCSOL was observed among local teachers, which could be due partly to a lack of recognition and esteem from colleagues especially those dispatched by Hanban. Previous research has found that a teacher's be(com)ing a legitimate member of the teaching community is inseparable from finding collegial and institutional recognition (Miller, 2009), and teachers are more likely to stay in schools with "integrated professional cultures" organised around collegial efforts (Guarino et al., 2006). Therefore, the CI should work to build up a community where teacher members from different backgrounds can recognise and appreciate each other's competence, characteristics and strengths. For example, local teachers' comparatively richer intercultural experiences should be acknowledged and valued highly, not least because they can help Hanban-assigned teaching staff to better understand the sociocultural and educational environment in the host country. Moreover, some local teachers have cross-cultural parenting and marriage experiences which could provide valuable cultural insights for the newly-arrived Hanban-assigned teachers learning about the lives and characteristics of local students, particularly helping those new teachers understand the perspectives of immigrant children (Garson, 2005; Quezada and Alfaro, 2007; Houser, 2008). In summary, it is expected that measures to facilitate the display of competence and recognition of competence

(Wenger, 1998) among colleagues and peers have the potential to increase CSOL teachers' sense of belonging, particularly the locally-recruited teachers.

Some strategies for teacher management and wellbeing were already or recently in place in the CI and were perceived by some participants as helpful in fostering local teachers' sense of connection to TCSOL and willingness to stay with the CI. These strategies are worth consideration by other CIs and include: 1) use of social media platforms (such as WeChat) to help unite teachers; 2) managers' recognition and encouragement of teachers, including praise and positive language; 3) a CI rewards system to incentivise teachers and enhance their sense of achievement and morale; 4) management tiers which are fit for effective line management and communication, and having teachers on management committees to ensure that issues of satisfaction and retention are addressed, and 5) activities and social events to increase opportunities for teachers to bond.

2) Improvements to employment criteria and conditions

Perceived restrictions and flaws in the ways CSOL teachers were employed were common reasons for both Hanban-assigned volunteers and local CSOL teachers wanting to move away from the CSOL teaching profession. Because the convention was that only Hanban-assigned teachers were contracted to carry out administrative work in the CI, there was no scope for local CSOL teachers to be employed more securely by the CI. This job instability, coupled with low incomes due to their part-time status, led CSOL teachers to feel less committed to TCSOL. It is strongly recommended that Hanban and the CI consider changing their policies on recruitment and employment of teaching staff to give local teachers the chance to apply for longer-term contracts and thus give them equality of opportunity with their Hanban peers. Also, remuneration of local teachers should be increased to improve retention of existing local teachers and make the roles more attractive should vacancies arise.

For Hanban-assigned CSOL volunteers, career prospects were complicated. Typically these individuals are university graduates who majored in TCSOL, and certain factors inhibited their engagement in TCSOL-related work in China. TCSOL jobs are usually based in Chinese universities where there are very high criteria for academic staff appointments, usually requiring a doctoral degree in the relevant field. These criteria were hard for TCSOL graduates to fulfil, and doctoral programmes in TCSOL only

began in China in 2015. Therefore, there is a need for a more established pathway, specifically for CSOL teachers to continue their accredited professional development in TCSOL. Note that Hanban's existing scheme, the Full-time CSOL Teacher Programme, was launched in 2012 with the aim of building "stable" cohorts of CSOL teachers but this scheme is still not very widespread. Hanban selects CSOL teachers for this programme and requires them to sign contracts. The recruits are then allocated to Hanban-appointed universities in China where they work formally as teaching staff until there are suitable opportunities for them to be dispatched to CIs around the world. The Chinese universities involved in the programme are responsible for appraising the job performance of the teachers while they are in the Chinese universities and formally accrediting them with professional titles, which in effect guarantees the continuing professional development of CSOL teachers.

