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Co-Constructing an EFL Student Teacher's Personal Experience of Teaching Practice

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ABSTRACT

This study inquires into how a student teacher's pedagogical narrative is co-constructed with a teacher educator. Viewed from a dialogic approach to narrative analysis, the current inquiry is to discover the ways these characterizations confirm and expand previous findings on (double-) voicing and positioning. Using Wortham's tools for analyzing voicing and ventriloquation, the present findings suggest that voicing is accomplished through positioning oneself in relation to other characters and interlocutors, as reflected in the use of specific references, evaluative indexicals, and quotations. A closer scrutiny to voicing also sheds light on a narrator's positioning with characters in a past narrated event and with an interlocutor during storytelling, as well as on how the interlocutor views the narrator's positioning. The narrator's interlocutor, through questioning in a storytelling event or beyond, resists the narrator's finalizing tendency of constructing her self. Resisting narrative finalization is important in reflecting on English-language-teaching (ELT) experiences.

Keywords: Dialogical narrative analysis, voicing, positioning, self-reflexivity, unfinalizability

INTRODUCTION

That English language teachers should be reflective has been suggested in the ELT literature (e.g., Ferrara, 2011; Richards & Farrell, 2011; Wyatt, 2010). However, it is still important to examine student teachers' narratives that contain stories of interpersonal tensions in the context of English language teaching in an EFL setting like Indonesia between a mentor teacher and a student teacher, especially when the latter lacks in self-reflexivity. Being reflective is the main ingredient of being self-reflexive (or self-critical), but there is a fundamental difference between reflection and self-reflexivity. In Edge's (2011) view, reflection "assumes the continuing identity of the person doing the reflecting," while reflexivity (or "self-reflexivity" in this paper) "questions that continuity…" (p. 38). Extending Edge's view, I regard self-reflexivity as space for a person doing a reflection to disrupt and challenge his or her beliefs and past practices that have shaped the person's current sense of identity.

Inquiring into a story of a student teacher who lacked self-reflexivity can be done through analyzing an interviewer's ways of questioning a narrator's story details, which might occur in the storytelling event, or as the interviewer analyzes the recorded interview with hindsight. To make such inquiry possible, I will first review briefly the literature on the conceptualizations of *voice*, *voicing*, and *double-voiced discourse*. Elucidations of these concepts make it possible to understand an EFL student teacher's self-construction and identifications, as well as conflicts, in an educational setting more fruitfully. The ways and why an interlocutor challenged a narrator's constructions of self and others—during and after a storytelling event—will be discussed, too. This paper ends with some possible implications for pedagogical practices of, and further research into, extending conversations based on a person's characterization of self and others and positioning in his or her narrative of personal pedagogical experiences.

A DIALOGICAL-NARRATIVE-ANALYSIS APPROACH AND ITS INSIGHTS INTO NARRATED ELT EXPERIENCES

The notion of voice plays a major role in dialogical narrative analysis (Riessman, 2008; Wortham, 2001; Wortham & Gadsden, 2006), especially when researchers are analyzing how narrators, together with interlocutors (Wortham, Mortimer, Lee, Allard, & White, 2011), position and characterize themselves and others. Inspired by Bakhtin (1981), Wortham (2001, pp. 38, 40) states that "[s]peaking with a

certain voice… means using words that index some social position(s) because these words are characteristically used by members of a certain group." In the light of his theory of voicing, Wortham believes that people ascribe voices—drawn from existing language repository, social "positions and ideologies from the larger social world" (p. 40)—to describe others. Moreover, voicing is the process of "juxtaposing others' voices in order to adopt a social position of one's own" (Wortham, 2001, p. 63). This is related to the notion of "double-voiced discourse" in which "the speaker's meaning emerges in part through an interaction with the voice of another" (p. 64). Jane's autobiographical narrative of her experiences of dealing with 'failed caregivers' (including her mother) and 'abusive institutions' (e.g., an orphanage), whose (double-)voices were Ventriloquated by Jane, constitutes a dominant part in Wortham's study (see e.g., p. 131).

How others' and the narrator's own utterances (or voices) in the past or during storytelling are said may determine how the narrator positions him- or herself with others being narrated. Positioning also transpires when a narrator is telling a story to one or more interlocutor. As Davies and Harré (2001, p. 264) put it, positioning is "the discursive process whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines." Inherent in this process is how a narrator positions him- or herself (or "reflexive positioning") in relation to others (or "interactive positioning") in the past or during storytelling. In Jane's case (Wortham, 2001), she distanced herself from past abusive institutions, for instance, and attempted to align with the interviewer during storytelling (e.g., being a cooperative interviewee in) or wanted the interviewer to align or empathize with her.

