Negotiated Identity of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL):

A sociocultural perspective

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of Applied Linguistics
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
The degree of Master of Arts

By Nesma Hossam Eldin Hassan Abdel Fattah

Under the supervision of
Dr. Marilyn Plumlee

May, 2016
The American University in Cairo
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

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Dedication

To Allah,

To my parents who supported me immensely,
And to my grandparents.

To my lovely sisters Nada, Noran, and Yasmin.
To my little brother, Yahya.

To my aunt, who has always showed me it is possible.

To Ali Saddik,
The one who has first touched my soul and showed me the way.
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Abstract

Many studies have investigated the sociocultural aspects of professional identities of EFL teachers in different contexts. However, a limited amount of research has been conducted on the negotiation of teachers’ identities particularly in the Arab world and in Egypt. The current study investigates the factors that contribute to forming and negotiating the sociocultural aspects of the professional identity of six experienced and six novice Egyptian teachers of English as a second language (EFL). The study is conducted in two English language programs, one in a private university and the other in a public university context. Interviews and classroom observations were conducted with all twelve teachers.

A framework is introduced to conceptualize the negotiation of a professional identity construct that is associated with a number of social and cultural factors, including past teaching and non-teaching professional experiences which influence identity development and shared identity formation. Tajfel’s (1982) theory of social identity was found to reflect a level of the teachers’ professional identities along with the sense of the teachers’ shared identities. Experience, in addition to other external factors such as context, institution and culture, appeared to be one of the variables affecting the negotiation of the sociocultural aspects of teachers’ professional identities both in their self-reported data and classroom practices. The study suggests some pedagogical implications that if emphasized in teacher education programs could assist teachers in negotiating their professional identities in accordance with the surrounding sociocultural factors of different contexts.
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List of Abbreviations

EDI: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
ESP: English for Specific Purposes
EFL: English as a Foreign Language
IRB: Institutional Review Board
L2: Second Language
SLA: Second Language Acquisition
TESOL: Teaching English as a Second Language
Univ A: A well-known private university/context in Egypt where the study is conducted
Univ B: A well-known public religious university/context in Egypt where the study is conducted
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Traditionally, the fundamental components of EFL teacher education programs have been teaching techniques, teaching methods and other aspects of teacher performance such as lesson planning, techniques to teach different language skills, and classroom management. Those components are considered core to the preparation process of good teachers while taking into consideration the various sociopolitical and socioeconomic contexts in which English language is taught. As a result of globalization as well as the “interrelationships between language and culture” (Duff & Uchida, 1997, p. 451), experts in the field of TESOL teacher education have encountered new challenges such as the institutional policy and multiculturalism (Duff & Uchida, 1997). A compelling need has arisen to qualify teachers to be able to cope with such challenges (Fotovatian, 2015). More emphasis has been recently laid on the sociopolitical and socioeconomic views of contexts in TESOL programs (Johnson, 2006). However, such introduction of sociopolitical and socioeconomic issues is still not emphasized in some EFL training programs.

One of the challenges that has consequently arisen is “located L2 teacher education” (Johnson, 2006, p.235) which is concerned with examining the diversity and the flux nature of contexts. The word “contexts” here is inclusive of socioeconomic, sociopolitical, sociohistorical and sociocultural contexts that are affected by the surrounding events. As the socioeconomic, sociopolitical, sociohistorical and sociocultural aspects influence contexts and result in diversity and change, a close examination of how teachers behave in different contexts would give answers that could serve the “located teacher education” challenge.

Teachers’ beliefs are shaped by prior experiences and the contexts they worked in (Johnson, 2006). In the same vein, the word identity for Norton (2000) is used to “reference how
a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across
time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p. 5). Based on
Norton’s (2000) definition of identity, a relation between identity and teachers’ professional lives
can be made. Recent research emphasizes the importance of integrating the identity issue in teacher
education curricula (Fotovatian, 2015; Kelly, 2006; Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010; Xu, 2013). The
main motive behind such integration is the belief that teachers’ awareness should be raised
concerning their professional identity. As a result of identity awareness, it is maintained that the
teachers’ professionalism and therefore their performance under different circumstances should be
improved.

Teacher identity is a broad topic that can be discussed from multiple aspects. Teacher
professional identity has been described as standing “at the core of the teaching profession”
(Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 178). Gur (2014) argues that teachers as persons besides their
professional identities have other sub-identities including personal, parental, collegial,
ideological, among others. Cultural, social, political, claimed, assigned, constructed and
maintained identities are other sub-types of teachers’ professional identity (Varghese et al.,
have discussed the actual and the designated identities, while another study examined teachers’
imaginary identity (Stenberg, Karlsson, Pitkaniemi, & Maaranen, 2014). Professional identity is
found to be shaped by multiple influences such as education, society, family and other factors
that are represented by the previously stated sub-identities (Gur, 2014). Due to the various
influences on identity, it would be difficult to examine teachers’ professional identities in
isolation.
Norton’s (2000) definition of identity emphasizes that relation between identity, time and place. This means that the nature of identity is dynamic. Identity changes across time and place and teachers must be aware of that change and cope with it. Recurrent themes of teacher identity present it as "multiple, shifting, and in conflict; related to social, cultural, and political context; and being constructed, maintained, and negotiated primarily through discourse" (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005, p. 35). This research aims at focusing on how teachers negotiate their professional identities in specific contexts when affected by sociocultural aspects and how this negotiation might differ according to their experiences.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Farrell (2011) argues that future studies can address the issue of teacher professional identity by conducting case studies and using a comparative approach to illustrate the similarities and differences of teacher identities across a number of settings. Examining an identity in a diversity of contexts entails considering the element of culture which does not merely label people, but which is used to comprehensively understand “why and how they label the Other” (Holliiday & Aboshiha, 2009, p. 686). An understanding of the motives behind teachers’ as well as students’ actions has become an urgent need in our world. Scholars view the process of language learning as situated in complex and dynamic contexts as opposed to static views (Norton & Toohey, 2011). Norton and Toohey (2011) suggest that scholars investigating the topic of language learning and identity should address this issue within different contexts as we live today in “globalized sociocultural worlds” (p.436). National policies of education systems also have their effect on professional teacher identity (Cohen, 2010). Cohen (2010) stated that “the impact of education policies on teacher identity and practice has been investigated in Australia, Canada, England, France, and the United States” (p. 473). Such impact still needs further investigation in Egypt.
A lacuna that needs to be filled in the body of research on negotiated identity is the diversity within contexts and the cultures that exist within them. Examining the relation between teachers’ experience and their negotiated identity from a sociocultural angle is another issue missing from the literature. Studies investigating identity have been conducted mostly in Japan, Taiwan, Iran, Canada, U.S and Australia. Few similar studies have been conducted in the Middle East, for instance in Iran and UAE (Abednia, 2012).

1.3. Purpose of the Study

“If scholars from the communities to be studied are unavailable, then the next best thing is for ‘outsiders’ to become much more than disinterested scientific observers.” (Edwards, p.43). Through my teaching career I worked in two distinct contexts, though both are located in Egypt. If I am to examine both contexts, I would be both an insider and an outsider at the same time for the two contexts.

Research has to consider the idea of cosmopolitan and sociocultural worlds in which learners and teachers live today (Norton, 2012). According to Norton (2012), the goal of research on identity and language learning has to underscore the importance of nurturing teaching and language learning in equitable worlds where human agency can be further enlarged. Research of identity in multilingual and non-Western contexts is highly recommended for building new theories not only for teacher education, but also for Second Language Acquisition (SLA) (Norton, 2012). It has also been posited that national identities has been the focus of research on immigrant L2 learners and therefore recent studies should focus more on examining the national identities of learners in their home countries (Gu, 2010).

A teacher takes into consideration a number of aspects when planning a lesson, i.e. student needs, learning styles and individual differences in addition to cultural appropriateness.
Dogancay-Aktuna (2005) suggest that the efforts towards cultural appropriateness have encountered some problems as both teachers and schools fail to choose methodologies that correspond to students’ and teachers’ cultural norms and therefore create a gap between both. It has been recommended therefore “to take the learners’ sociocultural backgrounds into consideration in choosing materials and pedagogical approaches for particular contexts of teaching” (Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005, p. 100) to overcome this gap between teachers and students.

Raising teachers’ awareness of students’ cultural norms would be more rewarding for both teachers and students than using methodologies and curricula that do not align with the students’ cultural norms. Therefore, analysis of how cultures of learning might vary is one variable that may affect the negotiation of the teacher’s identity.

This study aims to examine the dynamic interplay of the negotiated teacher identity in relation to context, students and teaching practices in an Egyptian context.

The main context I will be working in is one of the private universities in Cairo (Univ A). The second context is a public university in Cairo (Univ B). This study examines the sociocultural perspectives of two opposing university contexts in an attempt to examine the factors that influence teacher negotiation of identities in diverse teaching contexts.

1.4. Operational Definitions

Professional Identity Construct: combines two basic levels which are identity development and shared identity. The professional identity encompasses the three aspects of Tajfel’s (1982) social identity theory (membership, values and emotions). Both stages have their influence on the process of negotiation that occurs across time and place.
Shared Identity: refers to the three aspects of Tajfel’s theory of social and group identity (awareness, membership and emotions) that teachers develop towards their profession as members who belong to one group.

National Identity: suggests that citizens of one country “form a coherent community; they share the same habits, history, locality, linguistic practices, and so on” (Bassiouney, 2014).

Negotiated Identity: is an interaction process, in which teachers attempt to modify their own and their students’ desired self-images and cultural norms in a particular context to avoid conflict (adapted from Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p. 4)

Culture: It “refers to a way of life, a network of meanings, a system of values and beliefs” (Clarke, 2008, p.21)

Cultural Norms: It refers to “customs, world view, language, kinship system, social organization, and other taken for granted day-to-day practices of a people which set that group apart as a distinctive group” (Scollon and Wong Scollon, 2001, p.139).

Experienced Teachers: It refers to teachers whose average teaching experience is seven years (Peacock, 2001). In this study, Peacock’s definition of experienced teachers is adapted to include those who have five to seven years of experience or more. In addition to the years of experience, the amount of training teachers have received will be considered as a component of experience. Experienced teachers must have received an accredited formal structured training in addition to teacher development workshops.

Novice Teachers: Gatbonton defined novice teachers as “those who are still undergoing training, who have just completed their training, or who have just commenced teaching and still have very little (e.g. less than two years) experience behind them” (2008, p.)
162). This definition is comprehensive and inclusive of the targeted samples. Novice teachers in this study are those who have from one to four years of experience.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, a review of the literature on the topic of this study - teacher identity - is organized thematically. Teacher identity is a broad topic that has been investigated from different angles. The present study focuses on examining the sociocultural aspect of teachers’ professional identity as it is still an area that is under-researched.

The sections in this chapter are divided as follows. First, a general overview of the broad themes that have been studied on the topic of teacher identity is introduced (section 2.1). Separate sections are subsequently dedicated to an explicit discussion of the themes relevant to the research questions of this study on teacher identity. Section 2.2 focuses on the construct of sociocultural identity. In section 2.3, a review of the studies that examine the negotiation of identity is presented. Section 2.4 identifies the literature that examines three of the sociocultural influences on teacher identity: culture, institution and context. Section 2.5 presents the studies that focus on the teaching practices and the differences of novice and experienced teachers in that realm. Finally, a conclusion of the literature and the study research questions are outlined.

2.1. Introduction to Teacher Identity

Before delving into the topic of teacher identity, an understanding of identity as a concept and its relation to the field of teaching and learning a second language must be set forth. Though some scholars argue that language and identity are not two related constructs, others claim that both identity and language are closely interrelated (Norton, 1997). Based on the assumption of this interrelation, it is proposed that “speech, speakers and social relationships are inseparable” (Norton, 1997, p. 410). Norton (1997) further argues that through communication, speakers of a second language express who they are in addition to their relation to surroundings and therefore
they are constructing and negotiating their identities. According to Norton (1997), identity refers to “how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future” (p. 410).

Multiple definitions of teacher identity are suggested. Identity can be defined as “a framework for teachers to build their own ideas of their profession and its place in society and thus to enhance their professional development” (Stenberg, Karlsson, Pitkaniemi, & Maaranen, 2014, p.205). From a social aspect, identity is “the result of affiliation to particular beliefs that are available to individuals in their social contexts” (Cho, 2014, p.181). A more holistic definition regards ‘teacher identity’ as “a continuous process of teachers negotiating and modifying their roles, self-knowledge, values and behaviors through engaging in varying discourses and practices” (Yuan & Lee, 2014, p.2). This multiplicity of definitions is a proof of the dynamic nature of identity and that is why no specific definition for identity could be traced. Multiple definitions of identities entail multiple aspects and consequently different themes.

Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) review the literature on teacher identity to study the emerging themes of identity, i.e. the different aspects of teacher identity, in an attempt to suggest a framework for an effective teacher education program that encompasses an identity perspective. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) list two main reasons which reoccur in the literature that account for the growing need to study teacher identity. First, identity can be used as an analytic framework to study different aspects of teaching, i.e. how students integrate their influences, creating conflicts and contradictions. Secondly, identity can function as an organizing element in the teachers’ lives to explain their relation to themselves and to the world. The first reason reflects the intertwined relation between teacher identity and students’ identities and the effect they have on teacher identity. The second point supports the dynamic relation between the
teacher’s self and the social context, two variables which affect the negotiation of identity. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) reviewed the literature; however, their review is missing two main points: the negotiated identity as one of the multiple identity types and the students’ role in shaping the identity of the teacher.

Studying the development and formation of pre-service teachers’ identity especially in qualifying programs is one theme. Dang (2013) examines the formation of identity of teachers in a paired-placement teaching program (each two teachers were assigned to work together) in Vietnam and how those teacher students could overcome the contradictions they experienced while developing their new identity. The outstanding point in this study is the collaborative setting, i.e. the collaborative nature of the practicum where it was conducted. The peer effect and the multiple identities the teachers adopted when dealing with each other resulted in contradictions. The study concludes that student teachers were able to resolve these contradictions and in the process of solving problems and contradictions, they developed their identities. This study covered a gap that was previously identified by exploring the how of identity formation, therefore suggesting a new trend in investigating teacher identity in terms of collaborative environments.

Another study conducted in China focused on how identity developed through working in contexts, from primary to schematic; in other words from imagined to real. The study showed how the pre-service teachers’ identities transformed from imaginary to schematic due to various influences (Xu, 2013). The study adopted a sociocognitive approach and recommended that future research explore the cognitive transformation in relation to the sociocultural circumstances which in turn would suggest how situations could be invested in for “a smoother transition from the imagined to the practiced that may otherwise lead to teacher attrition, early burnout or loss of
beliefs in the profession of teaching” (Xu, 2013, p.85). Other studies used psychological theories, ‘dialogical theory’, to analyze teacher identity (Stenberg, Karlsson, Pitkaniemi, & Maaranen, 2014).

Reviewing the literature on the topic of ‘teacher identity’, one can find multiple themes evolving around various concepts and theories. However, a more focused and relevant categorization to this research is the identification found in Tsui’s (2007) research. Tsui categorized the themes of ‘teacher identity’ and focused on the relationship between the personal and social dimensions of identity formation theme. Mostly, researchers have focused more on examining the personal dimension in isolation. However, a number of studies have discussed the importance of the professional context which is part of the broader sociocultural context in shaping teacher identity (Fotovatian, 2015; Kayi-Aydar, 2015; Kelly, 2006; Syed, 2003; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Tsui, 2007).

A main challenge facing researchers in the spectrum of teacher identity lies in the fact that issues of identity in the literature are varied. It is difficult to draw clear lines between the different identity aspects as identity has more than one facet. It has also been proven that identity is dynamic and unstable with multiple sub-identities in the self as previously discussed. For instance, there is no clear distinction between personal and professional identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

Professional identity is argued to be one of the sub-identities of a teacher (Gur, 2014). The findings of Gur’s study (2014) suggest that professional identity develops both individually and socially i.e. within the influence of social surroundings. It was also argued that “motives, beliefs and personal experiences” (Gur, 2014, p. 515) play a role in the development of the teacher professional identity. Gur (2014) defines professional identity as one of a teacher’s sub-
identities “shaped with the influence of the environment, education and personal choices starting from childhood” (p. 510-511). The conclusion can be drawn that in order to understand teachers’ professional identities and their development, they have to be examined in relation to a number of surrounding factors such as education, society and culture.