10.3 Contributions to knowledge

This longitudinal research has studied the TI trajectories of CSOL teachers in the context of a UK CI and has made significant contributions to knowledge in this area in several ways. First of all, the study tackled a topic which had been relatively unexplored – the process of CSOL teachers' identity formation – and helped fill the gap in the literature by uncovering and interpreting the complexities and dynamics of this process in a detailed and systematic way. Secondly, the study investigated the experiences of *local* CSOL teachers, an important category of CI staff which so far has attracted little research interest (Xu, 2019), as well as adding to the existing evidence base on Hanban-assigned teachers and volunteers (e.g. Zheng, 2012; Wang, 2017; Ye, 2017; Xiang, 2019). Thirdly, the temporal frame of the investigation was valuable. The study used retrospective as well as concurrent inquiry methods to glean rich information on the participants' earlier life experiences which pointed to critical factors influencing their teacher identity development. These insights may not have emerged from data gathering focused exclusively on the teachers' thoughts and feelings during their CI assignments (see for example Ye, 2017 and Xiang, 2019). This approach also informed the targeted recommendations (section 10.2.4). Fourthly, the study encompassed the cultural dimension of CSOL teachers' identities, an area which has not had much coverage in LTI research (Martel and Wang, 2015; Ennsner-Kananen and Wang, 2016). The three-

stage model of cultural identity development (Phinney, 1990, 1993) was used for the analysis and interpretation of the TI formation of CSOL teachers, contributing to the originality of this research. Moreover, the findings led to a recommendation that cultural identity work should become part of the routine education and professional training of CSOL teachers to help them critically examine their cultural identities and its impact on their pedagogical practices, i.e. their instructional identities. Currently, this sort of scrutiny is seldom included in the TE and PD activities of CSOL teachers. Fifthly, resonating the suggestions proposed by Varghese et al. (2005) who call for openness to multiple theoretical approaches, this research employed several theoretical frameworks in combination, such as frames perspective (Pennington, 2015; Pennington and Richards, 2016), community of practice (Wenger, 1998), sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986, 1987; Holland and Lachicotte, 2007) and the model of cultural identity development (Phinney, 1993; Lustig and Koester, 2010) in addressing the different dimensions of identity in CSOL teachers, hence making a contribution theoretically.

10.4 Limitations of this study

Having specified the study's contributions to the literature, it is also important to address its limitations. The first limitation lies in the generalisability of the findings (Creswell, 2014). Although the adoption of a case study approach contributed to the generation of thick description and in-depth data, inherently it is unlikely that the findings can be generalised to the wider population in other contexts (Atieno, 2009). The five participant CSOL teachers were purposefully selected from a specific CI and the different trajectories of their teacher identity development might not be applicable to other CSOL teachers in other sites. However, it is asserted that the factors identified as having influenced the identity formation might have more universal relevance when approaching and framing the study of TI in CSOL teachers in other situations.

Another limitation of this study relates to the methods used. Due to practical constraints described in section 4.8.1.1, interview was the only method actually employed in the data collection and analysis. Although feedback forms were offered by Coco to evidence her teaching practices, for the rest of the participants, the self-report obtained from interviews was the only source of data. Exclusive reliance on self-report brings

potential risks, as participants may “present themselves in a favourable light” (Newman et al., 2002, p.294) and/or reveal only those aspects of their teacher identities that they are aware of. To bolster the reliability and credibility of similar future studies of teacher identity, it is strongly recommended that additional sources of data be used, such as live classroom observations or videotapes of teachers’ activities and daily practices, and the gathering of others’ perceptions (such as colleagues and mentors) through interview (e.g. Vélez-Rendón, 2010).

10.5 Personal reflections and implications for future study

During my doctoral study period, I have continued to play a dual role. On the one hand, I was a researcher who was exploring CSOL teachers’ identity and their professional development; on the other hand, I was a novice CSOL teacher myself and gradually developing my own professionalism. My practical teaching experiences and my theoretical research study formed a mutually nurturing circle, helping me to become a more critical researcher as well as a more competent CSOL teacher.

