Negotiating Tensions: A Study of Pre-Service English as Foreign Language Teachers' Sense of Identity within their Community of Practice

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Abstract. The dynamic nature of language teacher identity requires an understanding of the processes involved in the formation of teachers' professional identity. In the context of English as a foreign language (EFL), identity formation involves navigating dominant discourses around a hierarchical dichotomy of native and non-native speakers placing non-native teachers in a lesser category. This research presents a qualitative analysis of interview data of 4 pre-service teachers in an EFL teacher education program. Using the community of practice identity negotiation framework, the findings of this study show how pre-service teachers are negotiating practices deemed as valuable by their education program. The findings in this study suggest that EFL pre-service teachers' processes of identity negotiation were mainly characterized by adoption and some degree of tension around ideologies privileging the NS and unmarked speech. This study contributes to the extant conversation about the problematization of the native non-native speaker dichotomy and discusses the unique affordances of Epistemic Network Analysis to examine processes of identity formation and negotiation beyond the context of language teachers.

Keywords: Teacher identity, Pre-service teachers, English as a foreign language, Communities of Practice, Epistemic Network Analysis.

1 Introduction

In the last 2 decades, the study of teacher identity has gained prominence in English language teaching [12, 16]. Building on research on teacher identity in mainstream teacher education [3], language teacher identity has been theorized to be negotiated through discourse and characterized as "conflicting, context-bound, and socially constructed" [25, p. 35]. The dynamic nature of language teacher identity indicates a need to understand the processes involved in the formation of teachers' professional identity [7, 18, 29].

In the field of English as a foreign language (EFL), an area that has gained interest in the study of teacher identity is the hierarchy created by native speaker and

non-native speaker (NS-NNS) dichotomy, which places the non-native speaker (NNS) at a subordinate position [1, 5, 8, 18]. The native speaker (NS) is valued more, and the NNS is placed in a position of always learning English, and this could affect their identity as teachers, especially pre-service teachers who are trying to construct identities reflecting their legitimacy as speakers and practitioners [11, 26]. Despite the theoretical problematization of this dichotomy, it is still pervasive in the English language teaching profession [1, 18], particularly in EFL contexts, where little research has been conducted [26]. Considering the need to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the construction of language teacher identity, the present study explores the negotiation of identity of four EFL pre- service teachers in an education program in Costa Rica. Building on an earlier study [26], this research uses qualitative interview data in order to analyze and examine how pre-service teachers adopt and negotiate the NS-NNS dichotomy dominant discourses present in their program. Given that pre-service education is a critical period for teacher identity formation, the purpose of the present study is to illuminate the ways in which dominant discourses are initially contested and the ways in which they contribute to tensions in identity development.

2 Theory

2.1 Communities of Practice

This study uses Communities of Practice (CoP) [13] as a theoretical lens to explain the identity process of pre-service teachers in training to become EFL teachers. A CoP framework conceptualizes learning as a process of identification that is a "constant becoming" as the individuals engage in a practice [28, p. 153]. In a CoP, membership is obtained by legitimate participation, which takes two forms: central participation of old-timers, and peripheral participation of newcomers. In an EFL teacher education program, pre-service teachers are newcomers engaging in peripheral participation seeking to find modes of engagement to learn in practice and become legitimate members of the EFL teacher community. Professors and other more experienced professionals are old-timers who model and define legitimate practices for the community. Within the CoP framework, Wenger's [28] duality of identification and negotiation in identity formation account for the agency that newcomers enact when seeking membership in the community. On one hand, identification acts as a process to determine the meanings and "styles and discourses produced by the community" (28, p. 196) relevant for newcomers. On the other hand, negotiation is a form of contestability of existing identifications in the community, involving "the ability, facility, and legitimacy to contribute to, take responsibility for, and shape the meanings that matter within a social configuration" (28, p. 197). In a teacher education program, pre-service teachers identify with established styles and dominant discourses in coursework and with old-timers. Newcomers decide to what extent those practices are relevant to them. The duality of identification and negotiation captures the dynamic nature of identity formation as an agentive process

involving tensions and conflict as pre-service teachers reconcile personal expectations and those of the community.

