



## Confessions of a Non-Native English-Speaking Professional

- In this article, the author describes the three stages of his own professional development—puzzlement, endeavor, and empowerment. In describing these stages, he seeks to empower other non-native English speaking (NNES) professionals in the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). The article describes the author's experiences, which range from learning English as a foreign language (EFL) in China to teaching English as a Second language (ESL) in the U.S., from writing and publishing in his native language, Chinese, to writing and publishing in English, and from being a graduate student in a university in the United States to serving as a doctoral dissertation committee chair. The article further reveals the hurdles overcome, the challenges encountered, and the academic success in teaching and research that the author has experienced as a NNES professional. The author concludes by sharing his belief that the success of a TESOL professional does not depend on whether one is a native speaker or a non-native speaker of English.

At a recent meeting of the oral comprehensive examination committee for a doctoral student in the Second Language Acquisition and Teaching Interdisciplinary Program at the University of Arizona, I briefly introduced myself to the graduate representative from a different discipline. I was not prepared for the question he threw back at me. "So, are you a graduate student?" I noticed that the other committee members who knew me were startled by the question. The doctoral candidate came to my rescue, saying, "No, Dr. Liu is my committee chair." I smiled and then focused on the procedure of the oral exam. On my way home that evening, the question re-entered my mind, and I could not help thinking of a number of pertinent issues regarding how I am perceived.

Recent publications in our profession reveal a growing interest in the concerns of NNES professionals and the roles they play as TESOL professionals (Braine, 1996, 1997; Kamhi-Stein, 2000; Liu, 1999; Samimy & Brutt-

Griffler, 1999). Generally, TESOL research has focused on the experiences of ESL learners and effective ways to help them learn English (e.g., Brown, 2000; Celce-Murcia, 1998; Hadley, 2001; Li, 1998; Liu & Richards, 2001; Manzo & Manzo, 1997; Mitchell & Vidal, 2001; Norris & Ortega, 2000; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Recently, however, research in the field has expanded to include the impact that NNES professionals have on their students (e.g., Braine, 1996; Kresovich, 1988; Liu, 1998; McNeill, 1994; Medgyes, 1994; Palfreyman 1993; Rampton, 1990). Although in the U.S. the majority of professionals in Applied Linguistics and TESOL speak English as their first language (L1), NNES professionals clearly play an important role as well. Additionally, their interests, concerns, and perspectives have compelled the profession to explore the complexities of the native versus non-native speaker constructs (some leading researchers are Davies, 1991; Kramsch, 1998; Liu, 1999; Medgyes, 1992—are leading researchers). This exploration has led many researchers to challenge the stereotype that NNES professionals who were born and educated in EFL contexts fall short of native proficiency in English (Bautista, 1997; Crystal, 1997; Kachru, 1992; Kachru & Nelson, 1996; Medgyes, 1994; Paikeday, 1985; Rampton, 1990).

Admittedly, numerous differences exist between native speakers and non-native speakers of English. Obvious ones include the process of learning English and the context in which English is learned. In this paper, I will reflect on my own experiences as a NNES professional, initially as an international graduate student and currently as a faculty member in a U.S. research university. My reflection comprises three parts, each focusing on a particular dilemma I faced as I progressed along the a continuum of my professional development. The first part is titled “Puzzlement” and addresses the question: How did I feel when my self-confidence was challenged by school expectations in the target culture? The second part is titled “Endeavor” and addresses the question: How did I attempt to develop adaptive cultural transformation competence<sup>1</sup> and to create multiple identities appropriate for different communities? The third part is titled “Empowerment” and addresses the question: What did I do as a NNES teacher to empower my students to learn?

My intention is to share my experiences both with other NNES professionals and with my native English-speaking (NES) colleagues who have not experienced a similar process. Ultimately, I aim to achieve a better understanding and appreciation of those in the TESOL field who consider themselves NNES professionals.