My present study is expected to contribute to the literature of dialogical narrative analysis (DNA), especially in the context of teaching English as a foreign language. At an initial stage, DNA pays attention to an interaction that occurs during storytelling. In Talmy's (2011, p. 27) view of interactional approach to studying narrative, "data analysis focuses not just on content, but on how meaning is negotiated, knowledge co-constructed, and the interview is locally accomplished." But what makes DNA differ from a heavy focus on how an interview is locally accomplished is how potential conversations beyond a single interview can be initiated. In the field of TESOL, Barkhuizen (2011, p. 396) argues that research writing shapes a narrative in its own right that transcends "narrative artifacts," including audio-recorded story and its transcript, that reflect what happened during a storytelling. Going beyond narrative artifacts is in line with Frank's (2012) commitment to *unfinalizability*, in the light of Bakhtin's (1984) work: "dialogical narrative analysis is not to summarize *findings*—an undialogical word, with its implication of ending the conversation… —but rather to open continuing possibilities of listening and of responding to what is heard" (Frank, 2012, p. 37, italics in original). Thus, not only a narrator, but also an interlocutor, as a person who is capable of producing "*rejoinder[s]* in an unfinalized dialogue" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 32, italics in original), is implicated in voicing. Wortham (2001, pp. 40-44) argues that subsequent utterances or paralinguistic cues (e.g., laughter or cry) may account for some emergence of obvious meanings for earlier utterances that may at first be open-ended. The question is what if more cues and verbalized elaborations very minimally or never materialize in a conversation, such that some earlier utterances remain relatively open-ended or indeterminate? Even when subsequent utterances and non-verbal cues emerge, which make earlier cryptic meanings become relatively more lucid eventually in a conversation, subsequent reading(s) or hearing(s) of the same narrative (Riessman, 2008) may result in questioning of similar or other parts of the narrative that are overlooked in the (earlier) conversation.

Based on the review above, one overarching question that guides my current inquiry is how a pedagogical story is co-constructed by a narrator and me, as an interviewer, in a storytelling event. In addressing this question, emerging issues and the implications of attending to co-construction of a pedagogical narrative during and beyond the storytelling event will be discussed.

METHODOLOGY

Context and Participant

In the present study, I delve into a narrative told by a female EFL student teacher, Helen (a pseudonym), who had just completed her teaching practicum in a junior high school in a town in Central Java, Indonesia. Helen's narrative of a "good" experience is part of a larger set of data I collected from 19 students (see e.g., Mambu, 2009). Her story is chosen here because she is one of the most vocal student teachers in terms of challenging a mentor teacher. The data is also exemplary in terms of how I as an interviewer and a teacher-educator challenged her positioning quite considerably.

Data Collection Procedure

I asked my students including Helen to share their "good" and "bad" experiences during teaching

practicum they had just completed. The students were free to determine what they wanted to mean by "good" or "bad" experiences, as long as they were related to what happened during their involvement in teaching practicum at various high schools in a town in Central Java, Indonesia. The data collection took place in early 2007 and underwent three phases of narrating for each student: (1) in a written form, (2) in an interview, and (3) in a written form again—all of which were to be the same story (Chafe, 1998) for the "bad" or "good" experience respectively. The first written form was used because I assumed that students would have some time to think and reflect on their personal teaching experiences in a less face-threatening way. As the second telling was also about the same story they had composed in the first round in written form, I assumed that the students felt readier to talk about it with me and my fellow interviewer. Furthermore, by asking my participants to write their narratives in the first round, my colleague (Tom, a pseudonym) and I had the chance to prepare probing questions during the second telling in a sociolinguistic interview format. The average time split between phase (1) and phase (2) and between phase (2) and phase (3) was two weeks. In both written and spoken narratives, I gave my students freedom to use Bahasa Indonesia (i.e., my and my students' first language) when they were blanking on an English word or phrase. In this study, however, I will rely on Helen's second telling only in my analysis, as it is more robust: both Tom and especially I chimed in, asking her to elaborate on certain details. Regardless, her second telling is still relatively as open-ended as other tellings, thus making it still suitable to analysis of unfinalizability.

The notion of "revisit[ing] narrative data … years after their initial collection" (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, p. 152) is relevant here. In 2007, I was interested in knowing how narrators, in view of Labov (1972), structured and evaluated their stories, which culminated in Mambu (2009, 2013). In the current paper, I am revisiting how Helen, one of the narrators in my collected data, and I co-construct or challenge her positioning within and/or beyond a storytelling event.