As mentioned earlier, professional identity is only one of multiple sub-identities of a teacher. Attempting to conceptualize identity, Gee identifies four aspects of identity: “nature-identity (stemming from one’s natural state), institution-identity (derived from a position recognized by authority), discourse-identity (resulting from the discourse of others about oneself), and affinity–identity (determined by one’s practices in relation to external groups)” (as cited in Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 177).

Building on Gee’s classification, the variables addressed in the research questions of this study revolve around Gee’s four aspects of identity. Affinity identity, which focuses on the relation between the self and the social context reflects the ongoing interplay between teachers and students. This dynamic relation between teacher and students is also explained in terms of discourse-identity. Institution identity which highlights the influence of power and authority enhances the proposal that the institution could affect the identity of the teacher. In order to analyze or account for any of the three aspects of identity (affinity, discourse and institution identity), an understanding of the nature of the self is required, i.e. nature Identity.

2.2 Sociocultural Aspects of Professional Identity

Multiple theories and approaches have emerged lately in an attempt to define, theorize or conceptualize teacher identity. One of the recent theories explains teacher identity in relation to the theory of dialogical self in psychology which proposes that the self is composed of multiple ‘I-positions’ in the mind (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Stenberg, Karlsson, Pitkaniemi, &
Maaranen, 2014). The dialogical conceptualization of identity “explains how teacher identity can be typified as both unitary and multiple, both continuous and discontinuous, and both individual and social” (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011, p. 309). Akkerman and Meijer’s research examines the dialogical theory in both novice and experienced teachers. They argue that three major characteristics of teacher identity, i.e. ‘multiplicity (i.e. involving sub-identities), discontinuity (i.e. an ongoing process of construction), and social nature (i.e. relating to various social relationships and contexts),’ are the reason that identity is ever-changing within time and context. The findings of Akkerman & Meijer’s research (2011) reveal that identities of teachers are constructed and developed in a social context. On the basis of the dialogical approach, teacher professional identity is not the final shape of the self, but rather it is “an ongoing process of negotiating and interrelating multiple I-positions in such a way that a more or less coherent and consistent sense of self is maintained throughout various participations and self-investments in one’s (working) life” (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011, p. 317). This definition highlights the concept of ‘negotiation’ in the teacher’s professional journey as a major aspect.

The findings of Akkerman and Meijer further suggest some challenges for future research. For instance, according to the ‘dialogical approach’, it is impossible to categorize teachers and assign them fixed roles. A macro (self-narratives) and micro (in different working conditions) analysis of the teachers’ professional identities is required to be able to visualize a clearer perception of the teacher professional identity. In this study, an examination of both a macro and micro analysis is approached.

In order to be able to combine such macro (self-narratives) and micro (in different working conditions) analyses of the teachers’ professional identities, a theoretical framework must be established. As this study focus on examining the professional identity of the teachers in
relation to time and context focusing on sociocultural factors, a conceptualization of sociocultural aspects must be first introduced.

Norton (2006) notes that there is a growing interest in the sociocultural identity in the field of second language. Social identity “was seen to reference the relationship between the individual and the larger social world, as mediated through institutions such as families, schools, workplaces, social services, and law courts” (Norton, 2006, p. 1). Norton (2006) posits that cultural identity “referenced the relationship between an individual and members of a particular ethnic group (such as Mexican and Japanese) who are considered to share a common history, a common language, and similar ways of understanding the world” (p. 2). However, later Norton (2006) argued that both types of identities (social and cultural) share more similarities than differences.

Based on a review of a number of studies discussing the issue of sociocultural identity, Norton (2006) outlines five main characteristics of research that address the issue: i) Identity is “dynamic and constantly changing over time and place” (Norton, 2006, p. 3). ii) Identity is complex and contradictory. iii) Language is a main influence on constructing identity. iv) Identity must be examined in relation to larger social processes. v) Research attempts to link identity to classroom practices. Norton (2006) proposes that those five characteristics combined form a sociocultural theory. However, if applied to examine teachers’ identities, their narratives regarding their group and shared identities which are integral parts of the sociocultural aspects are not explicitly mentioned in any of Norton’s (2006) characteristics.

Tajfel’s (1982) theory of group identities can be adopted to get a deeper understanding of how the teachers’ identities were formed in relation to the social context. Group identity is referred to as social identity. Tajfel defined social identity as “the individual’s knowledge that he
belongs to certain social groups together with some emotional and value significance to him of this group membership” (as cited in Hogg, Abrams, Otten, & Hinkle, p. 248). A social identity must be understood in relation to external and outer factors. Only the internal criteria is relevant to this study. Three components are necessary to be a member of a group: membership awareness, value connotations and emotional investment. As identity is complex and dynamic, the three components can be used in terms of analyzing teachers’ group identity which is part of the general sociocultural aspects of teachers’ professional identities.

National or shared identity is another crucial sociocultural facet to teachers’ professional identities. Bassiouney (2014) argues that Egyptians’ unified identity suggests that they “form a coherent community; they share the same habits, history, locality, linguistic practices, and so on” (p. 40). She further argues that though Egyptians form one large community, this community encompasses their diversities in terms of religion and social class. Wodak postulates that national identity suggests shared perceptions and attitudes produced by “public discourse – that is, individuals acquire it through education, media, and everyday practices” (as cited in Bassioney, 2014, p. 47). It is noteworthy to mention that such perceptions refer to self-perceptions (Bassiouney, 2014).

To understand self-perceptions, it is important to investigate the reasons that could have contributed to such perceptions. Some historical events still have their influence on the Egyptian national identity such as the British occupation, the 1919 Revolution and the January 25th Revolution (Bassiouney, 2014). Bassiouney argues that due to those events Egyptians had a disintegrated national identity, whereas a ‘distinct identity’ projection has started in the twentieth century (2014). According to Bassiouney (2014), two main aspects of Egyptian national identity are: language and locality. It could be argued then that Egyptian teachers’ national identities are
affected by the same factors and if they share the same language, i.e. Arabic and locality, i.e. Egypt then they have a common shared national identity.

Some studies investigated the relation between national identity and EFL teachers’ professional identity. In a study examining the formation of the professional identities of Australian-trained Vietnamese teachers, it is posited that they maintained a strong sense of their Vietnamese national identity despite being dislocated from Vietnam (Ha, 2007). This strong sense of national identity is argued to be the outcome of a shared Vietnamese identity that teachers act accordingly. In the same vein, a study examined the national identity of EFL Chinese learners (Gu, 2010). Gu (2010) identifies three stages of the Chinese students’ national identity development: “admiration of English speaking cultures, antagonism towards alien things, and conciliation between the national and the global” (p. 57). The results of the study indicates that being exposed to other cultures results in a deep appreciation of national culture. National culture of L2 learners is constructed through a conciliation reached as an outcome of the ongoing interaction between the imagined global identities and their own national identity (Gu, 2010). It could be argued that EFL teachers in developing their professional identities they go through the three stages of developing their national identities (admiration, antagonism and conciliation).

It is obvious that there is a strong relation between developing a professional identity and a national identity. However, the relation between professional and national identities of EFL Egyptian teachers’ has not been investigated yet.

2.3. Teacher Negotiated Identity

The issue of teachers’ professional identity was further investigated in another study (Abedina, 2012). Seven Iranian teachers whose experience ranged from six months to three years
were subject to identity analysis in pre-course and post-course interviews to implement reflective practice theories. The research findings revealed two major shifts in their identities. The outstanding shifts were from rigid ideologies to “reflective autonomy” and from no “orientation” to “critical orientation of teaching”. Teachers started to reflect instead of applying mere theories which encourages a sociocultural perspective of teaching, i.e. teaching is a process of “identity construction” rather than the teacher being a recipient of knowledge.

In Nguyen (2008), pre-service Vietnamese teachers’ identities were explored in a case study. One of the findings asserted the effect of the Vietnamese teachers’ culture on their teacher identities and on their development as teachers. Nguyen also mentioned that based on data a person might have multiple identities that are linked to their culture, however those multiple identities might be in conflict with their individuality. This conflict can be avoided if manipulated with a negotiation of identities.

Teachers construct their identities and impose identities on their students intentionally through language. An example from Hall and Johnson’s (2010) triple study on illiterate practices support the claim of imposing identities intentionally. One of the teachers who participated in the study used language to position her students in conformity with her morals and ethics. However, by engaging in this positioning she marginalized her students. In relevance to the reading materials used in the classroom, again teachers’ identities and views were more prominent in discussing readings. When students held different opinions, they feared being marginalized as their understanding differed from the teachers’. The findings support the proposition that teachers’ and students’ understanding of identities can either promote or hinder learning (Hall & Johnson’s, 2010).
Identity is subject to negotiation among teachers when discussing significant shared aspects such as assuming double identities by being a learner as well as a teacher (Cohen, 2010). These common aspects are shared through reflective talk, i.e. personal storytelling and analytical talk. Cohen’s study (2010) confirms the significance of reflective talk to negotiate identities among teachers building on each other’s themes and opinions.

Blackledge and Pavlenko (2001), argue that eight identity domains are essential for daily communication including “cultural, ethnic, gender, personal, role, relational, facework, and symbolic interaction identities” and the more culturally familiar the context is, the more identity acknowledgment and emotional safety teachers feel (p. 244). In contrast, teachers may experience “identity vulnerability” in a less culturally familiar context. Identity negotiation outcomes in conversational interaction include feelings of being understood, valued, supported, and respected, despite the intercultural differences that may surface in the process. Norton (1997) also posited that teachers’ identities enter a state of flux especially during times and places of conflicts and that is why it would be more insightful to examine their identities while these identities are being negotiated.

It may be derived from this section that the negotiation of teacher identity is dependent on external factors including: context, culture and students. The negotiation of teacher identity cannot be examined in isolation, but rather within an understanding of the surrounding effects and sub-identities of the teacher especially at times and places of conflict. Moreover, teacher experience has an impact on reshaping the identity. The comparative studies exploring the difference among varied teaching experiences are limited (Gatbonton, 2008) and the contexts where teachers perform their profession are diverse and demand to be noticed.
2.4. Sociocultural Variables Affecting Teacher Identity

As an outcome of globalization, experts in the field of teacher education have encountered new challenges such as institutional policy and multiculturalism as a result of “interrelationships between language and culture” (Duff & Uchida, 1997). As a result, a compelling need has arisen to qualify teachers to be able to cope with such challenges (Fotovatian, 2015).

New dimensions of examining teaching-related issues have emerged. Sociocultural and sociopolitical aspects as two emerging influences on teaching revealed different factors affecting identity such as race, gender, history and society. Similarly, the teacher is viewed as an influential player in the classroom in relation to their students and to the wider context to which they belong (Varghese et al.’s, 2005).

Some studies have examined the effect of negotiated identity on teaching practices (Duff & Uchida, 1997; Farrell, 2011; Fotovatian, 2015). Duff and Uchida (1997) is a comprehensive study as they explored “the interrelationships between language and culture, between teachers' sociocultural identities and teaching practices, and between their explicit discussions of culture and implicit modes of cultural transmission in their classes” (p. 451). Lasky’s (2005) research uses a sociocultural approach to agency examining the dynamic relation among teacher identity, agency and context. Yet, one main axis is missing in research: students.

One dimension of the sociocultural aspect is the teacher-student negotiation of identity. As students are regarded as an influential factor on identity, it is noteworthy to mention that they affect the identity of the teacher in terms of the “teaching practice” (Duff & Uchida, 1997). This negotiation of sociocultural identity is extremely obvious inside the classroom when teachers discuss other cultures, resolve conflicts arising from such discussions, reconcile such conflicts with
their own identities and reconcile all of the previous issues with the curriculum (Duff & Uchida, 1997).

In their article, Freeman and Johnson (1998) propose a reconceptualization of the knowledge of ESOL teacher education that should “frame how the profession responds to the basic sociocultural processes of learning to teach” (p. 397). They assert that a new framework must focus on the teaching practice; “it should center on the teacher who does it, the contexts in which it is done, and the pedagogy by which it is done” (p. 397). Freeman and Johnson (1998) also argue that teachers should be trained based on their prior knowledge, taking into account their prior experiences, memories and beliefs as students and language learners. Teachers should not be treated as “empty vessels” (p. 401). That revelation regarding the role of past experiences entails that this interactive process is “socially negotiated” as “teachers’ knowledge of teaching” (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 401) is shaped through experiences with students, parents and administrators in addition to the surrounding context. According to Freeman and Johnson, this tripartite proposal, i.e. teacher-learner, social context and pedagogical process, is inclusive of the factors that construct the teacher’s knowledge. This teacher’s self-knowledge is what has come to be known as “teacher identity” in recent research in the field.

To construct a relation between Freeman and Johnson’s theory and the concept of “teacher identity”, an answer to the question “what is meant by ‘identity’?” is required. Multiple definitions are provided in previous sections of this study; however, a connection between teacher identity, negotiation and sociocultural aspects should be restated here. Two definitions are cited to support Freeman’s and Johnson’s proposed framework.

One of the definitions provided for teacher identity is that it is a “continuous process of teachers negotiating and modifying their roles, self-knowledge, values and behaviors through
engaging in varying discourses and practices” (Yuan & Lee, 2014, p. 2). Furthermore, the dialogical approach presented by Akkerman and Meijer (2011) illustrates some external factors that might affect the identity; for instance, the approach focuses mainly on the social context as one of the external factors and to what extent it might influence the identity.

Considering the two previous definitions of teacher identity as the “continuous process of teachers negotiating and modifying their roles, self-knowledge, values and behaviors through engaging in varying discourses and practices” (Yuan & Lee, 2014, p. 2), and the dialogical approach that highlights the role of the social context in influencing the identity (Akkerman and Meijer, 2011), one can conclude that they are in conformity with Freeman and Johnson’s (1998) tri-dimensional proposed reconceptualization framework which focuses on the dynamic interaction between three factors, i.e. teacher learner, social context and pedagogical process that influence “teacher identity”. One can argue that though Freeman and Johnson’s proposal is not inclusive, their framework attempts to answer three questions affecting the negotiated identity: who does it, where and how. However, a fourth element is ignored: with whom, i.e. students.

In the subsequent parts of the literature review, an exploration of the four elements influencing the identity are reviewed and discussed. First, a discussion of the institution, i.e. the social context as an influence is presented. Second, a prominent factor which is the students’ influence is extensively discussed. Third, the identity of the self or of the teacher is explored from one angle: teacher experience. A comparison is to be held between novice and experienced teachers. Finally, the teaching practices’ or the pedagogical implications’ effect on identity is investigated (section 2.5).
2.4.1. Institutional Effect on Identity

Teacher identity is affected by both internal and external factors. The context is one of the external factors that influences the identity of the teacher. The institution is one example of the multiple contexts that could influence the teacher identity. As Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) acknowledge the influences that the institution might have on the identity shifts, especially on beginning teachers. They further argue that emotions brought to and from the institution influence the identity. A qualitative study interviewing 45 teachers to examine their professional identity recommends building stronger relations between teachers and the social contexts in which they are working (Timoštšuk, & Ugaste, 2010).

In the same vein, another qualitative study observes how non-native English teachers contextualize their identities in a secondary ESL setting (Huang, 2013). The results reveal how three non-native teachers’ identities were interwoven with their relationships with six students and four administrators embodying the institution policy. Huang concludes the study by suggesting that though the non-native teachers’ accent did not alienate them from the context, this might not be the usual case in similar situations. Huang further argues that the elimination of the non-native teachers’ accent, i.e. examining the case of native teachers, does not necessarily suggest less institutional challenges as it is dependent on sociopolitical factors of the institution and the students. However, he suggests that further research in the field of teacher identity would enhance analysis of power relations.