### **Puzzlement**

I came to the U.S. in 1991 to pursue my PhD in second and foreign language education at Ohio State University (OSU). With a decade of experience teaching EFL in a college in China, upon my arrival in the U.S. I was very confident of my proficiency in English. However, from the beginning there were many occasions when I felt very awkward and thought that I had failed to achieve communicative competence. For example, when I arrived at the airport in Columbus, Ohio, I was picked up by an acquaintance who

kindly took me to his house for dinner. As soon as we reached his house, his wife asked me if I wanted something to drink. Because of my Chinese sense of politeness, I said, "No, thanks." Actually I was very thirsty and expected her to ask me again. But to my surprise, she served herself a drink and started talking with me while preparing dinner. About half an hour later, the dinner was ready, and this time she asked me directly if I cared for a glass of root beer. Although I did not quite hear the modifier of the word "beer," I accepted her offer without hesitation, thinking that a glass of beer, whatever it was, would help me relax after a 17-hour stressful flight. No sooner had I taken the first sip than I realized that American beer had a very special taste. Such a different flavor soon became too unique to appreciate. To please my hosts, I kept drinking, pretending that I really enjoyed the beer while waiting for a chance to request something else to drink. What I did not expect was that the hostess, impressed by my speed of drinking, took my glass and said, "So you like the taste, and I bet you cannot find it in China, eh?" "Yes, well, you see..." I tried to search for words polite enough to show my dislike of the taste. But she interpreted my hesitation as indicating approval, although my Chinese culturally-conditioned "yes" response was not intended to mean "yes" in this context. Sure enough, my empty glass was soon filled again with the same beverage. This time, however, I did not finish it, afraid of having the glass refilled again. I used my Chinese strategy of implicit polite refusal by sipping it a little bit at a time. Half an hour later, the glass was still full.

A couple of months into the first quarter at OSU, I began to realize the difference between the English people spoke in daily communication and the English I had learned from reading 18th- and 19th-century British and American literature books. The idiomatic expressions I knew from books and from tapes sometimes caused confusion in communication; the canned proverbs, jokes, or tongue twisters I consciously carried into conversation were not received as humorous. What was worse, some British poems I proudly inserted in conversation to reveal my solid background in literature sometimes made me sound comical. Oftentimes, I was dissatisfied with my conversational English and began to question how successful I had been at learning and teaching English in China.

Pragmatic incompetence apart, my lack of cultural experience on many occasions aggravated my frustration in communication. I felt ashamed that my knowledge of English, which was mainly obtained from books, did not help me feel comfortable in daily communication. One day I had a conversation with a rental agent about the distinction between furnished and unfurnished rooms because I did not understand the variety of rental packages. Fifteen minutes into the conversation, the landlord, who was obviously impatient with my endless questions and the puzzled expression on my face, quit talking with me and showed me the apartment instead. When visiting McDonald's, I literally questioned the meaning of "to go" when I first ordered a combo because I did not know where else I could go other than to the fast-food restaurant in order to eat the hamburger. I was somewhat confused and offended one day when a taxi driver asked me to sit in the back

seat while the passenger seat in front was available. I felt extremely uncomfortable when in one of the courses I took during my first quarter, I noticed that the professor sat on the edge of the front desk while teaching. I was equally surprised to notice that some of my classmates brought soft drinks and potato chips into class. In Chinese culture, this behavior is not acceptable because it is perceived as disrespectful to teachers. Here in the U.S., nobody in class seemed to care. It took me almost a year before I realized that while shopping for clothes, I could actually try on every piece before I bought it, and I could return anything I decided I didn't like. Behavior patterns that were known by others in the U.S. represented new concepts for me. The problem, in my case, was not the language since I could tell the difference between the language I used and the language spoken by others. The problem was that the U.S. culture overshadowed my linguistic abilities. The beliefs, values, and norms that governed my social behavior no longer seemed to function well in this new environment. What I needed then, and what I later benefited from, was the desire and courage to embark on a journey of what I will call adaptive cultural transformation.

### **Endeavor**

Achieving adaptive cultural transformation in the U.S. was not easy. The biggest challenge that I encountered in this process was finding a balance between my Asian cultural background and the United States cultural environment I was in, and between my dual identities—in the Chinese and in the U.S. communities. I was highly motivated both instrumentally and integratively<sup>2</sup> to adapt to the U.S. culture, to gain new experiences in order to understand and appreciate the target culture. But my Chinese self, characterized by Asian beliefs, values, customs, and habits as illustrated by my earlier experiences in the U.S., often presented conflicts in the process of my adaptive cultural transformation. That transformation required determination and a willingness to recognize my own native culture and to understand and respect the target culture.

In North America, I am regarded as a visible minority due to my Asian appearance. In order to achieve my second language (L2) social identity, to be accepted as a member of the target culture, which was a very important factor for success in my professional career, I focused my attention on improving my communication skills and mannerisms and even my appearance. As a result of my cultural adaptation, I am now often mistaken for a Chinese-American. While being identified as a Chinese-American can be a symbol of successful acculturation, it is not necessarily interpreted that way in the Chinese community. I found it difficult to be Westernized when I was with my Chinese friends. For instance, in a Chinese-only group, speaking English would be regarded as odd or showing off; likewise, dressing like the United States population would be considered a sign of being alienated from the Chinese inner group.