Data Analysis

To answer the question of how I co-construct or challenge Helen's story, I will use Wortham's (2001, pp. 70-75) some "analytic tools for identifying voicing and ventriloquation." The main reason is that Wortham's tools make it possible for me to understand how Helen positioned herself in relation to other characters in her narrative—the mentor teacher, in particular. In voicing her positioning with the mentor teacher—whether it was on Helen's own initiative or after being probed by her interviewers, Helen embedded some other characters' voices. These voices will be identified first in order to facilitate further analysis on how they are ventriloquated or appropriated. This voicing and positioning may transpire in Helen's use of "reference" (i.e., "the picking out of things in the world through speech"), "quotation," "predication" (i.e., the characterizations of "objects picked out"), and "evaluative indexicals" (i.e., "particular expressions or ways of speaking… associated with particular social groups when members of a group habitually speak in that way," including her use of first and/or second language). Based on some portions of Helen's second telling, I will identify voicing through these tools that help analyze how Helen depicted herself and other characters. See Appendix for transcription conventions.

By "co-constructing" Helen's narrative (or her characterizations of self or others) I mean either (1) my positioning that was aligned with hers (i.e., when I agreed with her) or (2) when I initially intended to ask for clarification, but then, in retrospect as I perused my data, became a subtle series of questions that may challenge her credibility, among others, as far as my view as a teacher educator is concerned.[i]

FINDINGS

Helen's Construction of Others' Voices

A person's construction of others' voices is one of the main ingredients in storytelling and is subject to one or more interlocutors' agreement or challenge. Prior to discussing how an interlocutor co-constructs a narrator's story, I will elaborate on ventriloquation grounded in the present data. Ventriloquated (or "quoted") voices sound like "real" wording produced by other characters in a narrator's story. These voices may support, or be parodized by, the narrator to imply his/her main point. In my current data, there is an evidence for the latter (i.e., parody; see Excerpt 1).

Excerpt 1. "Four is for [the mentor teacher] herself"

10	Helen:	But u:h suddenly (.) uh some day (.) I found (.) on my: (.) friends' observation form [(.) that (.) yang sudah dinilai oleh [(.) pamong teachernya ((which has been graded by the mentor teacher)) u:h (.) he (.) and she
11	Joseph (Jos):	[hm [°guru pamong°
...	...	...

32	Jos:	Uh before you go on with your story (.) do you know (.) why °uh or° why do you think the teacher wouldn't give a <u>four</u> for [her students (.) at first
33	Helen:	[oh uh:
34		Actually uh I have- uh in my school there are two pamong teachers.
35		Uh my own pamong teacher (.) said uh to me that (.) u:h the other pamong teacher suggest (.) my own pamong teacher (.)that (.) uh she (.) should not give [(.) <u>four</u>
36	Jos:	[four
37	Helen:	because four is for (.) u::h=
38	Jos:	[[=the guru pamong=
39	Helen	[[=but (.) heʔe ((yes)) buat guru pamong its- itsel- herself
40	Jos:	Oh ((smiles))
41	Helen:	Buat guru pamong sendiri ((for the mentor teacher herself))
42	Jos:	Hm
43	Helen:	Jadi jangan buat students nya ((so not for her students; laughs))
44	Jos & Tom:	((laugh))

Helen told Tom and I that 4 would not be given to student teachers, but she came across some 4s in her friends' teaching observation forms that had been graded by the mentor teacher (line 10). I was then curious why the mentor would not grant a 4 (see line 32). Helen's response was not only expressed in L1, but it also comprises a quotation (lines 37-43): "Because four is for … heʔe buat guru pamong… herself; buat guru pamong sendiri, jadi jangan buat students nya [because 4 is for … yes for the mentor teacher… herself, so not for her students]." Overall, lines 35, 37, 39, 41, and 43 could have been ventriloquated from the speech of the colleague of Helen's mentor.

From Wortham and Locher's (1999, p. 116) perspective, the incorporation of mentor's colleague in the mentor's speech constructed or quoted by Helen is an "embedded metapragmatic construction," a specific form of double-voicing. Such a construction occurs when "one quote [is embedded] within another and thus provide[s] the opportunity to voice and double voice two speakers *and* their relationship between those speakers" (p. 116, italics in original). In this specific context, Helen and her mentor seem to be "animators" (or "the person[s] uttering the message") of the grading policy and the mentor's colleague is apparently the "principal" (or "the person responsible for the substance of the message"; Goffman, as cited in Wortham & Locher, 1999, p. 120). Helen's mentor was likely to be the principal of the message (i.e., that 4 would never be given to student teachers), but as she violated this, she might have simply animated her colleague's adopted (and yet infringed) policy. Moreover, the animation of the mentor's speech can be interpreted as not only Helen's distancing from the inconsistent mentor, but also an implied distance between Helen's mentor and the mentor's colleague. The distance between colleagues then seem to have become a commodity for Helen to criticize their grading policy.