2.2 The Native Speaker and Non-Native Speaker (NS-NNS) Dichotomy

For EFL teachers, the NS-NNS dichotomy is still deeply rooted in the English teaching profession [1, 16]. This NS-NNS binary creates static, mutually exclusive, and hierarchical categories that place the NS in a superior level [18]. Ideologies of native speakerism [8, 9] constitute the NS as an idealized figure for culture and language and characterize the NNS as inferior, flawed, and a non-White other [1, 8]. Thus, the NS becomes the benchmark against which the NNS's' competence is measured [17, 30].

The present study aligns with views that pursue conceptualizations beyond the NS-NNS dichotomy and account for the dynamic nature of identity negotiation [1, 29]. Although previous studies have reported tensions in identity negotiation [1, 11, 12, 18], there is still a need to characterize such tensions and analyze how they go unnoticed by pre-service teachers and are unaddressed in teacher education programs. The research question addressed in this study is: *How do EFL pre-service teachers make sense of dominant NS-NNS discourses and perceived legitimate practices when negotiating their emerging teacher identities?*

3 Methods

3.1 Context and Participants

This research draws from qualitative interview data from 4 pre-service teachers in an English teaching program for secondary education at one of the largest suburban public universities in Costa Rica. This four-year bachelor's program prepares students to teach English as a foreign language (EFL) in secondary schools. Students complete coursework based on English language and pedagogy content along with a one-semester teaching practicum. Also, one of the last oral communication courses includes the semester-long Global Classroom project, a telecollaboration activity with American students from a midwestern university in the U.S., during which students interact weekly through class oral presentations and discussions. The 4 Spanish-English bilingual participants in this study were in the fourth year of the program and had all met the teaching practicum requirement as well as participated in the telecollaboration project. Three of the participants learned EFL in Costa Rica through elementary, secondary, and college education, and one participant, Vanessa, lived in

the U.S. as a child and received English as a second language (ESOL) services at her school. Pseudonyms are used for all participants within this study.

3.2 Quantitative Ethnography

Quantitative ethnography (QE) is an approach that intertwines qualitative and quantitative perspectives [21]. It draws from ethnography in that it seeks practical, functional, and grounded interpretations of data to understand why people in particular cultures or communities do the activities they do and are inclined to certain meaning making. The quantitative perspective allows for making sense of large data sets through data visualizations in order to uncover relationships between codes and to analyze small-d discourse (what participants say) and big-D discourse (the meanings of the community) [21]. In this research, QE facilitated sensible interpretations of the interview data to make sense of small-d discourse of the pre-service teachers in relation to big-D discourse of their community of practice (their teacher education program). The grounded analysis afforded by QE in this study uncovered unexpected patterns that went beyond the frequency with which codes occurred. In other words, such analysis at the discourse level revealed pre-service teachers' making sense of practices from their community in their identity formation.

3.3 Data collection and analysis

This paper presents data from a broader study examining the perspectives and learning experiences of pre-service teachers in this English Teaching program and builds on a previous study [26]. After obtaining informed consent from participants, semi-structured, open ended interviews were conducted via video calls. Interviews, which ranged from 45-75 minutes, were recorded and transcribed. Questions referenced pre-service teachers' experiences and feelings during the teaching practicum and while interacting with NS's, their reflections on accent, and their inquiries regarding what matters to them as future teachers. Additionally, researchers collected syllabi, rubrics of oral performance, and official documentation of the description of the curriculum, objectives, and theoretical principles of the program.

The data analysis consisted of two processes: (1) analysis of documentation, and (2) analysis of the interview data. The first process included thematic analysis of the documentation provided by the program [4] and qualitative deductive coding of the interviews [19] guided by the theory of identity development within CoP's [28]. For the documentation analysis, we looked for evidence of legitimate practices associated with idealized notions of English. In the second process, we identified evidence of participants' identity negotiation in the 143 utterances analyzed. Through discourse analysis, we identified how "situated meanings and Discourses were used to enact and depict identities" [6, p. 150] within a CoP. In 3 iterative rounds of coding, we combined deductive and inductive coding to refine and validate codes. In the first round, we created deductive codes derived from the CoP framework, then we followed an inductive process to extend and add codes. In the third round, for

reduction of codes and reaching theoretical saturation, categories generated in the previous round were collapsed into the following codes: adoption, rejection, tension, the NS as a standard, reflections on accents, and NNS less legitimate practices (Table 1).