Lasky (2005) proposes that political, social and economic mediational systems shape the school reform policy, which in turn mediates teacher identity and teacher agency. The analysis in Lasky’s (2005) paper indicates that external reform systems may have a deeper or more enduring effect on the formation of teachers’ professional identity than on reshaping teachers’ professional
identity that has been already securely established. This finding could suggest that institutional decisions influence the professional identity of less experienced teachers more than experienced teachers. Lasky’s (2005) study suggests examining the influence of governmental policies on school structures and how that in return affects teachers’ professional identities.

In the Gulf region, a study conducted in Qatar (Scotland, 2014) examined the effect of institution on pedagogy. The study concludes that change of institutions leads to renegotiation of some teachers’ identities. However, the way the renegotiation happens differs from one teacher to another. There are limitations in terms of its applicability to other contexts and cultures, especially the western environments. Another limitation is that the study involved ten experienced teachers, some of whom were expatriates. However, the findings are still related to teacher identity and might be conducted in a different setting with novice teachers as the aim of the study was to explore the effect of institutions on pedagogical practices of teachers.

Since this study aims at investigating an Egyptian context, it is important to understand the education institutional situation in Egypt with an emphasis on language policies. In Bassiouney’s (2014) book, discussing language pedagogy in Egypt, it was stated that learning Standard Arabic was done in a ‘parrot-like style’ especially to learn grammar. A distinction was made between ‘teaching about a language and the teaching of a language’ (p. 96).

As for the division of educational institutions in Egypt, there are two educational systems: private and public systems. Most of the private universities are accredited by foreign bodies and focus on teaching the whole curriculum in a foreign language (Bassiouney, 2009). On the other hand, public universities use English only in textbooks of sciences and technology subjects. Such division of languages used in universities is based on language policies and ideologies. A language policy ‘refers to a set of planned interventions supported and enforced by
law and implemented by a government agency’ (Spolsky, 2004, p. 5), while language ideology is ‘language policy with the manager left out’ (Spolsky, 2004, p. 15). It is noteworthy to mention that more than one ideology could exist together in one country. However, if the applied language policy is not in harmony with the feelings of identity, it will be contested (Bassioney, 2014).

It is of relevance to this study to examine how the institutional language policies of a foreign language affect the professional identities of teachers. This has to be understood in relation to the sense of teachers’ national identities as well. No similar studies have investigated those aspects of Egyptian EFL teachers. Other aspects have to be considered, such as teachers’ experience and the power of the institution.

2.4.2. Student Effect on Teacher Identity

The literature indicates that teachers not only influence their students’ identities, but they also play a role in the students’ negotiated identities. Buzelli and Johnston (as cited in Nguyen, 2008, p.117) suggest that “students’ identities were constructed, challenged, reinforced, and negotiated through the types of participation, representation, and classroom discourse, including others’ perceptions and expectations of them”. Nguyen (2008) argued that teachers assign certain identities to their students that might conflict with the ones they would have adopted. It was clearly stated that teachers influence students; however, the opposite influence is not elaborately examined. Nguyen (2008) suggests that the interaction between teachers and students influences both of them. No more details on how this mutual influence takes place is mentioned. The influence can be a continuum between both parties, teacher and students, or it might be a static process as teacher is the one who has power. The description of how the process takes place and what factors influence it is not extensively examined.
One of the emerging identity themes in the classroom is “Identity and Resistance” that examines the relationship between identity, language learning and classroom (Norton, 2012). Norton (2012) cites three examples of resistance (Canagarajah, 2003; McKinney & Pletzen, 2004; Talmy, 2008). In those three examples, students were found to resist imposed identities and language learning; however, when students were given the opportunity to reconstruct and negotiate their identities, ‘powerful teaching moments’ emerged. It is noticeable that the students’ resistance was followed by a change in the teachers’ practices and consequently a “shift in their identities”. The three studies (Canagarajah, 2003; McKinney & van Pletzen, 2004; Talmy, 2008) confirm the effect of students’ resistance on the negotiation of the teacher identity. However, teacher experience is a missing variable from the three studies.

Another dimension of students’ effect is their cultural background that they bring with them to the classroom. Norton (1997) reported on Leung, Harris and Rampton’s (1997) research in the same TESOL article, noting that they concluded that ESL students’ needs cannot be understood within a fixed framework of ethnicity and language, i.e. students’ mother tongue, but rather in a wider perspective of cultural theories. Norton (1997) comments on the findings of Duff and Uchida’s study by highlighting the fact that culture “comprises implicit assumptions, dynamic processes, and negotiated relationships” (p. 415). Norton (1997) supported her argument by explaining that although two of the participant teachers were Japanese, their understanding of culture and language differed and such difference was reflected in their identities and therefore their practices.

In Scollon and Wong Scollon (2001), in an attempt to define ‘culture’, a distinction is made between two different types of cultures: high culture and anthropological culture. High culture refers to the intellectual and artistic achievements of a certain group or an era in history.
This type is not the focus of this study, but rather the second type, the anthropological culture. In 
the anthropological sense, the word “culture” refers to “customs, world view, language, kinship 
system, social organization, and other taken for granted day-to-day practices of a people which 
set that group apart as a distinctive group” (p.139). Some of the cultural constructs which already 
exist are “The Japanese”, “The American” and other nationalities. However, such groups share 
similarities as well as differences. This cultural construct would be pertinent in this study as it 
depends on salient features that reflect the “culture” of a group.

A more concise definition of culture therefore can view it as a concept that reflects the 
communications, ideas and behaviors of a group of people which in turn shapes their “distinctive 
identity” that organizes their internal sense of membership. According to Scollon and Wong 
Scollon (2001), those are the main criteria that affect “intercultural communication” especially in 
a world with growing globalization. Based on the previously cited criteria, Scollon and Wong 
Scollon introduced a framework including the main aspects that directly influence “intercultural 
communication”. Scollon and Wong Scollon’s framework (2001) which is entitled “Culture and 
Discourse Systems” highlights major four factors: Ideology, Socialization, Forms of discourse 
and Face systems. Each of the four factors has other subcategories (Appendix A).

It is relevant in this context to attempt to define “Intercultural Communication”. A 
definition that fits in this study would consider “Intercultural Communication” as the interaction 
between individuals from a “sociolinguistics perspective” which is directly related to classroom 
communication (Scollon & Wong Scollon, 2001). The classroom is in a sense a group of people 
that do not only have their own culture, but also shape it. The students as well as the teacher are 
members of a group, the classroom is the setting and the teaching process is their medium of
communication which can be referred to as “Intercultural Communication”. Each classroom may have its own culture, yet within this culture there are both differences and similarities.

Anderson (2006) was the first to introduce a term “imagined communities” and “imagined identities” in the context of cultures and nations. The terms “imagined communities” and “imagined identities” were referred to in Norton and Gao (2008) where they argue that the learning environment constitutes an imagined community for language learners in which they assume imagined identities in return. However, Norton & Gao (2008) proposes that the role of the community is the reconstruction of previously constituted identities as a result of past history and community. Based on Norton’s proposal, it can be argued that the process of identity negotiation is based on imagined identities and communities assumed inside the classroom community. If classroom community and identities are imagined, it is crucial to explore the identity negotiation that occurs between members of this community; teacher and students.

Norton (2012) builds on her previous arguments referring to the classroom culture using the term ‘imagined communities’ and ‘imagined identities’ by further explaining that the individual does not have a fixed, coherent core but rather a dynamic, diverse and changing core. The change takes place over time and in a social context. Through learning, assumed identities are negotiated in an attempt to build relations between the self and the world. Scollon and Wong Scollon’s (2001) framework can be adapted to examine the cultural system of the classroom based on the four main aspects it introduced: Ideology, Socialization, Forms of discourse and Face systems.

Based on the previous discussion, a classroom is an ‘imagined community’ where students and teachers adopt ‘imagined identities’. Their community shares some general characteristics that define the shared ‘cultural norm’ in the classroom. Teaching in this ‘imagined
community’ is the resource used for ‘intercultural communication’. This description provides a wider conceptualization of how relations and communications occur inside a classroom. It also justifies the need for examining identity negotiation in various settings and contexts.

The literature supports the relation between culture, identity and learning a second language. In her book, *Identity and Language Learning*, Norton (2012) emphasized the need for theorizing the relation between identity and second language acquisition in relation to the social world and the communities that surround second language learners. Nguyen (2008) concluded that “students’ identities would be shaped by culturally influenced patterns of participation and representation.” (p.117). Norton (2010) further explains Nguyen’s point, arguing that within each community or a social medium practices and resources do not only produce identities, but also play a role in the negotiation process. It is noteworthy to highlight that when Norton (2010) mentions ‘resources’, she is referring to “institutions such as homes, schools and workplaces as well as available resources whether they are symbolic or material” (p. 2). Norton’s claim is supported by studies that confirmed this relation (Canagarajah, 2003; Peacock, 2001; Talmy, 2008). Hence, communities and social surroundings, institutions which are a form of a community and pedagogical practices and materials are all viewed as variables affecting the students’ negotiation of identity.

As students and teachers are both members of one community, i.e. the classroom, it is therefore logical to assume that both are affected by the same variables.

**2.5. Teacher identity and classroom practices**

In this section, a review of the literature on the relation between identity negotiation and teachers’ pedagogical practices is examined. As mentioned earlier in this study, identity aspects
overlap. In this section, reference to other variables such as students and teacher identity are analyzed and discussed in relation to social context.

In an ethnographic study, Lewis (2001) examines three variables affecting literacy practices (e.g. read-aloud, peer-led literature discussions, teacher-led literature discussions and independent reading) as social acts in the classroom. The three variables that were closely investigated are: power, status and cultural norms. In her case study, Lewis worked with a teacher whose pedagogy would allow for discussions. The study findings revealed the impact of “discourses and rituals within the classroom” and “social codes and dominant cultural norms beyond the classroom” on the literacy practices (Lewis, 2001, p.4). By social codes she meant “local culture” of the classroom community and “cultural norms” referred to the “larger culture”. Both the local and the larger culture are interrelated and the local is shaped by the larger one. It is noticeable from Lewis’s analysis of literacy practices that the dominant function of “peer-led discussions” is negotiating the classroom culture which lays emphasis on the social position as ruled by the local cultural norms. This finding highlights the relation between pedagogical practices and the notion of negotiation of culture when peers are involved in discussions together. However, this study focused mainly on one skill, i.e. literacy practices. Other skills in the classroom are yet in need of exploration.

The importance of Lewis’ (2001) findings lies in the fact that culture which shapes part of identity and is negotiable between students during discussions might also be negotiable between students and teachers. The present study will therefore investigate this aspect of identity formation. Later in the study, Lewis shows how Julia (one of the participants in the study) used reading to negotiate her identity and construct a classroom culture (Lewis, pp. 59 -70). The
author concluded that “the social expectations that Julia promoted were shaped, in part, by the social conditions of her own life” (Lewis, 2001, p.61).

McKinney and Pletzen (2004) concluded in their study, which focused on exploring the relationship between identity, resistance of language learning and classrooms, that identity transforms in a non-linear way affected by multiple experiences which suggests a “pedagogy of change” on the level of the self and the society. The proposed “pedagogy of change” is applicable to the classroom and could be attained by creating “significant intellectual engagement” in diverse unequal social issues.

Another interesting remark by McKinney and van Pletzen (2004) is the need to understand students’ interests, hopes and dreams in relation to the sociopolitical and historical surroundings to be able to address these issues and invest in them. Nevertheless, resistance is not always a problem that should be solved. On the contrary, resistance can be manipulated and turned into a memorable moment in the classroom if it is reflected in resources and materials to engage students and create those successful memorable moments. It can be derived from McKinney and van Pletzen’s (2004) research that students’ resistance could be transformed into a successful learning experience if teachers have the ability and awareness to negotiate their identities with students instead of forcing students to change their identities.

In the same vein, novice teachers are open to innovation and usage of new ideas as reflected by the Iranian teachers who participated in a reflective teacher training course (Abedina, 2012). Generally, it was evident that the Iranian teachers were more open to bringing more “real life and unsafe topics into the classroom”. A shift in how they perceived the material before and after the course is embodied in Sina’s opinion on ‘Cutting Edge’ (a course book).
Sina used to appreciate the book’s communicative approach; however, later he expressed his appreciation of the real life topics discussed in it.

The cited articles in this section illustrate the interchange between identity, culture and teaching practice. Recent studies suggest using more culturally appropriate materials in teaching and viewing students’ resistance as a positive factor. However an aspect still missing from research is how to determine the appropriate material to the students’ culture, i.e. how to examine the students’ culture. Another gap which is not covered is the methods by which teachers can use materials and teaching techniques to negotiate their identities. Only Lewis (2001) explored using reading practices to do that, but other skills are not investigated.

According to Wenger (1998), identities are in a constant state of change especially when teachers are moving from novice to expert through negotiating their experience of “membership in social communities” (1998, p. 145). Kelly (2006) also suggests that there is a sociocultural aspect in identity development as people adopt different stances towards the activities they engage in when moving from novice to expert. Wenger argues that to negotiate a meaning is to be able to contribute to and shape the meanings in which one is invested; it is therefore fundamental to identity formation (1998). Moving from novice to expert entails a process of negotiation of experiences and positions and therefore a negotiation of identity has to happen as suggested by Wenger.

Generation gap is one of the emerging issues that influences the relation between teacher and students. In reviewing their discourse system, Scollon and Wong Scollon’s (2001) research sheds light on differences emerging between members from different discourse systems as a result of belonging to “different generational discourse systems”. The conflict arising from generational difference is suggested to be resolved by individuals as it leads to a “conflict in
identity”. Scollon and Wong Scollon (2001) further explain the conflict by saying that “the problem is not how Baby Boomers communicate with other Baby Boomers, but how members of the Depression/War generation and Baby Boomers communicate” (p. 283). It is further discussed by Scollon and Wong Scollon (2001) that this gap between generations is the case between any two generations in any context such as between managers and employees. The reason provided for this generation conflict is that the older generation is concerned with individual power and control, while younger generations focus on personal freedom and “lifestyle”.

Scollon and Wong Scollon (2001) have considered age as a variable in creating a conflict between different age groups, such as between teachers and students and even among teachers from different generations. In classrooms, the issue of generation gap becomes evident especially when the age difference between teachers and students is evident.

Conflict arises from the age/generation gap and thus to resolve this conflict a process of identity negotiation is required. Gatbonton’s (2008) study investigates how two groups of teachers, experienced and novice, internalized the knowledge they gained from the teaching training programs and how this knowledge was reflected in relevant issues as “language management (how to handle language input and student output), procedural issues and handling student reactions and attitudes” (p. 161). Results revealed that of all the investigated issues dominance prevailed for the experienced teachers followed by language management, while for novice teachers their ability to notice students’ behaviors and reactions was on top of the list followed by language management. However, it is interesting to find out that both groups have very little knowledge of their students that ranges from 7% to 10%, which comes nearly at the end of the list of the investigated issues. Another finding is that novice teachers were more observant of the negative reactions of students, while experienced teachers focused only on
issues related to classroom conduct. Though the study seems comprehensive, the findings cannot be generalized as it was conducted on only four teachers per group. Unlike the operational definition used in my research, experienced teachers in Gatbonton’s (2008) research are defined as those “with many years of teaching behind them, with ‘many’ interpreted in various studies as at least four to five years” (p. 162). That definition is more general than Peacock’s definition (2001) which I am using in this research. Seven years of experience is the minimum number of years for Peacock (2001) to consider a teacher experienced. The used definition of experienced teachers is another limitation for Gatbonton’s (2008) research.