As a CSOL teacher in the CI, I had invaluable opportunities to teach in British local schools (both private and public) where I was surprised to find that classroom discipline was emphasised and even that detentions were sometimes given as punishment to students for poor behaviour, in ways that were quite similar to what I had observed in schools in China. This scenario aroused my interest and heightened my awareness of cultural issues in education, enabling me to scrutinise my own misunderstandings and stereotypes about the nature of so-called “Western/British-style education”, which according to the prevailing (but inaccurate) discourse in China was characterised mainly by “freedom”. Meanwhile, my teaching and situated learning experiences in British local schools helped fine-tune my perceptions when gathering my participants’ accounts, especially with regard to the culture-related content, and prompted me to think about how and why they were using the expressions “Chinese style” and “British style”, and to consider the validity of the dichotomy itself. All of these issues informed my developing interpretations of their teacher identities. It is fair to say that the changes in my understanding and interpretation of the data were accompanied by the changes in my own cultural identity from homogeneity to intercultural awareness which took place during my CSOL teaching. The experiences of living, studying and teaching in an alien

culture, i.e. the UK, and the process of investigating the CSOL teachers' cultural identities inspired my deeper interest in cultural identity as a topic and may lead to a shift in my research to focus more on this aspect in the future.

At the same time, my research experiences also benefited my professional development as a CSOL teacher. Thanks to the choice of this research topic, I had more opportunities to communicate with other CSOL teachers in the CI. It was the interaction with the participants, especially those who are also immigrant parents, that helped me dislodge my preconception that immigrant Chinese children in the UK were more or less the same as children in China, and made me more aware of the nature of their difficulties in learning Chinese. So, like some of my research participants, I have become a more considerate, tolerant and empathetic teacher with my students, and I feel and show even more respect for them. These experiences have also inspired me to explore how participants influence researchers' practices, in the next stage of my research.

The entire PhD journey has significantly changed me by cultivating my critical thinking abilities and challenging my old ways of perceiving the world and its different cultures. All the knowledge and skills I have acquired and developed will be of great benefit to my future research journey and my professional career.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Ethical approval letter



Downloaded: 30/08/2019
Approved: 14/12/2016

Junmin Xiao
Registration number: 150107978
School of Education
Programme: Teacher reflection and its relationship with professional development: a case study of a Confucius Institute in the UK

Dear Junmin

PROJECT TITLE: Teacher reflection and its relationship with professional development: a case study of a Confucius Institute in the UK

APPLICATION: Reference Number 012133

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 14/12/2016 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 012133 (dated 14/12/2016).
- Participant information sheet 1025313 version 2 (14/12/2016).
- Participant consent form 1025314 version 2 (14/12/2016).

If during the course of the project you need to [deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation](#) please inform me since written approval will be required.

Yours sincerely

David Hyatt
Ethics Administrator
School of Education

APPENDIX 2

Participant information sheet

Participant Information Sheet

1. Research Project Title:

Teacher reflection and its relationship with professional development: a case study of a Confucius Institute in the UK

2. Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

3. What is the project's purpose?

This research intends to use a Confucius Institute in the UK as a case, and investigate in-service international Chinese language (ICL) teachers' reflection and its relationship with their professional development. With a total of five interviews for each participant over eight month period, complemented with reflective writing, this research will illustrate the characteristics of ICL teachers' reflection, identify the factors that influence their reflection, and explore the potential influences of ICL teachers' reflection on their teaching practices and professional development. This study aims at contributing to a better understanding of the importance of ICL teachers' reflection, and leading to a provision of more targeted services and teacher education by the local Confucius Institutes and the Confucius Institute Headquarters (Hanban) to assist ICL teachers to realize their professional development.

4. Why have I been chosen?

This is a small-scale case study, and the sample size is expected to be six. You are invited mostly based on my observation of your performances in a series of reflective activities, such as group discussions organized by the Confucius Institute and my daily communication with you. Due to your perceived willingness and capability to share your thoughts and experiences, I sincerely hope that you could be my invaluable participant.

5. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw at any time without it affecting any benefits that you are entitled to in any way. You do not have to give a reason.

6. What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be interviewed five times during eight-month data collection period from December, 2016 to July, 2017, with each interview lasting for one hour. The first interview will be conducted in December, 2016, inquiring into the “critical moments” in your past learning and teaching experiences. The following four interviews will be done at an interval of approximately six weeks between January and July, 2017, in accordance with the two half terms and two end terms of the CI teaching calendar (i.e. mid February, early April, end May, and mid July, 2017). You are expected to talk about your newly occurred experiences during the past several weeks or anything you think worthwhile to reflect. A detailed instruction suggesting what might be included will be given to you sometime before each interview, leaving time and space for you to have a think. As the study unfolds, the meeting time and the length of each interview can be adjusted in consideration of your timetable.