Sometimes I preferred to reveal my Chinese ethnic identity when talking about something I was very proud of, such as Chinese ethnic foods,

which I cook without using recipes, and China's long history with numerous dynasties. Sometimes I preferred to conceal my Chinese ethnic identity when the topic under discussion was something for which China is often criticized, such as the treatment of intellectuals or the nature of the government bureaucracy.

As I believe that social identity is dependent on the social context, I know that my social identity has multiple dimensions. Each has its function in the right context. I present myself as a different person in different social groups and communities. In China, I was very quiet in class as a sign of respect for teachers, but I became very outspoken in class at OSU as a sign of cooperation with teachers. I was not very talkative in Chinese communities in the U.S. because I did not want to show off. But I was very enthusiastic when talking about China and Chinese people among U.S. friends as I considered myself a cultural informant. I seldom wrote Chinese letters to my relatives and friends in China, yet I was not afraid of losing my Chinese. But I wrote almost every day in English because I still saw weakness in my writing in English. Therefore, I came to realize that I have to maintain different identities in different contexts and to vary my communication styles depending on when and where I speak about what and to whom.

I also found that a social identity sometimes requires mutual acceptance. Even if I want to be affiliated with an ethnic group, I might be rejected. In order to know the U.S. culture well, for several consecutive years I spent Christmas Eve at the homes of my U.S. friends, even though I was invited again and again by my Chinese friends to go to their Chinese Christmas parties. One Christmas, when I wanted to be with my Chinese friends for a change, I was unfortunately not invited. I was told later by my Chinese friends that they thought I would decline their invitation if they asked me again. I felt bad about this experience. But perhaps my friends were right; affiliation with a certain ethnic group is reciprocal. How you want to be identified is incomplete without considering what others might think of you.

In my journey of adaptive cultural transformation, I gradually perceived my Chinese cultural boundaries as permeable and flexible. Instead of letting my Chinese culture and my well-established L1 social identity become a shield that blocked me from constructing my L2 identity in the U.S. culture, I became open-minded and was willing to participate in various social activities to give myself opportunities to experience and understand the target culture. I was considered a fluent English speaker by many native English speakers in the U.S. But in my first quarter at OSU, I was afraid to speak up in the courses I took. I was overwhelmed by the various teaching styles used by professors, by the amount of information presented in my classes, by the amount of reading to be completed before each class meeting, by the weekly-testing format, and by the outspokenness of my classmates. As a result, I kept quiet and tried to figure out how to carve a niche for myself in the new classroom culture. I conducted numerous "experiments" on myself in adapting to this special social setting—the academic content classroom. I tried to speak up when I was very certain of something but initially failed because I was nervous

about making grammatical mistakes. I tried several times to focus on basic concepts in the readings and give my interpretations of the concepts when they were discussed in class. This purposeful preparation somewhat helped my participation. However, I still felt nervous about speaking up in class as I noticed slightly unnatural tones in my voice. Nevertheless, I kept trying and reflecting on my own experiences in participation and interaction with classmates. A couple of quarters later I realized that my participation in classes had become instantaneous, improvised, and effortless.

Learning some of the “normal” behavior rules in classroom communication in the target culture and unlearning some of the “normal” classroom behavior rules in my own culture gradually brought about an internal transformation. In time, I deviated from the accepted classroom patterns of my original culture and acquired the new patterns of the target classroom culture. This process, referred to as the stress-adaptation-growth process (Kim, 1988) in a classroom setting, led to my increased functional fitness and to a greater congruence and compatibility between my internal state and the conditions of the U.S. classroom environment. As a result, my increased oral participation in content courses gradually made me aware of my successful existence in class. I could hear my voice in discussion, and I had a sense of belonging. This increased self confidence also gradually enabled me to attain a level of communicative success beyond the classroom setting that allowed me to meet my social needs, including making friends with people from different cultural backgrounds and seeking graduate research and teaching assistantships across campus. More self confidence also improved my psychological state in that I achieved lower levels of stress and anxiety, higher self-esteem, and the ability to be more creative in work and study and to have a sense of personal fulfillment.