In another relevant and more recent study Akkerman and Meijer (2011) suggest that identity formation includes the negotiation of multiple positions in the self-based on the “dialogical theory”. Examining six novice teachers in their research has proven that in-training teachers are assuming two positions/identities simultaneously: a teacher and a student. Holding more than one position at the same time might result in contradiction that could either lead to ‘progressive’ or ‘regressive’ movements in their career. Using a dialogical framework to analyze teacher identities of novice and experienced teachers is recommended by Akkerman and Meijer (2011) focusing on dilemmas, contradictions, controversies and problems teachers face.

Similarly, Abedina’s (2012) study findings underscore the fact that identity negotiation is not an easy process and that needs ample time to take place; however, critical transformation in the identity of the participant Iranian teachers took place though their experience was limited (six months to three years).

A conclusion can be drawn from the previous discussion that generally less experienced or novice teachers are more open to identity negotiation than experienced teachers. Other factors besides teacher experience, role/position and age might play a role in the teachers’ unwillingness
to negotiate their identities. Abedina (2012) claims that teachers who find themselves with job security and who are financially satisfied oppose change and prefer to follow the conformed norms.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the literature on the issue of identity and focused on the sociocultural aspects and the body of research that examined the negotiated identity. Main themes of teacher identity are briefly reviewed. An examination of relevant theoretical frameworks of the study are addressed. Reviewing the literature on negotiated identity and the sociocultural aspects that are found to influence the process of negotiation: institution, context, national identity and culture, are outlined. Finally, the issue of teacher identity negotiation is reviewed within the scope of actual classroom practices drawing comparisons between novice and experienced teachers.

Johnson (1997) argues that L2 teacher learning is a lifelong process as it emerges from experiences in social contexts. Johnson further depicts L2 teacher learning as “socially negotiated and contingent on knowledge of self, students, subject matter, curricula, and setting” (p. 239). Johnson’s suggestions summarize the sociocultural factors that are addressed in this study. Reviewing the studies that examined those variables suggests that no similar study has been conducted investigating the interplay between all those factors combined especially in an Egyptian context. Research is not rich enough as well in examining the cultural norms of students in certain contexts, and how that influences teachers’ identities as well as their practices. Identity negotiation might be extensively examined on students, however teacher identity negotiation especially in actual classroom practices still needs further analysis for future
integration in teacher education programs. A comparison between different experiences and different contexts, which is the focus of this study, is another gap.

This study is an attempt to fill these gaps by exploring the sociocultural aspects that influence the formation of the teachers’ professional identity in an Egyptian context in addition to investigating the negotiated aspects of the identity. As classroom practices is an area that was continuously suggested to explore, the study compares the teachers’ identities to their actual practices exploring the differences between novice and experienced teachers in two different contexts.

2.7. Research Questions

1. What are the sociocultural aspects that contribute to the development of novice and experienced teachers’ professional identity?

2. What are the sociocultural aspects of professional identity that teachers negotiate?

3. What are the differences between novice and experienced teachers in negotiating the sociocultural aspects of their professional identities in classroom practices?
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological framework of the study that was followed to answer the research questions outlined in section 2.9. In section 3.2, a description of the research paradigm is presented followed by a brief description of the setting, participants and instruments used in the study. Then a detailed explanation of the data analysis steps is reported in section 3.6. Rationale for each methodological issue is established.

3.2. Research Paradigm

The study is exploratory in nature as it does not aim at proving or nulling any hypothesis. An inductive methodological model is used in an attempt to theorize the teachers’ sociocultural identity in the target contexts. The study uses a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. Norton (2012) argues that a qualitative research paradigm is more effective in identity research as identity itself is dynamic, changing and multiple. Quantitative research is static and therefore it does not reflect the nature of identity. Qualitative research as opposed to quantitative research allows for deeper insights and that is why Norton argues that it lends itself more to identity research. Qualitative research focuses on narratives to obtain more extensive results. Elbaz regarded an interpretative paradigm as “better suited to explaining the complexities of teachers’ mental lives and the various dimensions of teachers’ professional worlds” (as cited in Johnson, 2006, p. 236). Therefore in this study a qualitative methodology was used in an attempt to obtain a better understanding of the studied contexts.

The qualitative methodology depended on an analytical framework based on triangulation. It is suggested that triangulation in qualitative research examines the same topic from multiple perspectives and widens “our understanding by allowing for new or deeper dimensions to emerge”
(Jick, 1979, pp. 603 - 604). Two qualitative instruments were used in this thesis: interviews and classroom observations for in-depth understanding of the issues at hand.

3.3. Research Setting

Based on the fact that the research is examining the sociocultural factor in negotiating the teacher identity, it will enhance the research to draw a comparison between two different contexts. Therefore, data was collected from teachers working in two different English Language programs in two universities in Egypt.

The first university (Univ A) is a private university where English is the medium of instruction. Participant teachers work in the intensive English language program. Students enrolled in the intensive English language program can move to their full-time undergraduate study if they successfully complete the program. The second university (Univ B) is a public university where Arabic is the medium of instruction. English is studied as a second language in all majors. Participant teachers work in a language center where they teach top students of the university English as a second language in collaboration with one of the international educational organizations specialized in English language teaching.

The primary factor affecting the selection of Univ A was convenience (convenience sampling). Univ A also offers a wide variety of experience and backgrounds both for teachers and students, which better helped in answering the research questions. Univ B is also diverse, however in different aspects. Teachers and students represent a variety of Egyptian sub-cultures as they come from different governorates, but the main common characteristic among them is that they share the same educational background especially their higher education system.

Both contexts are located in Egypt, neither of them follows the governmental educational policy. Each system follows a different foreign educational policy.
The main difference between both contexts is the goal of instruction. Univ A teaches academic English to prepare students for their full-time undergraduate study, while Univ B is teaching students general English as a requirement. Another significant difference is that Univ B students must study religious subjects in addition to their majors as it is one of the oldest Islamic universities in the Middle East.

3.4. Participants

Criterion sampling paradigm was applied to choose participants in the study from the two respective contexts. The criteria explained in section 1.4 determined the choice of novice and experienced teachers. Different aspects could distinguish teachers in each context, but the most salient one was experience. A total of twelve teachers representing the two strata, i.e. novice and experienced teachers in both contexts, participated in the study. Six teachers from each university participated: three novices and three experienced teachers. A breakdown of the twelve participant teachers is illustrated in Table 3.1. Teachers are given pseudonyms for confidentiality issues.

In Univ A, experienced teachers are full-time teachers working in the English Language Instruction programs. The participant novice teachers teach in the same program with the experienced teachers and are simultaneously full-time graduate students enrolled in an M.A. TESOL program. In Univ B, data was gathered from a similar sample: both novice and experienced teachers. All teachers in both contexts are Egyptians with varied experiences.

| Table 3.1. Participant Teachers’ Profile |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Context | Name | Gender | Experience | No. of contexts taught at |
| Experienced | | | | Other jobs |
| Univ A | Maha | Female | 30 years | 3 | History Teacher |
| | Magda | Female | 40 years | 2 | Secretary, Translator, Voluntary work |
| | Yosra | Female | 30 years | 5 | Secretary |
| Novice | |

38
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Univ A</td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heba</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ahmed</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Univ B</td>
<td>Yara</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mazen</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nihal</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Experienced

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Univ B</td>
<td>Ramzi</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fouad</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fatima</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Teachers are given pseudonyms for anonymity considerations*

### 3.5. Method of Data Collection

#### 3.5.1. Instruments

Before starting data collection, an approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix D) since human participants are involved in the study. All instruments were reviewed by the board in addition to the teachers’ consent form (see Appendix E).

#### 3.5.1.1. Interview. In order to obtain self-reported data from the participant teachers that would allow access to information influencing the negotiation of their identities, a set of interview questions was developed. The interview was semi-structured. It included questions targeting mainly the cultural background of the teachers. It focused on how working in different institutions and working with students with different cultural norms have affected the negotiation of the teachers’ identities. The interview directed questions to report on the different aspects that have influenced teachers’ practices and their negotiation of identities. Follow-up questions and probes were asked when further clarification was needed or when an unexpected point was introduced by any of the participants. The interview provided detailed self-reported data from the teachers that was further analyzed to investigate their sociocultural identities.
The interview was structured in two sections. The first section aimed at exploring the different aspects of the teachers’ sociocultural identity. The second section was developed using Scollon and Wong Scollon’s (2001) framework (Appendix A) for examining cultural norms. The teachers’ self-reported data collected from this section was used during classroom observation to compare reported and actual classroom practices.

To ensure the validity of the interview, it was first piloted with a few teachers to assess the effectiveness of the questions, their wording and sequence and also to assess whether the questions would elicit the required answers from the teachers or not. After piloting the questionnaire with two teachers, some questions were rephrased and others were added. For instance, the 3rd question (What made you take this decision?) was added. The 9th question (If you were to teach in another country, what would distinguish you as an Egyptian teacher inside the classroom?) was extended to get a better insight of how teachers’ view the relation between their nationality, which was assumed to be one sociocultural factor influencing their professional identity and their actual practices. A third pilot was implemented and further modifications especially of the questions ordering were made. Two collaborators reviewed the final version before starting data collection for a final validity check.

A discussion of the interview questions and the rationale for developing each one is outlined. The interview is divided into two sections. Section I questions are broken down as follows:

1. Questions 1, 2 and 3 focused on teachers’ teaching experience in terms of years and the narrative of becoming a teacher.

2. Qualifications to become a teacher were elicited from questions 4 and 5.
3. Question 6 probed the possibility of having professional or voluntary experiences besides teaching.

4. Exposure to different contexts was the target of question 7 which was followed by question 8 to investigate the characteristics of those contexts.

5. Question 9 looked into the cultural aspect of the teacher identity in relation to classroom practices.

6. Students as an influential factor were discussed in question 10.

7. Question 11 examined teachers’ beliefs about the learning process.

In Section II, which was adapted from Scollon and Wong Scollon’s (2001) framework (see Appendix A), questions were divided into four main categories to examine the students’ cultural norms from the teacher’s perspective. The four main categories of Section II (see Appendix B) are as follows: historical/social/ideological characteristics, membership and identity, preferred forms of communication and preferred or assumed human relationships. Instead of asking teachers questions, this section was developed in the form of a Sentence Completion Task, which is one of the projective techniques recommended for eliciting more authentic information than direct questions (McGrath, Sherry, & Levy, 1993). Teachers were asked to assume their students’ roles and complete the sentences.

3.5.1.2. Conducting the interviews. To ensure the reliability of the data drawn from the interviews, the same protocol and procedures were followed with all teachers. It was taken into consideration to organize the interview questions in a smooth logical sequence. Teachers were given the chance to start by introducing themselves to alleviate the stress before moving to other questions. The interviewer was the same in all twelve interviews. Being an insider in both contexts has helped me overcome the researcher’s paradox to some extent. The interviews took place at
both contexts where the study was conducted. Each interview lasted for approximately 30 minutes. All interviews were audio recorded.

3.5.1.3. Classroom Observations. Classroom observations were conducted in order to assess whether teachers’ practices in their respective contexts reflect their self-reported data or not. A self-developed classroom observation scheme was used during observations (see Appendix C). To ensure validity of the instrument, the observation scheme was piloted twice. After the first piloting, the observation scheme focused on examining the effect of students, institution and teacher on classroom practices instead of looking into the influence of used material in addition to teacher interaction and behavior. After the second piloting, some items were found to be missing and were added to match the interview questions. To examine the student effect, Section I was developed in alignment with Section II in the interview. Both sections were adapted from the Scollon and Wong Scollon (2001) framework focusing on four main aspects: Ideology, Socialization, Forms of Discourse and Face systems. Field notes were recorded in the observation scheme when needed.

Classes were observed on the same day after teachers were interviewed. The same teachers who were observed were interviewed in order to be able to compare the self-reported data with the actual classroom practices. A soft copy of each observation scheme was saved on a password protected computer.

3.5.2. Procedures

1. A pilot stage of interviews and classroom observation took place before conducting the actual study.

2. A written consent form (Appendix E) was obtained from all participating teachers after generally explaining the aim of the study. Teachers were previously informed that the
interview and the classroom observations would be recorded to obtain their preliminary consent.

3. The teachers were notified that an observation was needed and they were given ample time to be prepared. The purpose of the observation was not explicitly revealed to teachers in order not to invalidate the results.

4. The observation date was decided upon agreement between the teachers and the observer via email or phone calls.

5. Teachers were asked to present a lesson plan or to discuss the lesson steps with the observer beforehand in order to have an idea of what was to be observed.

6. The observation scheme included items focusing on certain teaching practices. Field notes were written in the scheme.

7. The interview was conducted face to face in English with each teacher separately before the classroom observation.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

3.6.1. Procedure of Data Analysis

3.6.1.1. Interviews. Data was first transcribed by the researcher and another collaborator using InqScribe (a free transcription software that facilitates transcribing audio files by adjusting variable sound speeds). The researcher provided the collaborator with a transcribed interview as a sample to follow in order to use the same format. While transcribing, I took notes. Then I listened to the rest of the interviews to double check the transcription and to write down preliminary notes. The aim of this very first stage was to get immersed in the data.

The steps of grounded theory (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003) were followed to analyze the interview data. Theoretical coding and analysis of the interviews was done in 9 steps. 1)
After listening to the interviews twice, I underlined the relevant text to the research paradigm in each interview. 2) I divided the interviews into four categories: Univ A experienced teachers, Univ A novice teachers, Univ B experienced teachers, and Univ B novice teachers. 3) I combined the relevant text of each category of the interviews in one Word document. 4) The relevant text was coded using two colors to divide the text into meaningful chunks. 5) I numbered the recurrent chunks and then put them together in one table. 6) I divided them into sub themes. This stage was recursive and items were moved from one category to the other due to overlap. 7) Themes were deduced from the sub-themes. 8) Later, each set of teachers, i.e. novice and experienced from one institution, were coded together first and then compared to the other set from the same context. 9) The emerging themes from both contexts were then compared.

The emerging themes redirected the focus of the study at this point, so a theoretical framework was adapted both from Norton’s (2006) conceptualization of sociocultural identity as a construct and Tajfel’s (1982) theory of group identity construction as explained in section 2.2.

Norton (2006) suggested that the sociocultural identity as a construct encompasses five characteristics: identity is dynamic and changing over time and place, identity is complex and multifaceted, identity is constructed by language, identity must be understood in larger social processes, and identity must be linked to classroom practices.

Tajfel’s social identity theory “posits that identity develops from both an individual’s sense of belonging to a particular group and the affective component accompanying that sense of group membership” (as cited in Umaña-Taylor, Yazedjian, & Bámaca-Gómez, 2004, p. 10). In other words, Tajfel’s theory (as cited in Roberts et al., 1999) suggests three main axes: a sense of belonging to a group, the attitudes one has towards a group and the feelings that accompany a
sense of group membership. Based upon the previously mentioned theories, a framework was developed to explain the sociocultural aspects of Egyptian teachers’ professional identity within it. In figure 3.6.1, it is assumed that language is a stable variable as all teachers’ L1 is Arabic and L2 is English. Identity construction then goes through two basic levels that influence the identity negotiation, i.e. identity development and shared identity development. It must be noted that the process is recursive and not static due to the dynamic nature of identity. Both stages have their influence on the process of negotiation that occurs across time and place.

![Diagram](Figure 3.1 An analysis framework illustrating the influences affecting the negotiation of the teachers' sociocultural identity.)

### 3.6.1.2. Observations.
Each item in the observation scheme (see Appendix C) was marked by yes, no or not applicable. Three different colors were used to code the items. The next step was to count the number of times that each item was marked “yes”. Some of the items indicate a positive effect (+); while others had a neutral significance (+/-). The highest scores reflect the most salient features in classroom practices. Similarities and differences between the four categories of teachers are discussed in greater detail in the results and discussion chapters.
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

Results based on the analysis of the interview data and the classroom observations are presented in this chapter. Sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 address the three research questions of the study presented in section 2.9. Section 4.2 reveals the different sociocultural aspects that contribute to the formation of the teachers’ professional identity extracted from the interview data. The negotiated sociocultural aspects of the teacher’s professional identity are reported in section 4.3 followed by a presentation of the differences between experienced and novice teachers in negotiating the sociocultural aspects of their professional identities in their classroom practices (section 4.4).