Table 1. Table 1: List of generated codes for analysis of teacher interview data

Code	Definition
Adoption	The pre-service teacher (PST) takes on an established practice from the community of practice (CoP). This is reflected in statements in which the participants say that they would take/have taken the practices of the CoP to their teaching and/or their approach to language learning. Interviewer's questions/comments should not include this code. Example: "I would try to implement that [Global Classroom] so that students are going to have a real, um, interaction with the language, with the native speaker."
Rejection	The PST rejects an established practice from the community of practice. This is reflected in statements of disagreement or full dissatisfaction with the CoP. Interviewer's questions/comments should not include this code. Example: "I think that having a strong accent [Spanish accent] means that there has been a really good effort on learning a different language"
Tension	The PST demonstrates a tension when an established practice from the community of practice poses a conflict for the negotiation of their identity. This might be reflected in utterances that do not show full satisfaction with the practices of the community, have mixed negative and positive comments about them, and/or express strong/negative emotions. Interviewer's questions/comments should not include this code. Example: "I don't even know how I'm going to do when I actually have to teach"
The native speaker as the standard	The PST expresses their feelings or perspective about an established practice related to the idealized native speaker, who represent the target language norms against which the non-native speaker measures proficiency. Example: "I have tried to talk like them, but it is almost impossible to achieve their speech or their level."
Reflections on accents	The PST expresses his feelings or perspective about an established practice related to ideas about accent that suggest judgements of legitimacy of accents in relation to a standard language variety. Example: "the important thing is communication. Not the pronunciation, but still I'm very perfectionist about it, so it really frustrates me sometimes."
NNS less legitimate practices	The PST expresses his or her feelings or perspective about an established practice related to his or her own linguistic practices that are perceived as less legitimate than those of they imagine the native speaker would engage in. Example: "I understand that my brain has been always in Spanish mode, so I can't really change all my mindset to the other language."

Using the refined coding scheme, two of the researchers coded the data separately and met to discuss the inconsistencies found in 19 data points. This process served to further refine code definitions and provide systematic procedures for future coding [14, 15, 23].

3.4 Epistemic Network Analysis

Epistemic Network Analysis (ENA) was used [2, 19-20] to create weighted discourse networks for each participant. In the networks, the nodes represent the codes identified in the data, and the thickness of the links represent how often the participants made connections across the qualitative codes. To identify co-occurrences, we used a moving stanza window [22] that included two lines of talk at a time. This segmentation was chosen given the question-answer format of the interviews and the lengthy utterances of the participants. Connections were operationalized as co-occurrences of codes within a participant's single turn of talk and between the participant's turn of talk and the interviewer's questions. We used the visualizations of the networks rather than relying solely on a coding-and-counting qualitative design [28], which quantifies occurrences of codes within each participants' utterances. This provided more insight into the pre-service teachers' sense of identity by showing an analysis of the temporal proximity and relationships between the processes of adoption, rejection, and tensions, and their connections to ideologies of native speakerism and accents.

4 Results

4.1 Community of Practice: The Teacher Education Program

Taken altogether, the course syllabi, teaching methods, assessment rubrics, and a description of the program characterized *language correctness and non- accented English speaking* as components of legitimate participation and membership in this education program. For example, the Global Classroom telecollaboration project provided pre-service teachers the opportunity to interact with NS's during the last oral communication course. For courses not including telecollaboration, videos and audios, mostly with NS's of English (with American accents), were used to evaluate listening comprehension and as input to complement the contents of the class.

This program placed a strong emphasis on correctness and high levels of teaching proficiency that could be applied to different contexts, and there were strict English-only policies that did not allow students to use Spanish and/or "translation and Spanish-like structures." Moreover, the evaluation of assignments and projects often included a linguistic aspect that assessed the correctness of the language (phonology, grammar, and syntax), which in some instances accounted for 50% of the grade. Oral performance was expected to be fluent and without "choppy sentences,

long pauses, and hesitations," and students were expected to monitor the "consonant and vowel sounds" and make correct use of prosodic aspects of English.