My increased classroom participation enhanced my ability to function in my L2 and thus improved the effectiveness of my communication in the target culture outside the classrooms. It also affected my psychological state and self-identification, which changed from being monocultural to being increasingly intercultural. Instead of feeling bound exclusively to the Chinese culture, I had a more fluid intercultural identity (Gudykunst & Kim, 1984) that I expressed by observing and practicing different sets of social values, beliefs, and norms in different cultural communities. Such an intercultural identity with cognitive, affective, and behavioral flexibility allowed me to adapt to situations and to creatively manage or avoid the conflicts that occur frequently in intercultural communication settings. It is through this dynamic and continuous process of cultural adaptive transformation that I have gradually moved toward becoming increasingly intercultural.

Like many non-native English speakers in the U.S., I underwent an adjustment period in my process of adaptive cultural transformation. Now I am a professor who teaches both graduate and undergraduate courses in applied linguistics and L2 pedagogy in the Department of English at the University of Arizona. Whenever I teach a class that includes many NNES students, they always remind me of myself when I first came to the U.S.

Although I understand that these students are new to the culture, I still expect them to take risks and to make efforts to adapt themselves effectively to the U.S. culture. An encounter with another culture can only lead to openness if the students can suspend the assumption of difference, not perceiving the new culture as strange or alien but instead as a culture to learn about, adjust to, and transform into.

### **Empowerment**

When I began teaching English composition to NNES graduate and undergraduate students at OSU, I often encountered suspicion from my students. This suspicion usually came from those who walked into my classes presuming that their English teacher would be a native English speaker, an understandable assumption. Eventually, my smiles and understanding, my correct pronunciation of their ten-plus syllable names, my anecdotes about my English learning experiences, my encouragement, and my detailed and constructive comments and suggestions on their first assignment all helped me to win their trust and admiration. It is true that I am not a native speaker of English and never will be. But the quality of language teaching is not merely determined by native or non-native speaker status, and I believe my students came to recognize this.

The language I speak and the way I teach make a difference in the students' perception of me, a Chinese person teaching English in the U.S. I remind myself constantly that since I am teaching English in an English environment, the only way I can make up for my lack of nativeness is by being aware of it. This keeps me constantly striving for a higher goal since I recognize that a journey of self-cultivation and refinement usually ends when one no longer feels the need for improvement.

I also believe that the success of NNES professionals in TESOL lies in our modesty. My students appreciate me because I tell them that I need to consult my native speaker colleagues about a word, a phrase, or a sentence. My students appreciate me because I provide them with examples of my struggles completing difficult writing tasks. They appreciate me because they feel free to comment on different drafts of a summary or paper and criticize papers including mine. As a NNES professional, I empower my students through empathy, sailing with them to the shore instead of summoning them from the shore.

The following two examples illustrate how I as a NNES instructor empowered my NNES students when I taught ESL composition at OSU.

#### ***Example 1: Being a Participant in the Peer Review Process***

**Context.** International graduate students at OSU represent 129 countries, and their ability to function in English varies greatly. Almost 85% participate in course work offered through the ESL composition program, the largest post-admission ESL writing program in the United States. The ultimate goal of this program is to bring students' expository writing skills to a level at

which they can perform successfully as writers in university courses. Upon enrollment, all international graduate students are required to take a one-hour writing placement exam. Based upon this exam, holistically evaluated by ESL composition staff, students are then placed in one of three English courses (106G, 107G, and 108.02). Only a small number of highly qualified students are exempted from the courses.

The three courses have different purposes. English 106G is designed to help graduate students develop the fluency and basic skills needed for academic writing. The emphasis of English 107G is to help students develop advanced skills in academic writing. English 108.02, the last course in the sequence, helps students develop the skills necessary to write about research findings. In Fall 1995, I conducted an action research project<sup>3</sup> in the intermediate ESL writing class (107G). Because developing advanced writing skills was the objective of this course, students were expected to write polished essays incorporating organization patterns most frequently found in academic prose. There were three major tasks in this course—writing a definition paper, writing a problem-solution paper, and performing data analysis. Each task was to be completed with three drafts. Between the first and second drafts, peer review activities were incorporated in which a group of three or four students collaborated and commented on each paper, usually with the help of a structured peer-review sheet. Between the second and the final drafts, one-on-one teacher-student conferences were held. In these conferences, each student came to the teacher's office at a pre-assigned time and the teacher went through the paper with the student, pointing out rhetorical as well as grammatical errors and making various suggestions for revision.