4.2. Sociocultural aspects that contribute to the formation of novice and experienced teachers’ professional identity

Interview data revealed that teachers’ professional identity construct consists of three main sub-identities: identity development, shared identity and negotiated identity. A number of themes emerged from each sub-identity as illustrated in table 4.1 based on the analysis framework adopted in section 3.6.1.1. The first research question, which examines the sociocultural aspects that influence the formation of the teachers’ professional identities, could be answered by understanding the emerging themes that belong to the first two stages (identity development and shared identity).
Table 4.1. Interview Data Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Identity Construct</th>
<th>Sociocultural Aspects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- Identity Development</td>
<td>Teacher Professional Qualifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills Acquired from Other Professional and Voluntary Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Shared Identity</td>
<td>Awareness of the Profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Values of the Profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feelings about the Profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Identity Negotiation</td>
<td>External Influences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiation Scopes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1. Identity Development

The first level that formulates the teachers’ professional identity construct is the development facet. According to the participants’ narrative, the development level is reported to occur at an early stage of their teaching career or even before realizing that they will pursue the teaching path. Two main factors contribute enormously to this phase: professional qualifications and skills obtained from professional and voluntary work other than teaching.

The continuum of participant teachers’ qualifications ranged from formal to non-formal training and from certified to non-certified. However, all teachers acknowledged that formal structured training was crucial at some point in their professional career. As identity is dynamic and changing in nature, qualifications at the identity development stage are not limited to the early stages of career training. Constant development was a vital issue for all teachers whether it was institution supported or individually approached. Novice teachers highlighted the importance of the institution supported training programs. Ahmed mentioned that feedback was one of the highly valued aspects for him especially as he is still at the beginning of his career. The scope of teacher professional qualification encompasses other facets such as attending
conferences and professional development workshops as suggested by many teachers. Fatima talked about the training offered to all teachers by the institution she is affiliated to:

The center offers us free invitations to teaching conferences like TESOL and the BC [British Council] training days. They are offered about every two months. I forgot that every Thursday we get a training. We are pursuing a consistent module or program. Last Thursday we tackled how to teach speaking and next Thursday we are going to discuss how to teach writing.

Maha, who has been teaching for more than 30 years, considered structured training by qualified teacher trainers as more effective than peer observations and their feedback. Her statement reflected a comparison between the qualities of training she received at each one of the two institutions where she worked:

When we went to the Council [a well-known British educational center in Egypt], this is where I got I think a lot of tips on teaching. On the basis of, like, teacher talking time. The observations were very useful and they were carried out by the people who were qualified teacher trainers. At Univ A, we had our peers observe us, or TEFL fellows observe us. But I, I don't feel that the people who observed us are qualified teacher trainers. And so, they would give, you know, I think a lot of our peers are afraid to give cool feedback. Or fellows, you know, they may notice something and they would not give you cool feedback. But when you have a trained teacher trainer, you accept the cool feedback. And so, I think this is the difference. I think my teaching improved very much after the Council.

This theme focused on the effect of the teacher education program, its nature and its relation to the institution in addition to the role of the institution in supporting a continuous developmental plan. However, that was not the only influence especially within the identity development stage. Skills acquired from other professional and voluntary work was found as another reported factor.

As for acquired skills, most of the teachers – except for one novice teacher – had other professional experience before shifting to teaching. Other teachers participated in voluntary work either before starting their career as teachers, at some point while teaching or are still participating until present day. Teachers gained social skills, presentation skills and organization skills. Some teachers stated that working at other professions helped them to gain a better level
of self-awareness which helped in developing their professional identities as teachers. Whatever skills teachers gained, they were all able to relate the manner in which they were influenced as teachers.

The recurrent profession that novice teachers had previously experienced and which influences their teaching is working as a customer service representative. Working with customers helped them later in dealing with different types of students. Mazen admitted that he deals with his students as customers. However, he finds dealing with students to be easier than dealing with real customers as his position as a teacher gives him power and authority over his students.

Other skills were acquired from academic studies. Heba’s statement is a clear illustration of how the sphere of both academic qualifications and skills, though not directly related to teaching, can enrich the teacher’s experience and add to their teaching skills:

And I knew how to do that throughout my undergraduate studies because, on weekly basis, I had participated in team presentations and I had to make it interactive somehow to make sure that it goes successfully. And I had to work with a team to actually prepare that presentation. So, I have to say that once I started teaching, it wasn't such a foreign thing for me because I've been through the sub processes: working together, to gather information, getting there in front of people and interacting with them to transfer information. So, that helped me a lot I have to say. And the other thing as I told you is working within teams of all sorts of people. I was put sometimes by professors in teams where I did not go along with people. And I acquired skills of managing. And even though it's not really a nice term but managing people sometimes people who don't like to work, I knew how to manage them. People whom I didn't like, I knew how to manage them. People who are rowdy and you have to manage them, I knew how to manage them. So, I still have problems with discipline within the classroom but again, once I started I borrowed these sub skills to somehow manage a class.

The second theme included a variety of acquired skills either from other professions, academic studies or voluntary work. Together the professional qualifications and the possessed skills demonstrate some of the sociocultural factors influencing teachers’ professional identities, although they might occur before the identity development level or facet. The formation of the
shared identity was found to go through three sub-levels (awareness, values and beliefs) as explained in the following section (4.2.2) and those three sub-levels demonstrate part of the sociocultural factors.

4.2.2. Shared Identity

The second level of the sociocultural aspects of the teachers’ professional identity construct contains three sub-levels of the teachers’ professional identity: Awareness of the Profession, Values of the Profession and Feelings about the Profession. The three sub-levels proposed here are driven from the data analysis of the interviews and were found to match Tajfel’s (1982) theory of social identity construct. In this study, it is proposed that the shared identity of teachers is part of their professional identity. It could be also argued that the three sociocultural facets of the professional identity construct (Identity Development, Shared Identity and Identity Negotiation) are linear in nature, i.e. in order for teachers to develop feelings towards their profession, they should have passed through an awareness stage followed by holding values of the profession. However, in certain cases and at different stages along that continuum of professional identity construct (Identity Development, Shared Identity and Identity Negotiation) it could be also suggested that the process is recursive and one level might occur before the other. Teachers might also go back later in their career to redevelop one of the early levels.
4.2.2.1. Awareness. Awareness refers to developing a sense of membership to the profession. Whether becoming a teacher was a decision or a coincidence, this sense of awareness has been developed by all teachers at some point during their career. When asked about how they have become teachers, responses varied between passion-driven decisions and a coincidence. However, even if becoming a teacher started as a coincidence teachers decided later that teaching is a life-long career for them. They developed a deeper perception of the profession.

Two teachers, Yara and Ahmed, developed a relatively early stage of awareness during their undergraduate studies. Yara stated she always wanted to be a university professor. After minoring in linguistics, Ahmed made the decision that teaching is the profession he would want to pursue. Afterwards both Yara and Ahmed, seized every possible opportunity to develop themselves as teachers.

Sue is one of the novice participants in the study who is employed as a teaching assistant at a public university in Egypt and at the same time is an M.A. TEFL fellow at Univ A. She stated that she never thought of teaching as something she needed to ‘know how to do’ until she became a TEFL fellow.

I started to teach but I never really thought about it except when I joined the fellowship at Univ A and I started to understand that teaching is not just a thing that you can just... anyone can do. You really need to learn, to learn it and to study how to do it and to develop yourself and work on yourself a lot. More than once and not... it just... you never stop learning. It's more of a decision and now I understand that it's not an easy thing like I said. It's a career, it's something I need to work on... it's not just a thing I do. I used to think of it that way... before. But now, no. It's a serious thing and I take it seriously. And I like it, I enjoy doing it and and I know always there is a lot to learn.

Similarly, Magda went through the same experience; however she made the decision to become a professional teacher when she found that she lacked the necessary skills to teach. Exceptionally, Magda is the only teacher who developed awareness at a very early stage, i.e. in childhood. She did not express that explicitly, but it was clear from her statement that her
parents’ status as French teachers had implicit influence on her. Through her school and university years, she helped her peers and discovered that she has the gift of transferring information smoothly to others.

According to the results, a sense of awareness towards the profession can be developed since childhood influenced by family, during undergraduate studies, during practicing teaching or later while pursuing a structured teacher education program.

4.2.2.2. Values. It was highly significant for all teachers to express their beliefs as teachers, though that was not an issue probed in the interview. The differences of beliefs regarding teaching were diverse. In reporting their values, I will divide the data into four categories as it was noticeable that each group of teachers shared common values.

To start with, novice teachers in Univ B expressed general beliefs about the learning process and the teaching methodologies they approach. Similarly, the experienced teachers in the same context revealed their views on learning, which were more sophisticated than the novice teachers’ beliefs. In addition, students were a crucial factor around which their beliefs revolved. Yara stated that for her, passion is a means to reach for the students. Yara as well as Nihal emphasized the fact that they do their utmost to meet their students’ needs.

One common belief among this group of teachers who work at Univ B is ‘the aim’ or ‘the cause’ as they have expressed it. They all share the same belief that they are teaching for a ‘noble cause’. What drives them is the ideology of the center itself as it first started for teaching English as a second language for top undergraduate students from Islamic studies faculties for interfaith dialogue purposes.

In the second two categories, novice teachers at Univ A demonstrated a wider set of values. Learning to teach as an ongoing process, beliefs about using students’ L1 and rapport
were some of the common features of their beliefs set. The experienced teachers discussed nearly the same issues, yet with a deeper understanding. For instance, Maha expressed her total objection to embarrassing students in the classroom. For her, that is a taboo. Rapport, in Magda’s opinion, is the most important factor in the learning process. According to Magda, rapport is not exclusively having a good relation with your students, but also having a suitable environment that encourages learning:

It’s not just about being able to deliver the information I think, but it’s also the students have to feel that they’re safe and it's a non-threatening atmosphere, and that you feel for them. I’m not saying you need to be, you know, you didn't do your homework, never mind. No, no, no, none of that. There has to be a healthy respect and they have to feel the joy working hard so they work hard.

For the first two categories (novice and experienced teachers of Univ B), values are mostly institution-driven and student-centered, whereas for teachers at Univ A, a broader set of beliefs was mentioned. For experienced teachers at Univ A, rapport with students is the most salient aspect.

4.2.2.3. Feelings. It is remarkable that this sub-level of the professional identity was totally missing from the self-reported data of the teachers at Univ B, both novice and experienced teachers. On the contrary, novice and experienced teachers from Univ A expressed their feelings towards their profession explicitly. As I mentioned this item was not planned in the interview questions, but it emerged from data analysis.

Novice teachers at Univ A expressed positive feelings only such as passion, appreciation, sense of gratification and accomplishment, and enjoyment. The friendly atmosphere and the sense of collegiality were two major attributes for Ahmed who stated that emotional support is crucial for him as he is still at the beginning of his career. In contradiction, experienced teachers
expressed both positive and negative feelings towards the profession. Yosra - an experienced teacher - said:

  It's my passion. It is my passion. It has been my passion for quite some time. At one point, I want to tell you, I felt I was burnt out. That, was a lot. I felt I was doing the same thing again and I wanted to continue with my PhD.

  While emotions were not present in Univ B teachers’ data, they were explicitly expressed by Univ A teachers whose feelings varied according to their experience. Novice teachers experienced positive feelings, whereas experienced teachers experienced both positive and negative emotions towards the profession.

  Awareness, values and feelings are three sub-levels of the shared/national identity. The three levels (awareness, values and feelings) are viewed as the components of Tajfel’s social identity construct as established in section 3.6.1.1.

  4.3. Sociocultural aspects of identity that teachers negotiate

  The third and last sociocultural aspect of the professional identity construct is the negotiation of the teacher’s identity. It includes two themes: the external factors influencing the negotiation process and the scopes of the identity negotiation, i.e. the areas that were negotiated. Only the first part is reported in this section as it answers the second research question.

  Context, institutional policy and culture are three main influences that were extracted from the teachers’ self-reported data. All three factors were reported by teachers, however some differences and similarities were evident. None of the results of the three factors was discussed as an independent variable and that is why repeated instances of overlap are expected in the following lines.

  Teachers who worked in more than one setting at different stages of their careers or have experienced working simultaneously at two different contexts were able to draw comparisons
and clearly identify the factors that influenced their professional identities in each one respectively.

Institution policy is the most salient aspect that affected teachers. As indicated by teachers, institution policy incorporates course objectives, curriculum, teaching methodology, grading system and attendance policy. Sue stated that the Egyptian public university where she works she had to prepare students for the final exam as this is the only assessment criteria for students. As attendance is not an issue that affects her students’ grades, only those who are motivated attend her section as opposed to Univ A where attendance is obligatory to pass and as a result both motivated and demotivated students must attend. It is clear from Sue’s comparison that both the context and the students are mutually influencing each other and consequently affecting the teacher.

It is also noteworthy to mention that three main education systems of teaching as a second language were contrasted by teachers: Egyptian, British and American. Nearly all participant teachers have experienced working under either three or at least two systems adopted by different institutions. Each context has its own characteristics. The large number of students attending English language classes in the Egyptian higher education system was reported by both Sue and Magda as a major influence which affected their relation with students negatively. It allows no opportunity for building rapport. The British system stood out for its “sociable atmosphere”, whereas the American was characterized by being test-driven. Maha commented on both the atmosphere and the institutional policy:

Because there is a very nice social atmosphere at the Council. So, there is a garden and a cafeteria. So, it's a very nice way for people to interact and socialize with each other. Here, I think, the department is different in the sense that the instruction is test-driven. Whereas at the Council, it wasn't. And most of the students passed and went on to another level.
Mazen who works at Univ B, which adheres to the British system of teaching a second language, has been to America. He explained the methodological difference between both systems: “I think the British is more accurate. I’d say this. The United States I would say …. I don’t want to be judgmental, but you I can say that you can do whatever you want.”

In the same vein, culture is an influential element and it differs from one context to another and from one audience to the other. The students’ cultural background and the teachers’ both were revealed to be of significant influence on the teacher.

Before citing examples from the analyzed data, it is necessary to draw a distinction between national identity and culture. Teachers’ reactions to the question of national identity and teaching practices were varied. At Univ A, teachers argued that it is either their personality traits or their own personal beliefs that has an influence on them not their national identity, whereas at Univ B only experienced teachers could reflect on the relation between their national identity and teaching practices. Generally, novice teachers either found it difficult to find a relation between being Egyptian and their professional identity, or after admitting they have never thought about that, were able to draw a conclusion.

When teachers were asked about the most salient aspects of their national identities that they bring into class, teachers’ responses varied as mentioned. On the one hand, some teachers mentioned that being friendly, having a sense of humor, and having a shared history were the most salient features of national identity. On the other hand, other teachers did not highlight their national identity features. They valued their individuality more.

Participant teachers are all Egyptians and whether their students were Egyptians or not, the influence of their cultural norms was claimed. A number of remarks suggested that students’ L1, their country’s historical events, religion, socio-economic class, motivation, attitude, needs and
learning styles are all powerful motives for a teacher that affect their decisions as will be highlighted in section 4.4.

In this section an analysis of three sociocultural aspects (context, institution and culture) that teachers negotiate were presented. However, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the identity negotiation, the scopes of negotiation as reported by study participants are detailed in the next section (4.4) and compared with their classroom practices.

4.4. Negotiation scope of sociocultural aspects of novice and experienced teachers’ professional identities in classroom practices

This section attempts to answer the third research question which examines the relation between teachers’ experience and their negotiation of the sociocultural aspects of their professional identities in classroom practices. In order to be able to determine whether they negotiate their identities or not, an investigation of their self-reported data must be analyzed and compared to their actual practices. Therefore an analysis of the observation scheme results presented in table 4.2 is integrated and compared with the identity negotiation scope as analyzed from teachers’ self-reported data.