4.2 Pre-Service Teachers' Negotiation of Identity.

In the present study, the data suggest that when negotiating their emerging identities, pre-service teachers adopted practices that their CoP deemed as valuable for competence in English teaching as a foreign language more often than they rejected such practices. However, we identified a zone of tension across their dynamic process of negotiation of identity given that adoption and rejection of practices frequently occurred with some degree of tension for the pre-service teachers in this study. Such tension was manifested in frustration, self-doubt, and developing ideologies, particularly around notions of the idealization of the NS and personal reflections on accents. In this section, we present qualitative and ENA findings organized by these two main notions: (1) the native speaker as a standard; and (2) reflections on accents.

The native speaker as the standard: Pablo and Vanessa.

Qualitative Findings. Overall, the 4 participants positioned themselves in an inferior category of the hierarchy of native and nonnative speakers (NS-NNS dichotomy). All of the participants self-identified themselves as NNS's and referred to speakers from the U.S. and the United Kingdom as NS's, which often led them to compare their personal linguistic flaws to the NS's and reflect on advantages of the NS. For example, they expressed a preference for interaction with NS's, indicating it was one of the "best" forms of interaction for meaningful language learning and placed the NS of English as a standard against which they positioned themselves. This pattern was reified in the data when participants recalled a class project (the Global Classroom), which involved frequent interaction via video conferences with a college level class from a university in the U.S. and described it as a significant learning experience. Participants also agreed that they were disappointed that this type of interaction with NS's had been limited during the program.

Particularly, Pablo and Vanessa addressed the dichotomy between NS and NNS more strongly than the other 2 participants. They expressed a desire to incorporate interactions with NS's similar to those of the Global Classroom project in their future teaching practices as such interactions with NS's were a unique channel for students to learn about language and culture. As Vanessa stated, "I would try to implement that [Global Classroom] so that students are going to have a *real*, um, interaction with the language, with the native speaker." In Pablo's case, he went a step further by inviting a NS to his class during his practicum when covering the topic of holidays. He was excited to share his experience, as he explained, "I planned a conversation with a native. It will be a very good opportunity for them to speak [...] to know about U.S. celebrations [...] And I arranged everything so, and it was great, and they [the students] enjoyed that experience." When asked how he would modify this activity, he said that he would include NS's from other places besides the U.S. The commitment and effort in

implementing this activity showed that Pablo valued contact with NS's and wanted to provide such an experience for his students.

However, tensions emerged when pre-service teachers positioned the NS as a benchmark for language competence. In the following excerpt, Pablo explained his feelings during the same activity with a NS in his class:

> "When she was speaking with my students, I was like, oh my God, she [the guest native speaker] sounds native […] And I was, Oh my God, I'm not native. But the good thing I think is that […] I tried to be careful when speaking because you know, when teaching you are kind of exposed to be judged by your students."

Pablo's moment of tension came when he realized that there was a difference between the NS and himself. He acknowledged that his speech did not reach the superior linguistic category of a native speaker. For him, the NS was a benchmark that he used to measure his own proficiency by pointing out that he was *not native*. This was a place for tension for Pablo because on other occasions he acknowledged frustration and self-consciousness when interacting with NS's or comparing himself to them and their accuracy. For example, he stated, "I have *compared myself* listening to videos and audios from the internet, videos from YouTube and *I have tried to talk like them*, but it is almost impossible to achieve their speech or their level." This positioning put Pablo in a vulnerable position of judgement and linguistic insecurity as he felt that his students perceived his speech differently than that of a NS, leading him to become more self-conscious about his English.

Similarly, Vanessa shared the same tension. With her experience as an ESL learner, she expressed conflict regarding target language norms in the program:

> "here [in Costa Rica] *you go from Spanish to learning a structured type of English*. And to me, I don't see English that way. I even make a lot of grammatical mistakes that my classmates here in Costa Rica don't make […] they know a more structured language than I do, and therefore they will teach a more structured language. I don't believe that so much. Like I don't even know how I'm going to do when I actually have to teach, but I don't see myself setting that down and then giving the lesson, just some parts of the sentence or the different tenses of the verb. Like I *just wish to teach the language as it is*."