**Problems.** Although the two activities, peer review and one-on-one tutorials (also known as writing conferences), were generally welcomed by the students, problems occurred with each of the activities. In the peer review session, students often felt uncertain, not sure they should trust the comments of peers who were at the same linguistic level. Their insecurity often led to a lack of enthusiasm towards this activity. Meanwhile, without the presence of the instructor, some students came to peer review sessions under-prepared because of their heavy course loads, communicating disrespect to others and seriously hindering the mutual exchange among peers. This problem of students not trusting their peers and arriving without adequate preparation called into question the real value of peer review.

Another problem was related to the one-on-one teacher-student conferencing. Besides totally exhausting the teacher who repetitively talked with each individual student about similar rhetorical or grammatical mistakes, the tutorials were of questionable benefit as the students often followed the instructor's advice without fully understanding the comments. They were able to revise their drafts based on the teacher's comments, but it became evident that the students frequently did not remember the reasons for their revisions and thus made the same mistakes again in later assignments.

**Action.** To resolve these problems, I incorporated peer review activities into the conferencing. As the instructor as well as a NNES teacher who had

gone through a similar learning process, I participated in the peer review activities by assuming the role of a peer. Instead of dominating the discussion, I had the group select a leader to facilitate the discussion. I sometimes participated in the discussion by confirming peers' comments and sometimes questioned the writer's and peers' comments in order to stimulate further discussion. I gave my written comments on peer review sheets at the end of the discussion of each student's paper, as did the other peers. As a participant, my role was not only to offer comments but also to provide support and encouragement so that the student whose paper was being reviewed would feel comfortable and confident in assessing the different options and suggestions from peers (myself as peer included). The peers, on the other hand, would have to be well prepared to actively participate in commenting, arguing, and debating issues of concern when their teacher was present as a peer.

**Findings.** Data were collected via surveys, open-ended questionnaires, and interviews with the ESL students in an effort to address three research questions:

1. How do students in ESL composition courses perceive peer review, tutorials, and peer review with and without the instructor?
2. Why do they like or dislike peer review with the instructor as opposed to either peer review without the instructor or one-on-one tutorials?
3. What salient factors are involved or need to be addressed regarding the effectiveness of peer review with the instructor?

Both survey and open-ended questionnaires revealed that the majority of students liked peer review with the instructor because they could easily check with the instructor when receiving feedback from different perspectives. This made students feel more secure. The majority of the students thought that peer review with the instructor facilitated their decision-making about which feedback to accept or reject. Also the interview data revealed the students' belief that peer review with the instructor helped prepare them to be careful, critical, and sensitive reviewers of others' as well as of their own papers. By contributing and listening to the critiques of their peers' papers, they were more aware of their own writing problems and were better able to revise their own writing.

**Implications.** Combining peer review with student-teacher conferencing was an attempt to empower NNES students in their academic writing classes. The success of this attempt was enhanced by a number of factors. The primary factor, I believe, was my NNES status. As I had gone through a similar process of learning how to write in English for academic purposes, my role as a peer was easily accepted and naturally maintained. Any uneasiness students felt about being judged or evaluated was soon overtaken by the excitement and enthusiasm created by their active participation. The above example thus shows how a NNES professional can serve as a role model by sharing learning experiences, anticipating difficulties in writing in English, and providing needed help and timely advice in the composing processes.

### ***Example 2: Sharing My Own Academic Writing Experiences***

**Context.** ESL students who are learning to write academic papers often request samples that the teacher considers high quality. Because of their L1 writing training, international students in general, and Asian students in particular, tend to value the content and rhetoric of these samples. They make a realistic assessment of how they can work effectively and efficiently to produce similar high quality papers. To address this need, the writing teacher feels compelled to find writing models.

**The problem.** It is very difficult to match the students' current writing skills with a sample paper that will serve as a model. That is, professional writing samples (e.g., published journal articles) are either rhetorically too sophisticated for the students to appreciate at their current English proficiency levels or too long for them to imitate. As a result, many ESL students do not benefit from reading models despite their expressed desire to have them. Using previous students' writing (anonymous and with consent) as samples for class discussion is welcomed by students. Such student sample papers provide a realistic product for students to emulate. However, a problem with student sample papers is that the teacher cannot explain why certain ideas were included in the text or what revisions were made during the process of writing. Therefore, the process of writing and revising, a very important aspect to include in the teaching of writing, is not only unrevealed but cannot be revealed.

**Action.** In order to show the writer's mindset in composing and revising, I used my own writing samples. I would usually give my students an early draft on the same topic as the one they had been given without disclosing that I was the author. I invited students to critique the paper in small groups in class. In the next class, I would show them a second draft based on their comments and suggestions and invite them to make further comments. A few days later, I would show them the final draft and ask them to compare it with the previous drafts and justify why certain changes had been made or not. At this time I would claim authorship and share with my students the processes of writing and revision, as well as the dilemmas I faced in the writing process.