Now that the background of the external influences is established in the previous section (4.3), the findings pertaining to teachers’ decisions as a reflex will be outlined. Data revealed a wide scope of negotiation, however I will focus on reporting results related to the three interrelated aspects (context, culture and institution) that were previously cited. Comparisons with the observation scheme are integrated within the following presentation.

Culture, context and students are intertwined, as data revealed in the section 4.3. Cross-cultural issues emerged in classrooms through discussions whether students were Egyptian or not. Maha (experienced teacher at Univ A) said, “I might talk about controversial subjects and I
think that in some cases I was mistaken. That some students are not ready, or willing. I tend to be a little bit cautious.”

Parallel to what Maha recounted, Heba’s (novice teacher at Univ A) statement suggested awareness of the sensitivity of some topics that must be avoided in classroom discussions:

I avoid politics completely in the class. Not completely. I try to as much as I can, whenever they're discussing politics to draw it out actually, out of Egyptian context. Because for a certain time period, especially after the revolution it would lead to fight. It would seriously lead to fights. So this is the topic that I'm very hesitant to open in class. Before the revolution, not as much. I mean, I know that I have to discuss it carefully, I need to tackle it carefully but not as much. Lately because of course of the political unrest were happening, it's a topic I'm quite afraid of to open in class because I don't know what would happen. I really don't know what would happen.

**Table 4.2 Classroom Observation Scheme Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Features</th>
<th>Univ A Experienced</th>
<th>Univ A Novice</th>
<th>Univ B Experienced</th>
<th>Univ B Novice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. Ideology</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Teacher shows awareness of students’ country’s historical background. +</td>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teacher shows awareness of students’ social (lifestyle) characteristics. +</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teacher responds to students’ beliefs/opinions during the lesson and is open to adapt when/if needed. +</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. Socialization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Teacher responds to students’ schema of a good teacher. +</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teacher responds to students’ schema of good teaching in terms of teaching practices and teaching styles. +</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. Forms of Discourse</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Teacher resorts to L1 as an indication of building rapport with students/showing solidarity vs. for communication purposes +</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>0/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>0/3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Teacher seems aware of jokes/punch lines that students bring inside the classroom from their own culture. +

IV. Face Systems

1. Teacher uses materials that are relevant to the students’ cultural norms. +
   2/3 0/3 1/3 3/3
2. The materials are specifically chosen to introduce a different culture to the students. +/-
   0/3 0/3 3/3 0/3
3. The students show interest in the introduced material. +
   3/3 3/3 3/3 2/3
4. Teacher avoids taboos in the students’ culture. +
   1/3 2/3 0/3 1/3
5. Teacher shows respect in cases of opposing views/stances from students. +
   3/3 1/3 1/3 1/3

B. Institution Effect

1. The choice of the material reflects the influence of the institution/context on the teacher. +/-
   2/3 0/3 1/3 2/3

C. Teacher Effect

1. The teacher’s cultural background is reflected in the material used. +/-
   3/3 1/3 2/3 2/3
2. The teaching style of the teacher reflects his/her views about teaching. +
   3/3 3/3 3/3 1/3

Total score (45) 34 25 30 20

*Note (+) indicates a positive aspect; (-/+) indicates a neutral one.

Heba’s stance towards politics is reflected in her teaching. When observing her class, she discussed with her students a viral video of the Egyptian journalist who covered the Oscars. Heba listened to the students’ opinions on the topic and showed interest in what they said. Students started discussing why that journalist was chosen to represent Egypt in such a prestigious event although she was not qualified in terms of her English language level which caused a controversy in the media all over the world. Though the topic is a social one, the
discussion drifted towards politics as some students started arguing that the journalist was chosen because her father is a general in the army. When Heba noticed that, she immediately redirected the discussion again towards the main topic and stopped the ongoing debate of politics.

If compared with their actual practices, novice teachers at Univ A are at the top of the four categories: Univ A novice, Univ A experienced, Univ B novice and Univ B experienced teachers, who avoid taboos similar to their reported data. Heba’s avoidance of tackling politics in class as discussed earlier is a clear example. It is notable here that experienced teachers at Univ B attained 0 because taboo topics were not an issue in the observed lessons and it was not a topic they brought up during the interviews. The results of the observation reflect the data reported by teachers. Such data could suggest that there is no difference between novice and experienced teachers in Univ A in negotiating this scope of taboo topics. The novice teachers seem to develop the negotiation skill at an early stage of their career. However, based on the classroom observation, it could be argued that experienced teachers have somehow developed a more evolved negotiation skill which is not clearly indicated in the observation scheme. For instance, Magda (experienced teacher at Univ A) used a reading passage on “Slums in Egypt” in the observed lesson. Though the aim of the reading activity was a reading for writing, Magda held an open class discussion and turned the topic into a problem-solving activity. Students’ suggestions included individual as well as governmental solutions. Unlike Heba, Magda did not completely avoid politics, but she knew how to remain in control of the discussion by playing the devil’s advocate role and eliciting suggestions from students on how to solve such a problem.

Teachers at Univ A had to negotiate cultural aspects of their identities and their students’ as well, whereas teachers at Univ B dealt with different cultural issues. As English teachers, they were aware of introducing another culture, especially as the course book used by the institution is
represent another culture. Students are the key factor in this consideration. Nihal (experienced teacher at Univ B) recounted:

Though at Univ B, but we have diversity within it. So you have two extremes. In some classes they like to speak about their topics; the Islamic topics and their culture and their Egyptian background and so on. In other classes, you’ve people who like to speak about movies, music and football.

On the contrary, Fouad who is a novice teacher at Univ B stated:

There are some lessons that talk about some historical topics like the history of the U.S and the history of the UK and I don’t think my students are able to understand this or have any kind of information about these places.

A good illustration of Fouad’s opinion on avoiding other cultures based on the assumption that students do not know about other cultures was reflected in the way he approached the observed lesson. Fouad’s lesson (at Univ B) was an English for specific purposes (ESP) one dealing with Fasting for Muslims. When meeting after class, he pointed out that - contrary to his expectations - students were noticeably engaged in the last speaking activity: a problem-solving activity. In that activity, students were asked to use their background knowledge along with the language introduced in the lesson to issue a Fatwa (an Islamic ruling) for Muslims who lived in Scandinavian countries. Though students and the Scandinavians are both Muslims, they do not share the same national identity and therefore they have different cultural norms. His opinion that students are incapable of understanding others and that is why it would be futile to tackle cross-cultural issues seemed invalid based on the observation. Apparently, his previous statement does not represent a better understanding of his students’ interests.

The novice teachers at Univ B resorted to substituting or adapting such lessons with more culturally suitable topics for their students. Experienced teachers had more middle-stance solutions, as some suggested drawing comparisons between cultures, for instance, while in the
case of other topics they still preferred to substitute with similar topics from their culture as

Nihal (experienced teacher at Univ B) expressed:

> We’re teaching English, but sometimes I hate to lose my identity when I am teaching other culture. So sometimes if you’re explaining about requests or New Year’s Eve it’s not related to our culture. It’s good to know about it, but when you try to create a context or ask your students what did you do in the New Year’s Eve nobody is going to answer simply because they do not celebrate it or they don’t know it. So we introduce them to this concept, but we don’t have this.

Nihal’s actual practices seem to confirm her stance. After introducing the topic of marketing, she divided students into groups and organized a competition between them to advertise products. The products she chose to be marketed were not very common to the students’ culture. Nihal assigned the groups three different products to advertise: ‘ostrich meat, gums for puppies and sunglasses for camels’. Students were able to contextualize the advertised products in their own culture. Their advertisements targeted Egyptian audience from different sub-cultures in Egypt i.e. different geographical areas within Egypt. The material choice reflects Nihal’s self-reported data of attempting a middle-stance approach when dealing with other cultures. The students’ production also contradicts Fouad’s belief that students lack both information and capability to deal with other cultures.

It is noteworthy that only one category, experienced teachers at Univ A, explained how they integrate their students’ linguistic knowledge which is an integral of their national identity in their teaching. Yosra had a positive view when she was narrating how she made use of her students’ L1 in her Linguistics class. “I was doing phonetics yesterday …… the sounds which we don’t have in Arabic. I have one student from Kuwait and three from Bahrain and they keep giving examples from their own dialect.” Although the students’ shared the same L1 (Arabic language), they belonged to different national identities and therefore spoke different vernaculars
of the Arabic language. Yosra was able to successfully incorporate such linguistic and cultural diversity in a positive attitude.

As shown in table 4.3, the first section of the observation scheme examines the students’ influence on the teaching practices. For ideology features, novice teachers generally scored lower than experienced teachers except for the first item which explores awareness of students’ historical background. Their scores are similar to what they mentioned in their interviews. Results indicate that experienced teachers’ practices in both contexts generally do not reflect awareness of the students’ historical background except for one teacher, Magda, who used a reading passage discussing slums in Egypt. The reading passage and the classroom discussion reflected her profound awareness of the history of the country by citing examples from previous ministerial decisions and incidents. Considering socialization issues, all teachers across both contexts showed high degree of awareness in their observed lessons except for novice teachers at Univ B. It is noticeable that experienced teachers are using more discourse forms, i.e. using L1 and jokes in their teaching practices, in comparison to novice teachers. Such integration of L1 is expressed by Yosra’s example in the reported data. Maha also revealed that she uses well-known expressions from movies when discussing grammar points. Mazen (experienced teacher from Univ B) was good at using jokes and punch lines relevant to the students’ culture. When one of the students’ said he was ‘Zamalkawi’ (supporting one of the most popular football clubs in Egypt), Mazen asked him to leave the class because apparently Mazen does not support that club. Everyone laughed including that student. However, referring to such divisions should be dealt with carefully since it might cause problems as will be discussed later in the following chapter.
It can be suggested, based on the previous comparison of the four groups of teachers in terms of negotiating their identities as influenced by their culture and their students’ cultural norms, that some differences are salient between novice and experienced teachers. Experienced teachers’ practices reflect their negotiated identity practices in most cases, however novice teachers at Univ A are better implementers of some negotiated aspects, especially socialization techniques and students’ historical background.

The institution policy controlled multiple teaching decisions. The course goal, whether test-oriented, academic or focused on learning general English, determined the teaching methodologies and types of activities teachers can use in class. Maha said the following on the topic:

I used to play a lot of songs in my classes. I used to have students who used to say “is this gonna come in the final exam?” They used to see this as a waste of time. When I would say “OK, we are gonna listen to a song” or “we are gonna play a game” or something, I find that some students don't like it. They think it's not serious. How is this related to the exam? Because they are very exam-oriented. But at the same time, they want a variety of activities. But I tend to use these very sparingly now.

The course goal is found to be intertwined to an extent with the education system implemented. Teachers at Univ B talked more about using games and “extra-curricular” activities. Assessment, grades and attendance were not issues raised by the Univ B group who are implementing the British system. This approach is in conforms to Maha’s opinion, as she worked at a British center and said that it was characterized by its “social atmosphere” and that no stress is laid upon exams.

Although an examination of the institution effect on those issues such as course goal, activities, and teaching methodologies is missing from the observation scheme, some examples based on the observation field notes can be outlined. The three experienced teachers at Univ B depended on games, competitions and mingling activities in the observed lessons. The activities
were used to cover grammar points, vocabulary and pronunciation. In Univ A, all teachers except for one experienced teacher used either games, competitions or mingling activities in the observed lessons to deal with grammar and vocabulary. This seems to contradict their reported-data to an extent as they can still use a variety of activities in an academic test-driven system and both novice and experienced teachers at Univ A are negotiating their identities as influenced by the institution policy.

The scheme examined the choice of material and its relation to the institution policy and the teachers’ cultural background. It is interesting to find out that novice teachers in both contexts are at two different extremes regarding use of materials that match students’ cultural norms. In alignment with use of materials according to their students’ preferences, the novices at Univ B are avoiding using materials that represent other cultures. In the second and third sections, it is indicated that novice teachers in Univ A are the only group whose choice of material seem to be totally unaffected by neither the institution nor their own cultural background. For instance, Sue was discussing ‘bioethics’ which is not a common topic in the Egyptian context. It was clear from the discussion that students were trying to form an opinion on the spot. Such introduction of a new topic encouraged students’ reflective thinking.

The analysis of both the interview data and the observation scheme indicates that in most cases experienced teachers negotiate their professional identities, and the negotiation process is further supported by their practices. Novice teachers in Univ A show some aspects of negotiation, but this does not extend to all scopes, as opposed to novices in Univ B who generally have not yet developed this sense of negotiation. Another noticeable result is that the teachers’ reported data seem to match their actual classroom practices except for the issue of
activity choice. Teachers at Univ A are negotiating their professional identities in the realm of institution policy though they reported the opposite.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

The final chapter discusses the main findings of the study presented in Chapter 4. A thorough analysis of the results is presented according to the research questions and discussed in relation to the previous research in the field. Section 5.2 discusses the sociocultural aspects shaping the teacher’s professional identity. In section 5.3, the negotiated aspects of the professional identity are presented. In section, 5.4, a discussion of how the differences between the novice and experienced teachers’ classroom practices can be explained in terms of the negotiation of the sociocultural aspects of teachers’ professional identity. Section 5.5 presents some pedagogical implications based on the research questions. Limitations of the study and then suggestions for future research are outlined in sections 5.6 and 5.7.

5.2. Sociocultural aspects contributing to the formation of teachers’ professional identity

The first research question aimed at investigating the aspects that influence the teachers’ professional identity in an Egyptian context. Results revealed numerous factors that could lead to the development process of the Egyptian teachers’ identity. Two main points must be highlighted before discussing those aspects. First, the shared identity is preceded by a development stage. Second, as identity is dynamic, the process generally starts with development of the professional identity and then moves to developing a shared identity, but factors such as training and experience later in the career may result in a return to the developmental stage simultaneous with developing a shared identity.
5.2.1. Teachers’ professional qualifications and skills

The teachers’ self-reported data revealed the importance of developing professional qualifications throughout all career stages. All teachers stated that once they became teachers, development proved to be essential, and that they are in a constant state of progress. Their statements reflected their belief that learning to teach is an ongoing process that never ends. It is characterized as being a “trial and error” experience where every lesson is “a lesson” for the teacher, as one of the participants described it. The pursuit of ongoing professional development lends itself to the concept of agency which is included in professional identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

Professional qualifications for the teachers are not limited to structured programs. Attending conferences, workshops, training sessions and online courses all better qualify teachers. In addition, formal structured teacher education programs helped reshape teachers’ professional identities when the training took place later in their careers. Theoretical input was highly valued by all teachers whether they received it at the beginning or middle of their career.

Support from peers and qualified teacher trainers are two of the resources that teachers identified as being essential regardless of their prior experience level. An encouraging learning atmosphere of their institution has a great impact on the formation of the teachers’ identities.

Choe (2015) suggests that the main reason teachers develop negative identities is the absence of TESOL training. In other words, teachers develop a negative self-perception of their professional identities when they lack structured training for the profession. In the same vein, Timostsuk and Ugaste (2010) emphasize that initial training is highly recommended as it helps teachers form their identities at an early stage. Dang (2013) argues for the importance of collaborative environments in the formation of identity, especially for pre-service teachers as this
allows for peers to help each other in developing their identities. The results of this study suggest that the earlier teachers are exposed to structured training, the easier it could be for them in the future to develop their professional identities. In Egypt, not all second language teachers receive training to teach foreign languages. However, they might pursue an opportunity to receive structured training later in their career which leads to a delay in the formation of their professional identities.

The effect of academic studies in other fields and of other professional experience on teachers was not expected before analyzing the data. However, based on the limited data collected, teachers’ comments indicate that previous non-teaching experience has a strong influence on teachers’ professional identities. Other studies have posited that a teacher’s identity is dynamic and subject to change due to influence by outer experiences such as jobs and life experiences (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009) and the results of this study support this claim.

Some teachers were aware of the skills they had acquired and how they integrated them with their teaching practices, whereas others appeared unaware. This could be due to a lack of reflective skills or to the nature of the teacher education program in which they had participated. The skills teachers reported are mainly social skills, presentation skills and administrative skills.