Vanessa grappled with the idea that there is a difference between how a NS acquires the language naturally and subconsciously, as opposed to how a NNS requires more effort by consciously thinking about the structure of the language. By saying "you go from Spanish to learning a structured English," she compared how learning Spanish as a native language was a smooth process and learning English in an EFL context was more "structured", thus placing the NNS in a less privileged position of learning. Vanessa's tension challenged the traditional approach when she imagined herself giving less importance to correctness and letting students use "the language as it is".

However, this imagined scenario contrasted with expectations of the role of an EFL teacher including deliberate work on linguistic forms, which created a tension for her.

ENA Findings. Using ENA, the qualitative interpretations of Vanessa and Pablo's talk are visualized (Figure 1). Their strongest connection was between the **NS as a standard** and **adoption**, meaning they predominantly adopted ideologies reflected in the CoP's culture that positioned the NS in a superior level of proficiency. However, they also connected idealized ideas about the NS to **tension**, indicating concerns around their linguistic practices as language learners, although these connections were slightly less frequent. In terms of rejection of practices from their CoP, only Vanessa made a few connections to the **NS as a standard**, and this rejection was also associated with tension. In sum, Pablo and Vanessa's networks are similar in that they adopted their program's ideologies about idealized NS's; however, the perceived NS-NNS dichotomy was also a source of tension as they developed their EFL teacher identities.

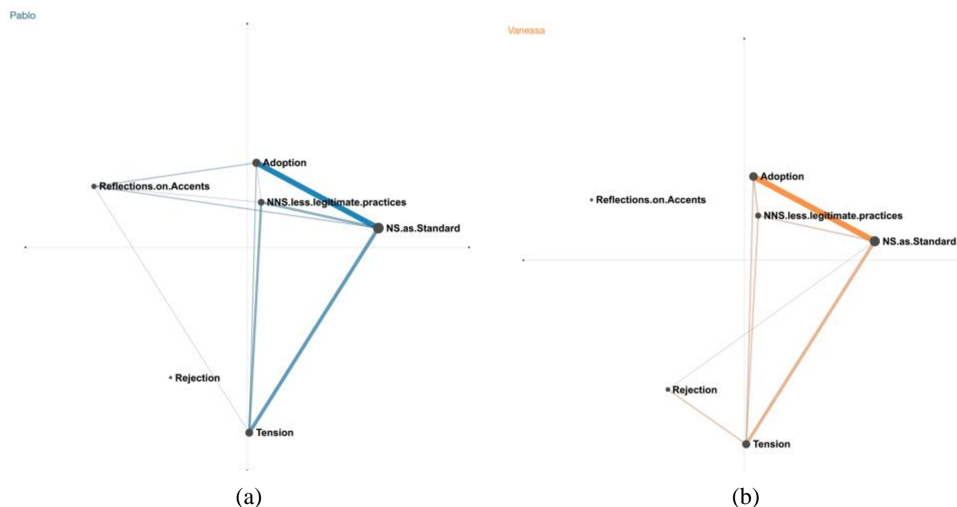


Fig. 1. Discourse networks for (a) Pablo and (b) Vanessa

The non-native's reflections on accents: Laura and Alfonso.

Qualitative Findings. The participants in this study adopted and rejected ideologies that associated non-nativeness with a distinctive less legitimate accent, but still expressed tensions with this perspective. Overall, most of the pre-service teachers in this research recognized that their speech had an accent and showed uncomfortable emotions towards not being able to reach the pronunciation level they desired as teachers of English. Specifically, the 2 participants that discussed reflections on their accent were Laura and Alfonso. Although their comments diverged in terms of adoption and rejection of ideas about the type of accent that was deemed valuable for a teacher, they converged in the ambivalence they showed when identifying dissonance between their own accent and the accent they or their CoP expected.