**Findings.** In looking at the results of the action research project, I mainly focused on one question: What effect does the use of my writing samples have on students' attitudes toward writing and on the improvement of their own writing? My observations, informal interviews with undergraduate and graduate students, and the end-of-term evaluations over several quarters produced consistently positive findings. The majority of students not only welcomed the use of my samples but also felt that they benefited from understanding my thought processes in shaping a paper through several drafts. They also realized the importance of feedback from both teacher and peers in the process of writing and revising. Such awareness contributed to their enthusiasm and attention in undertaking peer review activities and accepting teacher comments.

**Implications.** By using my own writing and by undertaking revision based on my students' input, the writing process became lively and engaging.

By sharing my experiences as a NNES writer, I demonstrated to my ESL students that no one can write a good paper without revisions and no one can effectively revise a paper without receiving comments and critiques. This sharing greatly empowered my students to understand the processes of writing, peer critiquing, and revising and led them to understand the importance of reflecting on their own writing experiences.

In teaching ESL composition courses, I also shared with students my struggles in transitioning from writing in my L1 to writing in my L2. I told my students that although in China I had succeeded in publishing many papers and books written in Chinese, during my first few quarters at OSU, I had difficulty writing papers in English because of the influence of my L1. It was not the content but the discourse that made the difference. My Chinese way of thinking had a great impact on how I composed in English. I soon realized that in order to maintain my L2 literacy and L2 social identity, I had to understand the fundamental thinking processes that the target culture accepted and the way that my L1 culture could be accepted. I learned U.S. discourse and rhetoric, and I made an effort to adapt my writing style to fit the general preference of a U.S. audience. The result? I have had a few papers published. However, the process of adaptation does not mean that I lost my Chinese writing style. I still see the legitimacy and beauty of Chinese writing even though I do not practice it in U.S. academia.

Despite the success of my action research, dilemmas have surfaced and have raised many questions. Will my prescription of strategies restrict my students' freedom of thought and expression? Will my requirement that students adopt U.S. academic standards do a great disservice by inhibiting them from reflecting their own cultures and ideologies? Will my dense reading and writing assignments burden students to the extent that they become passive learners? Will the use of my early writing as samples limit my students' opportunities to see model articles? Will my emphasis on discourse in writing discourage students from concentrating on eliminating grammatical errors? As I continue to think about these questions, I am reminded of other issues important to teaching ESL composition such as learner autonomy, self-directed learning, and self-empowerment.

### **Afterthoughts**

As a nonnative English speaker, I am proud to be a member of the TESOL profession. I am also proud to be aware of the ramifications of being a NNES professional. The success of TESOL professionals does not depend on whether they are native speakers or non-native speakers of English; however, non-native speakers might depend on different instructional approaches than those used by native speakers. Therefore, we need to consider several questions. How can we as non-native speakers of English take advantage of our experience learning the language we are teaching and collaborate with our NES colleagues to make teaching more effective and rewarding? How can we incorporate non-native speakers' viewpoints regard-

ing factors such as authenticity in language, social identity in communities, and cultural diversity in language classrooms? How can we best provide opportunities for our NNES students to empower themselves? And finally, what can we, as NNES professionals, do to empower ourselves? I believe we need to constantly ask ourselves these questions because in the process of forming questions, we can begin to find answers.

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## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Adaptive cultural transformation competence is the knowledge that enables an individual to communicate appropriately and effectively in the target culture by expanding his or her social identity to one that blends the new set of values, habits, and social norms endorsed in the target culture with those in the home culture. Such a higher-level competence is needed in appropriate and effective cultural adaptation, accommodation, and acculturation in order to develop successful second language proficiency in multiple contexts.
- <sup>2</sup> Instrumental motivation commonly refers to the desire of a learner to achieve proficiency for reasons connected to another goal (e.g., to attain career, financial, or educational goals). Integrative motivation, on the other hand, refers to the learner's desire to achieve proficiency due to a positive attitude toward the target language and culture and a desire to become like members of that target culture (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).
- <sup>3</sup> Action research involves participant intervention in a real-life classroom setting. Most frequently, the researcher participant poses a research question and then seeks to answer this question by collecting data and closely examining actual practices in the chosen context. This research typically culminates in suggestions that would improve the teaching practice (Nunan, 1989).

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