Being customer service representative is a common job younger teachers held before becoming teachers. Dealing with customers helped teachers acquire better social skills, which in turn helped teachers when dealing with students. Older teachers reported different professions that helped them acquire more organization skills. Due to the emergence of new technologies globally, new jobs have appeared and the job market in Egypt is different than it was thirty years ago. Outsourcing companies hire Egyptians fluent in English to deal with customers all over the globe. Some recent graduates pursue these jobs, primarily for financial motives, but may shift to
teaching due to dissatisfaction with long term career prospects in the customer service field; one teacher explicitly described returning to teaching as soon as he discovered that customer service may be financially rewarding but would not be professionally rewarding in the long run. The case is different with the older generation of teachers. The professions which the older generation entered were all prestigious and promising, however they chose to be teachers because they did not enjoy the other jobs. Socioeconomic factors seem to be a newly emerging influence on the development of younger generations of teachers. Regardless of the motives, both generations reported deciding to pursue a career in teaching as a result of passion or for a cause, as will be discussed later.

Based on the findings mentioned above, it can be suggested that skills other than those gained from professional teaching qualifications or direct teaching experience are helpful for teaching. Many teachers draw on non-teaching professional and educational experiences to gain such skills. Therefore, it would be beneficial for teacher training programs to tap into learner teachers’ previous experiences. Freeman and Johnson (1998) support this idea by suggesting that teachers should be trained based on their prior knowledge. They also recommend considering the wide range of prior experiences, memories and beliefs that learner teachers bring from their experiences as students and language learners.

The complexity of factors forming a teacher’s professional identity suggests that identifying a straightforward framework would be difficult. However, the emerging themes are found to be in alignment with the four main characteristics of the teacher’s professional identity as described by Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), namely that it is dynamic, comprises sub-identities, and involves a person and a context. The evolving nature of the teacher’s professional identity reflects its dynamism. The sub-identities differ from one teacher to another but could
include personal identities as well as the other professions that teachers have worked in. The issue of context is related to the sociocultural identity of the teacher and will be taken up in section 5.3.1.

5.2.2. Tridimensional shared identity

The two previously discussed elements (professional qualifications and skills) contribute to the formation of the teachers’ professional identity which does not necessarily occur before developing a sense of shared identity. Both facets, the development of a teacher professional identity and the shared identity, could happen simultaneously. However, in order to move from the level of development of the professional identity to the level of shared identity, three main aspects have to be attained by a teacher: a sense of awareness of the profession, values of the profession, and feelings about the profession. Those three elements recurred repeatedly in subjects’ expression of their professional identities.

The sense of awareness or membership of the teaching profession varies in terms of the timing of its development. Some teachers develop that sense of awareness early during childhood, others before starting teaching, and still others through experience teaching. It is not a matter of experience, but rather of knowledge and perception. Formal training programs definitely help teachers form such awareness; however, in other instances the act of engaging in actual teaching is required to develop membership. In light of sociocultural factors, Johnson (2006) views this sense of membership not as an abstract theoretical framework but as emerging from “a dialogic and transformative process of reconsidering and reorganizing lived experiences” (p. 240).

A set of beliefs is found to influence many of the teachers’ decisions and practices. Such beliefs included views on the learning process, effective teaching, ways of dealing with students
and other teaching-related topics. These beliefs were clearer for experienced teachers and less explicit for novice teachers. Experienced teachers placed high value on issues such as rapport with students and stressed the mutual aspect of the teaching process where teachers and students influence each other, reporting that their personalities both affect and are affected by teaching. For most of the novice teachers, their views were limited to learning how to teach. In other words, their views reflected theories more than actual experiences.

Timostsuik and Ugaste (2010) argue that feelings and emotions are critical aspects of identity formation. They further suggested that those feelings arise as a result of the relationships that teachers develop with students, peers, institutions, and contexts. Novice and experienced teachers in Univ A expressed their feelings, both positive and negative, towards the profession. Enjoyment, sense of fulfillment and a love of their students were the common emotions expressed by those teachers. However, not all teachers in this study expressed feelings towards their institution. Such lack of feelings could be due to not having a sense of belonging to the institution. Not all institutions provide support to teachers, which might result in a sense of alienation towards the institution. Furthermore, lack of support from the institution could affect teachers’ professional identities negatively. It could result in less motivational levels as well as delayed professional development. Lack of feelings could also be explained in terms of the institution’s power. Zembylas (2005) posits that each context has its own emotional rules which influence the formation of a teacher’s professional identity immensely. Moreover, teachers’ emotions can reflect certain power relations within the institution’s culture.

It is worth mentioning that in Univ B teachers never mentioned their personal feelings towards teaching. Teachers are aware of how their students’ appreciation for their work and they emphasized how important their students are for them in return; however no explicit expression
of emotions could be found in their statements. This absence of emotional expression does not indicate the entire absence of emotions, but it begs the question of why teachers refrained from voicing their emotions. Due to the lack of further evidence from the data that would justify such refraining, two options could be suggested: either teachers have not developed emotions towards the profession or they experience these emotions but preferred not to express them. Choosing not to express their emotions might be due to their personal traits, part of their own culture or a reflection of the power of the institution, as suggested by Zembylas (2003).

5.3. The negotiated sociocultural aspects

5.3.1. Sociocultural aspects influencing identity negotiation

According to this preliminary study, context, institution policy, and culture are the three sociocultural aspects that emerged as factors influencing the negotiation of the teachers’ professional identity. Thongsongsee (2012) posits that examining the social contexts where the teachers’ identities are formed and enacted is necessary to gain a better understanding of the formation process and their classroom practices. As teachers’ social contexts are influenced by culture, it would be relevant to discuss what culture means.

To begin with, there is no comprehensive definition of culture as it has many angles. It is individual as well as collective. National identity does not equal culture, a distinction which was highlighted in the results chapter between culture and national identity. For the purpose of this study, culture will be used to refer to the sociocultural aspects that teachers reported about themselves and their students which stem—to an extent—from their national identity as Egyptians but also from diversities among Egyptians.

Nguyen (2008) argued that teachers’ identities influence their students’ identities more strongly than students influence their teachers due to the power relations inherent in the
relationship. However, examination of the data collected in this study shows that the opposite could be suggested—that is, students’ culture appears to play a very powerful role in teachers’ negotiation of their identities as shown through their classroom practices. However, students’ culture does not refer to their national identity as almost all student participants in this study were Egyptian. Rather, cultural differences existed from one context to another which reflects the diversity in the national Egyptian identity (Bassiouney, 2014).

In Univ A, politics was the topic that teachers abstained from discussing in classrooms, a choice which was influenced by their students. One teacher mentioned that the polarization has become wider recently as opposed to the past in Egypt and that made her avoid discussing politics. Such polarization could be better explained within the current situation in Egypt after the January 25th Revolution. Guibernau suggested that national identities “may remain buried for years and can be resurrected at times of crisis or major historical points” (as cited in Bassiouney, 2014). It could be argued then that the diversities within the Egyptian national identities are emerging more than before after a period of silence and that is why more distinct national identities are in a state of clash. Teachers have to be aware that such an issue requires negotiation of identities inside classrooms.

Students, or a teacher’s perception of his or her students, decide which topics will be discussed and which will be avoided in each context. When compared to the institution’s power, students’ preferences appeared more influential than curricula or course books. Teachers in Univ B more often resorted to adapting lessons when the topics did not appeal to the students’ cultural norms regardless of the course book they used. It could be argued that the institution’s power is claimed in this decision as well. The influence of students in this realm could be explained in terms of language policies. When institutions force a language policy that clashes with students’
language ideologies this would eventually result in the dominance of the students’ preferences. It could be argued that since Univ B is a public university where Standard Arabic is the official language of instruction, students are resisting English. However, this is not the case for all students as some are more in agreement with learning a second language.

As Univ B follows the system of a well-known British educational center in Egypt, it is of relevance to mention that this British educational center adopts the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy. The EDI strategy aims at integrating students’ diversity in the teaching practices in addition to ensuring equality between different groups of students. In the same vein, Banks (2008) posits that citizenship education must be “expanded to include cultural rights for citizens from diverse racial, cultural, ethnic and language groups” (p. 129). The British center avoids discussing certain topics that teachers or administrators feel do not reflect the students’ culture and further target topics that they believe would appeal to students’ culture. These decisions may be made at the level of the teacher but may also be a result of the authority of the institution. The implementation of the EDI in the British system seem to be well-planned since the British government is aware of the nature of the Egyptian national identity. Such awareness could be due to the British colonization that took place in Egypt in the past in addition to understanding the national educational system in Egypt which in return avoids conflicts and stresses similarities of the Egyptian national identity.

It is interesting that teachers, regardless of their experience and the institutional context in which they work, expressed two different views concerning the effect of their national identity on their teaching practices. On the one hand, one group refuted such a proposal and suggested that their personalities and individual beliefs constitute their own culture. On the other hand, others acknowledged that sharing the same national identity with their students is advantageous
in many ways, for instance sharing the same L1, historical background, and being a product of the same educational system which reflects the definition of national identity suggested by Bassiouny (2014). In her definition, she highlighted the shared attributes of a unified Egyptian identity: “habits, history, locality, linguistic practices, and so on” (Bassiouny, 2014, p. 40). The second group touches on the discussion to the issue of native and non-native second language teachers. This was emphasized by one teacher who compared himself to one of his native English speaker colleagues who stated that not sharing the same L1 with students is a drawback for him.

The distinction between nationality and culture must be considered from another angle. One of the teachers who worked in different governorates across Egypt highlighted the fact that she was not previously aware of the diverse cultural norms in different geographical areas of Egypt and had to discover that over time and through experience. The students’ cultural norms even influenced the way the activities were structured. In such cases, applying the EDI approach could be useful. It might be of great help to teachers when they start teaching in a new context or setting to be aware of such cultural issues and adjust materials and teaching practices so as not to alienate students; however, teachers should use the EDI guidelines judiciously in order to avoid losing the benefits that incorporation of new or challenging ideas in the curriculum offers. In Univ B, where the EDI seems to be implemented, albeit not officially, instances of conflict are limited if not absent. Based on my field notes, classroom discussions and reflection in Univ B sometimes exist but are limited in scope. Such a limitation leaves little space for identity negotiation of both teacher and students. Although the EDI approach attempts to reduce imposing an L2 culture on students, excluding the L2 culture prevents identity negotiation and
may, on the contrary, impose an identity based on the teacher’s or the institution’s perceptions of the students’ culture, beliefs and interests.

Moving from one context to another – even within the same country – appeared to be rewarding for teachers. Teachers’ experience could be broadened by the amount of exposure they have to different contexts. The more settings a teacher works in, the more experience, and therefore perspective, they gain. Teachers who worked in more than one setting developed a more profound understanding of the sociocultural aspects of learning and teaching due to the process of comparing and contrasting that occurs when they deal with different students, policies, and institutions. Consequently, these teachers appeared to be more capable of identifying the negotiated aspects as will be discussed in the next section. In contrast, teachers who were exposed to only one or two contexts appeared to have a more limited understanding of the different negotiated aspects. All that they mentioned in terms of negotiation is related to teaching methodologies, students’ preferences and adapting lessons and lesson plans. This could be linked to the idea of applying the EDI, as discussed previously, which allows little room for developing individual voices. Resistance to the influence of the L2 culture was even stronger for novice teachers at Univ B. They tended to avoid presenting aspects of the L2 culture, assuming that students will not be interested. As a result, this reduced the opportunities for the process of identity negotiation.

Kayi-Aydar (2015) posited that teacher identity is ‘context-dependent’ and the institution represents a major part of the teaching context. Kayi-Aydar’s (2015) argument seems to support this study’s findings that the institution has its influence on teachers’ professional identity. However, it could be argued that the institutional identities might influence the identity negotiation in a negative way. As opposed to what Fotovatian (2015) argues that teachers
construct membership in an institution, and therefore “negotiate and (re)negotiate new social and professional identities which can enable them to be recognized as legitimate members within the institution” (p. 241), the limited results of this study reveal that though this negotiation process could take place at the beginning, it turns into a fixed state especially with time. The longer a teacher works at the same institution, the less identity negotiation could occur due to the power relation of the institution.

5.3.2. Teachers’ negotiation stances

Faced with different sociocultural contexts, teachers’ techniques of responding differ. A number of variables appear to have caused variation in the stances teachers have adopted as a response. Teachers’ qualifications and the education program might have shaped the views teachers hold. The number of contexts and cultures a teacher has been exposed to is another factor. Institutions and education systems in which teachers work also appear to have a considerable impact on teachers’ responses. Such findings are in line with a number of previous studies that conclude that the social context and institution contribute to the production and negotiation of teachers’ identities (Canagarajah, 2003; Norton, 2010; Peacock, 2001; Talmy, 2008)

Cross-cultural as well as local culture differences may be a source of disagreement or conflict in the classroom. Teachers’ strategies to mitigate the risk of conflict ranged from complete avoidance of controversial discussions to de-contextualization of the topic. For instance, one teacher mentioned that due to the contested political situation in Egypt after 2011, she would discuss politics but draw the topic out of the Egyptian context. At some points, students direct the discourse to controversial topics. One teacher in Univ A reported that in such instances she does not express her opinion but rather lets the students voice their points of view.
This technique was used by one teacher in Univ A and another in Univ B to lead open class discussions. Canagarajah (2003) argued that students’ resistance to imposed identities led to a transformation in teachers’ practices and identities, therefore enriching their negotiation skills. This suggests that those teachers who are able to tolerate and manage disagreement in the classroom rather than avoiding it completely provide a better opportunity for continuing development of their professional identities.

At Univ B, teachers deal with two distinctly diverse cultural norms of students, as one of the teachers described that “we have diversity within Univ B. So you have two extremes we have two other cultures.” She further explained that one perspective prefers an ESP approach related to the field of Islamic studies. The other group prefers approaching topics relevant to their lives such as movies, songs, football, etc. Such diversity reflects not only the students’ cultural norms, but also the diversity within the Egyptian national identity (Bassiouny, 2014). Teachers also face cultural issues but in a different way. Teachers are aware of being a cultural bridge in the sense that they are expected to transmit the culture of the L2. Experience seems to determine how teachers deal with the students’ diversity and their role as transmitter of culture. The more experienced teachers followed one of two techniques: either a middle stance of introducing the L2 and comparing between the L1 and L2 cultures or avoiding the L2 culture by substituting more familiar aspects from the L1 culture. Novice teachers, on the other hand, either introduced the L2 culture without much comparison or resisted and avoided the L2 culture. It is important to highlight that McKinney and van Pletzen (2004) argue that resistance is not always a negative point as it can be manipulated into a memorable moment in the classroom if teachers know how to negotiate their identities. Therefore, the novice teachers’ full acceptance or full avoidance of
the L2 culture likely shuts out the opportunity for discussion and reflection that would allow for both teachers and students to negotiate their identities.

The difference between novice and experienced teachers could be a result of getting exposed to more than one context and culture. One of the experienced teachers said that after travelling to the United States he became more comfortable presenting the other (L2) culture. In the same vein, one of the experienced teachers at Univ A commented on her ability to present the different cultures she has been exposed to, however she stated that she would not talk about the Syrian culture, for example, as she does not have any knowledge about it. It could be argued then that teaching English as a second language entails knowing about other cultures. This understanding of the other is what allows for negotiation of identity. However, as long as a teacher fully resists and avoids the other culture, the opportunity for negotiation will be lost.

Institution policy and students’ cultural norms lead to a negotiation of teaching methodologies and activities. Traditionally, choice of activities and the way they are structured have been dependent on curriculum methodology, attention to learning styles—visual, auditory, or kinesthetic—as well as group dynamics and individual preferences. However, in a globalized world and multi-cultural classrooms—even if students share the same national identity—other cultural issues must be noticed. Heba (novice teacher from Univ A) stated that due to the different educational background of her students, she had to think carefully about the activities. Not all students were able to work with others in groups or in pairs. Individual interests and personalities may also contribute to the lack of harmony between peers, but other cultural differences, such as coming from different educational backgrounds, also affect students’ learning and the teaching process. Being aware of this allows a teacher to negotiate classroom
practices that reflect his or her professional identity while also being successful with the students being taught.