For example, Laura, expressed a desire to achieve a native-like accent and was frustrated with not being able to do so. When asked about how she felt about having an accent in English, she replied:

> "*Frustrated*, but I understand that *my brain has been always in Spanish mode*, so I can't really change all my mindset to the other language. I have to remember [remind] myself that [...] I make these kinds of mistakes, that *the important thing is communication*. Not the pronunciation, but still I'm very perfectionist about it, so it really *frustrates* me sometimes."

Laura's feelings of frustration stem from perceiving her Spanish accent as an obstacle when speaking English. She reconciled this by understanding that her "brain has always been in Spanish mode," and that the important aspect of learning English was the ability to communicate with others. However, there was evidence of identity tension as she admitted that she still became frustrated about perceiving traces of Spanish in the way she spoke, and thus was "very perfectionist" about her pronunciation. Her frustration about mistakes in pronunciation, especially the ones related to her Spanish accent when speaking English, also occurred during teaching: "I feel like I'm teaching them something that *I do wrong*, so *I get mad* with myself that I can't really change it and that I know that I'm doing something wrong." She characterized her pronunciation as "wrong" or as less legitimate, and she expressed being "mad" about possibly being a flawed model for her students by teaching them "something wrong". Although Laura generally adopted ideas that privileged native-like English pronunciation coming from her CoP, she experienced tensions in her identity development when she saw her accent as deficient. Laura's tensions led to negative feelings about her accent and a pressure to achieve perfection in phonology.

In contrast, in Alfonso's case, rejection, adoption, and tension collided. He stated that he disagreed with the idea that he needed to have an American Standard accent. This seemed to be influenced by his experience studying in the US for a semester, which exposed him to different accents, so he rejected practices favoring certain varieties of English or judging or comparing accents either from professors or from classmates. The proceeding quote shows how Alfonso was beginning to make a difference between the expected accent for teachers and for EFL students:

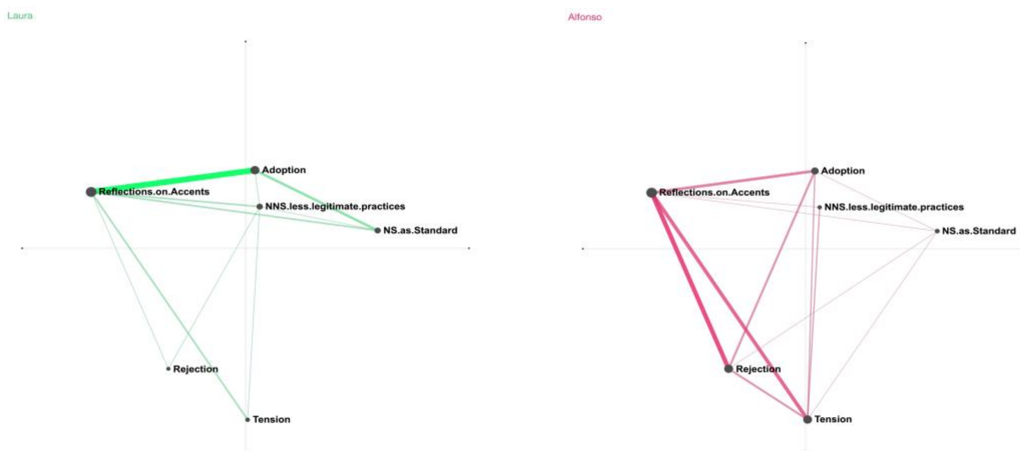
> "I know that in a context in which I have learned *English for teaching* [...] I might have the idea that it would be important having *a very good accent* or, at least, standardized [American English] accent. But getting out of the teaching context, I think that *having a strong accent [Spanish accent] means that there has been a really good effort on learning a different language and that is of course acceptable to me* [...] *there shouldn't be a judgment in this case*."

Alfonso disagreed with negative judgement on learners of English with Spanish accents. However, he thought it was desirable for a teacher to have an unmarked "very good... standardized [American English] accent." This distinction

indicates that Alfonso was beginning to grapple with notions of differentiated communicative expectations for English teachers and language learners outside the teaching profession. Although that conferred legitimacy to the demand for teachers to have an unmarked accent, his use of uncertain language such as "I might have the idea" denotes that he could be initiating a personal reflection on his ideologies of accent.