In this manner, the mentor's colleague might have been blamed, too, but this does not seem to be Helen's main point. As Helen, Tom, and I laughed (line 44), I am certain that at this stage Helen's narrative self-construction as a vehement critic of her mentor's policy—that is, Helen's main point—was successful. Assuming that the mentor's colleague statement was true, I have now begun asking why 4 is only for mentor teachers. Another series of questions that resist finalized interpretations of this seemingly simple theme of inconsistency are as follows: What is the relationship between Helen's mentor and her colleague? Did Helen's mentor have a lower rank or position than her colleague? If this is the case, was it fair that she was too vehemently criticized by Helen, because the mentor might have some disagreement with her colleague regarding the grading policy?

My Attempts as an Interlocutor to Co-Construct Helen's Voicing

In the earlier section, the ways Helen constructed herself and her mentor were delineated, with my inquisitive rejoinders attempting to keep imaginary dialogues concerning pedagogical issues with Helen going. In this section, my focus is on how I co-constructed or questioned Helen's self- and other-characterization, especially during the storytelling event, and how I view my interaction with her as I write up this paper.

Questioning or challenging Helen's narrative self-construction. During Helen's storytelling, occasionally I attempted to construct her narrative by aligning with her position (e.g., my laughter that ridiculed the notion that "4" is for mentor teachers only; see line 44 in Excerpt 1 above) or by asking Helen (desperately) to elaborate on how exactly she did the inductive method in four attempts (see lines 65-81, 135-137, 141-161, and 167-177 in Excerpt 2 below). The latter began by my double questions in lines 65 and 66: "How did you do the inductive method? What was the topic at that time?" In retrospect, my question frames my hidden intention—"How on earth did Helen apply the inductive method, if she kept claiming it didn't work?" and yet immediately attempted to be specific about how it started: "What was the topic at that time?" To this Helen replied, "if I'm not mistaken it was about future, will and going

to" (lines 67 and 69). And then I followed up on my earlier question regarding how exactly she implemented the inductive method (line 72). She only said that she gave many more examples and then asked the students to "draw the patterns and conclusion by themselves" (lines 73, 75). She repeated saying "give examples' several times" (lines 75, 147), with no mention of any example. As an audience, I was not satisfied with Helen's explanation: "What are the examples of 'will' and 'going to'?! Show me that you really did your best before you keep claiming that the inductive method did not work!"—uttered only in my heart. But Helen started to describe that her students were passive and not very intelligent (lines 77, 79, and 157). I tried to dig out more by saying less straightforwardly (line 80), but Tom then interrupted (after line 81). I tried to revisit this later on during the storytelling, though I failed to do it effectively: "Oh okay, so you compared will and going to, but the students didn't respond" (line 135), which was very tersely responded to with "ya" (line 136; or, to paraphrase her remark, "That's correct"). Overall, Helen was more interested in constructing her mentor as her enemy rather than building her own pedagogical credibility by showing to me how well she was in applying the inductive method, apart from simply saying that she had given the students many examples.

Excerpt 2. "How did you do the inductive method?"