You are also recommended to keep reflective journals or just short notes. Reflective journals are journals written in a relatively structured way demonstrating your teaching-related experiences or anything you consider critical, in which you can express your thoughts and reflection. However, considering the great amount of time you may spend on reflective journals writing, I suggest you just write down short notes. These written records can be served as a reminder during the interviews, and you have the right to decide whether to share these written materials with me.

7. What do I have to do?

There will be no lifestyle restrictions for you, but it is expected that you may sacrifice some of their leisure time out of working hours.

8. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

1) *Tiredness*. I am fully aware of your heavy workload. However, some of the research methods I employ, such as interviews and reflective writing, require intensive involvement and a lot of time. You may thus sacrifice your time and feel more tired physically and mentally.

2) *Face-threat*. In my research, you will be asked to reflect on your learning and teaching experiences in the interviews and reflective journals, which are very likely to involve indicating your own deficiency or unsatisfactory performances during the process of teaching, complaining certain people occasionally, and even criticizing the context. In Chinese culture, confessing one’s own weakness in the public or in a written document that will later reveal to others is an act that will get their own faces threatened; and those who point out and discuss others’ weakness may threaten others’ faces.

3) *Anonymity*. In spite of the use of pseudonyms, I cannot one hundred percent protect your identities from being recognized, especially being identified by others in the same institution once the research gets published.

9. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for you to participate in the project, it is hoped that this work will promote your reflections on Chinese language teaching and help you better realize your professional development.

10. What happens if the research study stops earlier than expected?

If this is the case, I will definitely explain the reason(s) to the you.

11. What if something goes wrong?

First of all, if you are unsatisfied with any of my data collection ways, you are welcomed to complain to and discuss with me face to face, or through other written forms, such as emails. I will highly respect your thoughts and seriously deal with the problems until you are satisfied and comfortable.

There are other ways suggested to express your complaints:

1) The administrator in the Confucius Institute will be the person to whom you can complain and I'm sure that these complaints will be dealt effectively.

2) You can also contact my supervisors Dr David Hyatt (d.hyatt@sheffield.ac.uk) and Dr Sabine Little (s.little@sheffield.ac.uk) from the School of Education of the University of Sheffield to express your complaints.

12. Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All the information that I collect about you during the process of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Your participation will not be made public and I'll try my best to protect your information from being identified in any reports or publications.

13. What will happen to the results of the research project?

The results of the research will be mainly used for my PHD thesis and may later be adapted for publications. Anonymity will be insured. Your real personal names will not be referred to and I will try my best to prevent you from being identified in any reports or publications.

14. Who is organising and funding the research?

This is a self-funded doctoral research project.

15. Who has ethically reviewed the project?

The project has been ethically approved via the ethical review procedure of the School of Education of the University of Sheffield.

16. Contact for further information

For further information about my research, you can contact me through the following information:

Junmin XIAO

PhD student

The School of Education
The University of Sheffield
388 Glossop Rd
Sheffield S10 2JA

jxiao@10sheffield.ac.uk

Tel: (+)44 (0)752 121 0560

Finally ...

You will be given a copy of the information sheet and, if appropriate, a signed consent form to keep.

Sincerely thankful for your taking part in the project.

Question to insert into an information sheet if the research involves producing recorded media:

Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

All the interviews will be audio-recorded. The audio recordings with the notes I take, the transcriptions and the translations documents will be kept anonymous in my database and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings. The audio recordings during this research will be used only for analysis and for illustration in conference presentations and lectures.

APPENDIX 3

Participant consent form

Participant Consent Form

Title of Project: Teacher reflection and its relationship with professional development: a case study of a Confucius Institute in the UK

Name of Researcher: Junmin XIAO

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated [Dec 1, 2016] for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. *Contact number of the researcher: 07521210560.*

3. I understand that my responses will be anonymised before analysis. I give permission for the researcher to have access to my anonymised responses.

4. I agree to take part in the above research project.

5. I know and agree that my responses (in anonymised form) in this research project will be used for publication in the future.

Name of Participant
(or legal representative)

Date

Signature

Researcher
To be signed and dated in presence of the participant

Date

Signature

Copies:

Once this has been signed by all parties, as a participant, you will receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, the information sheet and any other written information. A copy for the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.