In a subsequent comment, he reiterated this perspective by stating that "learning English ...is a very valuable process that should be recognized as well and therefore respected. [...] their [English language learners] accent shouldn't be judged." He referred to the commitment and effort that learning a foreign language required, and that in itself should be respected by avoiding judgement on accents. However, this effort was not recognized for English teachers. He said, "we as teachers, we have this idea of using almost perfect English [...] And somehow [...] I think it is also necessary to focus on or to pay close attention on the way we speak." Alfonso oscillated between rejection and tension: he rejected judgement of accents for learners but placed a different expectation for teachers to have a "perfect" English accent, creating a source of tension for him as a teacher-in-training with a Spanish accent. In short, Alfonso and Laura's negotiation of identity speaks to the pressure that they felt as future teachers of English to achieve a "perfect" and "unmarked" accent.

ENA Findings. Through Epistemic Network Analysis (ENA, the qualitative interpretations of Laura and Alfonso's talk are visualized (Figure 2). Both participants made the strongest connection to **reflections on accents**, but they differed in that Laura made more connections to **adoption**, and Alfonso made more connections to **rejection**. This means that Laura predominately adopted ideologies that associated non-nativeness with less legitimate accents that were reflected in the CoP's culture. For example, she viewed herself as a "perfectionist" and felt frustrated about having a Spanish accent when speaking English. Alfonso rejected this type of ideology saying that accents deserve to be accepted because they are a sign of the effort it takes to learn a whole new language. He opposed judging accents and thought that people should respect the speech of NNS's of English. However, Laura and Alfonso connected **reflections on accents** to **tension**, indicating their concerns around the unmarked pronunciation that their CoP expected from them as future teachers of English. This was evident when Alfonso stated, "we as teachers, we have this idea of using almost perfect English" and that in a teaching context "it would be important having a very good accent or, at least, standardized [American English] accent." In summary, Laura and Alfonso's networks differed in that Laura adopted the ideologies of accent promoted in the CoP more frequently than Alfonso did; however, they converged in perceiving these ideologies as a source of tension in the negotiation of their teacher identities.



(a) (b)

Fig. 2. Discourse networks for (a) Laura and (b) Alfonso in which Ideologies of Accent is a central node.

4.3 ENA Findings: Visualization of the Four Participants.

Using ENA, the qualitative interpretations of the participant's talk are visualized in an average weighted network (Figure 3). Overall, a strong relationship is observed across participants between **adoption** and the **NS as a standard** and **reflections on accents**. This means that the pre-service teachers were more likely to accept rather than reject the ideologies from the CoP's culture, positioning the NS as a benchmark and unmarked speech as desirable for English teachers. A moderately thicker line is shown between **adoption** and the **NS as a standard**, suggesting that the figure of the NS is a powerful influence in the identity formation process of these participants. The next strongest connections are made to the node of **tension**, which was linked to all the codes and most strongly to the **NS as a standard**. This suggests that tension was present for all participants across the processes of adoption and rejection of practices of the CoP. This means that although participants were mainly adopting the practices of the CoP, they experienced tensions across all 3 categories of practices, and these tensions also occurred at the same time as participants discussed the adoption or rejection of such practices.