Wenger (1998) suggests that in order to become an experienced teacher, a process of negotiation of experiences and, therefore, a negotiation of identity has to take place. Experience is therefore an important variable in teacher professional identity but may be difficult to identify as the findings of this study have shown that the process of development is ongoing through all the stages of teachers’ development.

5.4. Differences between novice and experienced teachers in negotiating the sociocultural aspects of their professional identities in classroom practices

The third research question examines the relationship between experience and the negotiation of the sociocultural aspects of the teachers’ professional identities in teaching practices. The observation scheme was used to attempt to answer the last research question. Reflection of identity in classroom practice is relatively unstudied in the literature on teacher identity. Wenger (1998) makes a clear link between the professional identity and practice and notes the compelling need to connect between teacher identity and actual classroom practices.

The classroom observations generally investigated the influence of students, institution, and teacher on the teaching practices. According to the analysis of classroom observation data, the four groups of teachers could be generally categorized on a continuum from more open to negotiating to less open to negotiating as follows: experienced/Univ A, experienced/Univ B, novice/Univ A, novice/Univ B. The data therefore show that the more experienced teachers are, the more they apply a process of negotiation with their students. This ability to negotiate might be explained in terms of getting better knowledge of their students and the constant process of trial and error through years of practice. However, the case might be different for the two groups
of novice teachers whose experience in terms of years is nearly the same. Although the novice
teachers from Univ B share similar educational background with their students, still – based on
the limited number of observations – they were not very successful at negotiating their
professional identities with their students. On the contrary, some of the novice teachers at Univ
A who worked at least in two different contexts developed a higher level of negotiating their
identities. The variable that might be influencing that difference is their exposure to different
contexts which seems to be one of the factors that could accelerate the teachers’ cognition and
therefore the development of their negotiation abilities.

The influence of the institution seem to vary based on the study results, but both the
experienced teachers at Univ A and the novices at Univ B appear to be similarly influenced by
the institution in choosing their material as opposed to the other two groups. The reason could be
that the novice teachers have not developed their professional identities, while the experienced –
especially those who have been working at the same institution for a long time – have developed
institutional identities that do not contest the existing policy as suggested by Lasky (2005). When
teachers’ professional identities are formed and are more secured they are less prone to
institutional influence (Lasky, 2005).

Repeatedly, the novice teachers at Univ A select their own material regardless of the
institutional policy and in some cases regardless of their students’ cultural norms as well. Their
choice is aligned with their reported data that their choices are based on their personalities and
beliefs rather than on their culture. They also sometimes select material to introduce new topics
as long as the topics fit with the general course aims. Abedina (2012) argued that novice teachers
are more open to bringing new topics into their classes. Their negotiations of their professional
identities seem to be different when it comes to their relation to the institution. The institutional
policy and their teacher education program could contribute to their approach of selecting their own material.

In actual practice, teachers’ experience could be an influential factor that results in better negotiation of their professional identities, but it is not the only reason. Teacher education programs, exposure to different contexts, and institutional policy are other elements that lead to a successful negotiation process. Lewis (2001) likewise concluded that the “local culture” of the classroom and “cultural norms” are two influences on the negotiation of the teaching practices.

5.5. Pedagogical Implications

Johnson (2006) highlighted “epistemological gaps between how L2 teacher cognition is conceptualized, how L2 teachers are prepared to do their work, and how L2 teachers and their practices are constructed in the public settings where they work” (p. 250) which he recommended as issued to be addressed in L2 teacher education. It is therefore recommended that teachers be prepared during their early years of training to deal with different contexts especially in a globalized world. Awareness of how to deal with the sociocultural factors such as the institution, the context and the culture should be part of the curriculum. Due to the dynamic nature of identity and the influence of surrounding environment, the ongoing process of teacher development should address current sociocultural issues that seem to be evolving and changing over place and time. For instance, immigration due to sociopolitical reasons is one of the recent issues that affects the development and negotiation of teachers’ and students’ identities.

Reflective development is one of the main components of TESOL and other teacher education programs, however it can be extended to develop teachers’ identities. Development of identity negotiation could be accelerated through reflective practices and problem-solving activities. Awareness of sociocultural problems both from their local and global contexts should
be introduced to teachers. Addressing such problems and trying to deal with them would better qualify teachers to negotiate their identities in different situations.

As for practices, it has been suggested that a socio-approach to teaching which takes students’ cultural norms into account should be emphasized. It would be useful for more effective learning outcomes if teachers could consider their students’ culture in all aspects of teaching while also ensuring that they provide exposure to the L2 culture in order to facilitate negotiation in the classroom instead of imposing one culture or another. Through guided exploration of current local and global issues, both teacher education and professional development programs could enhance teachers’ abilities for negotiation of identity in the classrooms not only to deal with conflicts that may arise in classrooms but also to ensure effective learning outcomes in diverse settings.

5.6. Limitations of the Study

A number of limitations could be identified in the present study. Although the study examined both novice and experienced teachers’ negotiated identities as affected by sociocultural aspects - institution/instructional context and students’ cultural norms, in two different contexts - it did not cover other aspects such as socioeconomic aspects, historical background, political stances, or any other similar factors.

The data was collected over approximately one month and, therefore, presents no longitudinal information. The class observations are also limited as each teacher was observed for only one hour. Increasing observation time may provide more representative data on teaching practices. Enlarging the number of participant teachers would be an asset to the study. Experienced teachers from the two contexts are not equivalent in terms of years of experience with Univ A’s experienced teachers reporting 30-40 years of experience while Univ B’s
experienced teachers reported 5-10 years of experience, making years of experience and age intervening variables.

Students are an influence that should be examined in more depth. I conducted two focus groups with a limited number of students in both contexts to examine their cultural norms and to compare that to teachers’ reported data on the same students’ cultural norms. These focus groups showed that these teachers knew their students well but further investigation of students may provide more useful data especially as this study highlighted the role students played in influencing teachers’ practices.

The results of the study cannot be generalized to Egyptian teachers as it is a preliminary qualitative study. The limited number of subjects makes it difficult to generalize an understanding of differences between novice and experienced teachers. The number of contexts in which teachers worked is also a limitation as many of the teachers have worked in other contexts, primarily Egyptian, and this may have had an additional effect.

The observation scheme used to collect data is not comprehensive as it did not examine aspects such as the group dynamics, the choice of activities, rapport and classroom management. The interview data revealed other aspects that should have been observed such as extracurricular activities and teaching different skills, but due to the limited time of the study further modification was not introduced.

5.7. Suggestions for Future Research

The present study addressed one of the teachers’ sub-identities, i.e. the negotiated identity which appeared to be one of the latest stages of the professional identity, which is why a further examination of the Egyptian EFL teachers’ professional identities would provide deeper insight into the earlier stages of professional identity formation.
Longitudinal, ethnographic and case studies match the nature of the qualitative research and would provide more insight into the dynamicity of identity. Deeper investigation would reveal more variables influencing the negotiation of the teachers’ professional identities if supported by an increased number of classroom observations. A comparison of how one teacher’s practices could differ from one context to another is another lacuna. The effect of the teacher education program would be another influence to consider when conducting research on teacher identity.

Examining the institutional effect on pre-service, novice and experienced teachers and how it contributes to the formation of the sociocultural identities is another critical area that needs further investigation. In an Egyptian context, it would be interesting to study how teachers negotiate their institutional identities due to the wide variety of instructional contexts and institutional policies that exist at the present time. Institutions need to be examined in a wider scope to investigate the interplay between pedagogy and language policies. Teachers working at private and public institutions in addition to the wide diversity of the private educational institutions could be another area to investigate. The multiplicity of the Egyptian contexts based on the vast geographical divisions is another gap that needs to be addressed in research on teachers’ professional identities and how such diversity of national identity could influence teachers’ practices.

In a globalized world where both teachers and students move from one context to another and from one country to another due to sociopolitical motives, examining how teachers’ professional identities are developed and negotiated under sociopolitical influences would be an asset to the fields of education that could bring new theories and methodologies for both teaching and learning a second language.
References


Lewis, C. (2001). *Literary practices as social acts: Power, status, and cultural norms in the*


Appendices


1- Ideology: history and world view, which includes:
   a. Beliefs, values and religion

2- Socialization:
   a. Education, enculturation, acculturation
   b. Primary and secondary socialization
   c. Theories of the person and of learning

3- Forms of discourse:
   a. Functions of language:
      - Information and relationship
      - Negotiation and ratification
      - Group harmony and individual welfare
   b. Non-verbal communication:
      - Kinesics: the movement of our bodies
      - Proxemics: the use of space
      - Concept of time

4- Face systems: social organization, which includes:
   a. Kinship
   b. The concept of the self
   c. Ingroup-outgroup relationships
Appendix B: Teachers’ Interview Questions (semi-structured)

Hi, my name is ……………. As I have explained earlier, I am doing research on teacher identity. I will be asking you questions in three sections. The first section has general information about you as a teacher, and the second section will focus more on your students. The third section will be conducted after the observation. If you do not understand any of the questions, please ask me to explain it. The interview should take around 20 minutes.

1. How long have you been working as an English teacher?
2. How did you become an English teacher?
3. What made you take this decision?
4. Where did you receive your first training to become a teacher?
5. What are the qualifications, training programs, or certificates you had or took to become a teacher?
6. Have you had any previous experience in other fields whether professional or voluntary work?
7. What are the institutions you have worked for? Name them and provide a brief description of the context of each one of them.
8. In your opinion, have any of those institutions or your previous job - if you had any - affected you as a teacher? If yes, could you specify certain aspects?
9. What is your nationality? And have you ever found that your nationality/cultural background affecting you as a teacher of a second language? If yes, would you give examples? If you were to teach in another country, what would distinguish you as an Egyptian teacher inside the classroom?
10. In the different institutions that you have worked at, do you think that students influenced you as a teacher? If yes, in what ways? Do you think they have an influence on any of the teaching aspects (topics, materials, rapport, attitude, teaching style, feedback, etc.)?

11. In your opinion, how should learning take place?

Section II

I will read some incomplete sentences. Imagine that you are a student and complete them.

1- What are the historical/social/ideological characteristics of the group?

a. Some of our common hobbies are ………………….

b. We usually spend our free time especially during breaks doing …………………

c. We usually read in …………………. (a language)

d. We usually hang out with …………………

e. The people that affected our life the most are……………………

f. Some of our role models are …………………

g. The potential career/job we usually follow is …………………

h. Our dreams are …………………

i. The common values we have …………………

2- How does one learn membership and identity?

a. The types of formal education we have …………………

b. The types of informal education we have …………………

c. Our idea of a good teacher is …………………

d. Our idea of good teaching?
e. Our preferable socialization medium is .................. (e.g. face to face, phone calls, social media, writing, etc.)

3-What are the preferred forms of communication?

a. In our culture/society, foreign language(s) are viewed ...................

b. Learning English as a second language is .....................

4- What are the preferred or assumed human relationships?

a. A family is .....................

b. Gender differences .....................

c. Some of the stereotypes people have about gender in our society are .....................

d. Taboo topics include .....................
## Appendix C: Classroom Observation Scheme

Teacher’s name: ………….  
School/Institution name: ………………………  
Program name: ……………………………………  
English level: ……  No. of boys: …………  No. of girls: …………  
Time: …………………………………….  Date: …………………………………….  
Main aim of the lesson: 
Subsidiary aim of the lesson: 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Features</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Students’ Effect</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Ideology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- Teacher shows awareness of students’ country’s historical back ground.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Teacher shows awareness of students’ social (lifestyle) characteristics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3- Teacher responds to students’ beliefs/opinions during the lesson and is open to adapt when/if needed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Socialization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- Teacher responds to students’ schema of a good teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Teacher responds to students’ schema of good teaching in terms of teaching practices and teaching styles.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Forms of Discourse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- Teacher resorts to L1 as an indication of building rapport with students/showing solidarity vs. for communication purposes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Teacher seems aware of jokes/punch lines that students bring inside the classroom from their own culture.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### IV. Face Systems

1. Teacher uses materials that are relevant to the students’ cultural norms.
2. The materials are specifically chosen to introduce a different culture to the students.
3. The students show interest in the introduced material.
4. Teacher avoids taboos in the students’ culture.
5. Teacher shows respect in cases of opposing views/stances from students.

### B. Institution Effect

1. The choice of the material reflects the influence of the institution/context on the teacher.

### C. Teacher Effect

1. The teacher’s cultural background/experience is reflected in the material used.
2. The teaching style of the teacher reflects his/her views about teaching.
Appendix D: IRB Approval

CASE #2015-2016-085

To: Nesma Adel Fattah
Cc: Sara Tarek
From: Atta Gebril, Chair of the IRB
Date: Jan 26, 2016
Re: Approval of study

This is to inform you that I reviewed your revised research proposal entitled “Negotiated Identity of English Foreign Language (EFL) Teachers: A sociocultural perspective” and determined that it required consultation with the IRB under the “expedited” heading. As you are aware, the members of the IRB suggested certain revisions to the original proposal, but your new version addresses these concerns successfully. The revised proposal used appropriate procedures to minimize risks to human subjects and that adequate provision was made for confidentiality and data anonymity of participants in any published record. I believe you will also make adequate provision for obtaining informed consent of the participants.

This approval letter was issued under the assumption that you have not started data collection for your research project. Any data collected before receiving this letter could not be used since this is a violation of the IRB policy.

Please note that IRB approval does not automatically ensure approval by CAPMAS, an Egyptian government agency responsible for approving some types of off-campus research. CAPMAS issues are handled at AUC by the office of the University Counsellor, Dr. Amr Salama. The IRB is not in a position to offer any opinion on CAPMAS issues, and takes no responsibility for obtaining CAPMAS approval.

This approval is valid for only one year. In case you have not finished data collection within a year, you need to apply for an extension.

Thank you and good luck.

Dr. Atta Gebril
IRB chair, The American University in Cairo
2046 HUSS Building
T: 02-26151919
Email: agebril@aucegypt.edu
Appendix E: Teachers’ Consent Form

Documentation of Informed Consent for Participation in Research Study

Project Title:
Negotiated Identity of English Foreign Language (EFL) Teachers: A sociocultural perspective

Principal Investigator:
Nesma Hossam Eldin Hassan Abdelfattah
nesmahossam@aucegypt.edu

*You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of the research is to examine some of the factors that might affect an EFL teacher in a certain context especially the role played by students, and the findings may be presented and published in local and international conferences and journals. The expected duration of your participation is five hours.

The procedures of the research will be as follows.

1. You will sign this written consent. Note that the interview and the classroom observation will be recorded.

2. As a teacher, you will be observed once. The observation date will be decided upon agreement between you and the observer i.e. the researcher. You will be given ample time to be prepared and to present a lesson plan to the observer a week before the observation is due. The lesson plan should include a copy of any materials (worksheets, course book lesson, Power Point, etc.) used.

3. Pre and post interviews will be conducted before and after the observation on the same day if possible or within the same week. The interview will be conducted face to face with each teacher separately.

*There will not be certain risks or discomforts associated with this research.

*There will be benefits to you from this research.

Pre and post classroom observations interviews will give you an opportunity to reflect on yourself as a teacher now and in the past. This reflection could be viewed as a milestone in your professional development upon which you can set future goals for improvement and development.

*The information you provide for purposes of this research is confidential for both interviews and classroom observations. The collected data will be analyzed and results will be drawn from it. Quotes might be used in reporting and analyzing the data; however, confidentially.

* Questions about the research or your rights should be directed to Nesma Hossam Eldin, the researcher, at 0100 9102 319.

*Participation in this study is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or the loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Signature
____________________________________

Printed Name
____________________________________

Date
____________________________________