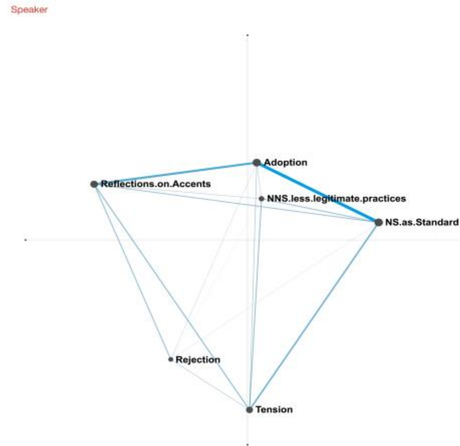


Fig. 3. Discourse network for all participants

5 Discussion

Using Wenger's [28] identity framework in CoP's, this study examined interview data from EFL pre-service teachers to describe their identity development and acceptance or rejection of practices and dominant discourses within their program. The findings in this study suggest that EFL pre-service teachers' processes of identity negotiation were mainly characterized by adoption and some degree of tension around ideologies privileging the NS and unmarked speech. The teachers framed the NS as an idealized figure in their identity formation process leading to feelings of frustration, linguistic insecurity, and inadequacy. More broadly, our results contribute to the understanding of identity as a dynamic social construct in teacher learning by offering a nuanced analysis of the tensions that emerge from the interaction between the individual and social aspects of the construction of identity in a community of practice. For the pre-service teachers in this study, membership to their CoP provided opportunities to engage in practices that they wanted to adopt, but frictions manifested when they realized that their CoP placed expectations that aligned more with a NS, which provoked insecurities and uncomfortable emotions. These expectations of "perfection" and unmarkedness reflected in the CoP, and more broadly in societal language ideologies, came into conflict with the pre-service teachers' own expectations of who they wanted to become as teachers since they perceived a sense of less legitimacy in their personal ways of speaking and learning English. However, the emergence of these tensions indicate that these pre-service teachers were starting to negotiate and contest these dominant discourses present in their CoP by reflecting on the extent to which the idealized NS mattered to them and how it conflicted with their self-perceptions of their existing identities. Possibilities for future research might

include sharing ENA visualizations and co-constructing an interpretation of them with participants to inquire on how they are making sense of these contestations.

In this study, we identified three affordances of the QE process and ENA for strengthening the analysis of language teacher identity. First, ENA allowed us to test the deductive categories of adoption and rejection from the CoP framework and the inductive coding category of tension. Through ENA visualizations, it was clear that tension was present and central in all participants' networks. Second, the weights of the links in the ENA visualization helped us iterate through codes and identify salient codes related to tensions in identity development. For example, initial codes such as the native speaker accuracy, the NS as a static/fixed figure, the native speaker as a dynamic figure, and the native speaker as a model for culture were created. Individually, these codes did not show strong connections in ENA visualizations; however, the common theme of the NS indicated that there was an additional code related to the NS, which was a combination of the initial codes. Thus, through further iterations of inductive coding, the code of the NS as a standard was created. This iterative process of interaction between the qualitative data and ENA network visualizations provided grounded evidence of salient codes in our data set and clarity for the story that the data were telling. For the study of language teacher identity negotiation, this process facilitated the relevance of tensions present and in which ways such tensions co-occurred with the adoption and rejection of practices of the CoP. Third, this iterative QE process using ENA and groupings of visualizations allowed us to build on the results of a previous study [26], leading to more detailed insights into teachers' language identity development. After establishing that all participants had connections to tensions, ENA visualizations showed 2 distinct groupings, each with 2 participants. One pair showed strong connections to reflections on accents, and the other pair showed links to the NS as a standard. We also found differences within the groups. For example, one group with 2 participants was concerned with different aspects of the hierarchical dichotomy privileging the NS as a benchmark, thus adopting this dichotomy. However, one of the participants focused more on accepting the NS as an ideal for correctness for his communicative competence, and the other focused more on positioning the NS as an ideal for the learning of English. These distinctions between and within groups revealed tensions at personal, group, and aggregated levels that participants experienced.

6 Conclusion

In this study, Qualitative Ethnography (QE) and Epistemic Network Analysis (ENA) offered unique affordances that might be useful to analyze processes of identity formation and negotiation beyond the context of language teachers. More broadly, QE and ENA can help to identify similar processes of adoption, rejection, and tension embedded in the formation of an identity in a community of practice in formal and informal settings. QE can elucidate how these processes are related to more specific and nuanced aspects that might be leading to emerging negotiations as learners become more central participants of the CoP. Attention to these negotiations is essential to address any problematic tensions that peripheral and more central

participants might be experiencing as they learn in practice. In this respect, the affordances of QE and ENA to build and refine theory and iterate and refine codes through exploratory data visualizations, as shown in this paper, assist researchers in identifying strong connections in their data and making grounded interpretations of the sorts of processes that characterize participants' identity formation.

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