65 Jos: How did you do the inductive method?
66 What was the topic at that time?
67 Helen: Uh: if I'm not mistaken it was about (1.0) future=
68 Jos: =future
69 Helen: =will and going to=
70 Jos: =will and going to=
71 Helen: =ya
72 Jos: =and then how did you do °the inductive method?°
73 Helen: Uh give the examples
74 Jos: Mhm
75 Helen: Ya (.) >°examples examples° and then< I asked the students to draw [the patterns and conclusion (.) by themselves
76 Jos: [conclusion?
77 Helen: But (.) ((laughs)) uh because (1.0) actually the students is uh were- were <u>passive</u> students
78 Jos: Mhm
79 Helen: And (.) ya °as what I said before (.) they were not so intelligent°
80 Jos: Hm so you tried to compare between [the- <u>will</u> and going to
81 Helen: [heʔe ((yes)) ya
... ...
135 Jos: O:h (1.0) okay hm so you compared will and going to (.) [but the students didn't respond
136 Helen: [Ya
137 Ya ((laughs)) pasif
... ...
141 Helen: [I was observed [(.) by
142 Jos: [You were observed [by (--)
143 Helen: [observed by my pamong teacher and also my peer.
144 Jos: And your peer.
145 What did they suggest that you should improve?
146 Because you said that it didn't work?
147 Helen: Ya give more examples ((laughs)) give more example I should give more examples
148 But (.) I thought (.) [it was
149 Jos: [do you think (.) you have given them mu- mo- uh many examples?
150 Helen: Yes ((laughs))
151 Jos: oh okay and they said (.) they are not enough? (1.0)
152 I mean that [the guru pamong said that [they're not enough?
153 Helen: [uh yeah
154 [I should (.) ask (.) or
155 encourage (.) u:h the students more [(.) to be active
156 Tom: [mhm
157 Helen: Tapi (.) gimana? Emang .hh ((But how, in fact)) basically they were passive students
158 I: couldn't [(--)
159 Jos: [so you think that it's not because you are a bad teacher?
160 Helen: ((laughs)) u::h I didn't think so ((laughs))
161 Tom: ((laughs))
... ...
167 Jos: Uh (.) ((clears throat)) hang on hm (3.0) ya (.) so (2.0) >I'm still interested in the teacher's comments on- at that time after< after (.) your teaching.
168 °So° (.) <u>give</u> more examples
169 Helen: Ya
170 Jos: And then?
171 Helen: encourage=
172 Jos: Encourage
173 Helen: =the students <u>more</u> [(.) to be active
174 Jos: [Mhm
175 to be active
176 Helen: To think by themselves (1.0) °but° it didn't work ((laughs))
177 Jos: It didn't work

Even when I shifted to another topic of how she was observed by her mentor, she asserted again that the mentor wanted her to provide more examples (line 147). When I did another round of confirmation check of whether she indeed had given more abundant examples (line 149), Helen said "Yes ((laughs))" (line 150), which was still regarded as insufficient by the mentor. I think because I felt totally desperate in figuring out the narrative of how exactly Helen taught her students with the inductive method, I asked something that may sound intrusive. In

retrospect, I view myself as profoundly attempting to challenge Helen's positioning that made her secure as a vehement critic of her mentor: "so you think that it's not because you are a bad teacher?" (line 159), which was laughed at by both Helen and Tom, and downright negated by Helen (line 160). From this observation, the transference of hatred (toward the mentor teacher and the inductive method) seems to have prevailed not only in the past narrated event, but also the storytelling event: Helen resisted my attempt to flesh out details of the inductive method. Put another way, she was more preoccupied with critiqueing the mentor and her preferred method than focused on explaining to me what happened chronologically in class in greater detail. Power differentials between Helen and myself, especially after I cornered her somewhat harshly (line 159), may account for such resistance on Helen's part, but this speculation should be pursued in its own right elsewhere.

Aligning with Helen's positioning, and questioning it. Having almost given up, I tried again to ask her what she did next after giving more examples (lines 167, 169; Excerpt 2). Helen replied: "encourage [onto which I latched 'encourage,' expecting more elaboration] the students more to be active [again I latched onto it 'to be active, to think by themselves'], but it didn't work ((laughs))" (lines 171-176). And this insistent negotiation on my part resulted in a new inspiration for me to shift my attention to the mentor. I asked her if the pamong teacher could encourage the students herself (line 178; Excerpt 3). And her answer seems to be the punchline of our co-construction of her narrative: "I didn't think so ((laughs))" (line 179). Helen went even further to conclude that her mentor is "NATO." She suddenly seemed to forget what it stands for, but after I said the second word, she ecstatically, with a louder sound, said: "NO ACTION TALK ONLY ((laughs))" (line 185). NATO originally stands for North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Many English and Indonesian speakers, however, appropriated this acronym creatively to mean "no action talk only." Indexically, when someone is evaluated as "NATO," the person belongs to a group of myriad other people that talk but do not act. What is more, making a pun of NATO is a double-voiced discourse in itself: appropriating or refracting (Bakhtin, 1981) an existing acronym to index an entirely different context. Extending Canagarajah's (2011, p. 406) finding in an academic writing context, NATO here is part of Helen's "voice strategies." The "dominant code" of NATO (in English) has been "[boldly experimented with]" by English-speaking people and Indonesians, and is further appropriated by Helen to denigrate the mentor teacher. Labeling her mentor as NATO also suggests that Helen made use of a very strategic interactive positioning (Davies & Harré, 2001) that dissociated her with the mentor in the past narrated realm and convinced her present audience to align with her, spicing it up with laughter after saying what NATO stands for out loud.

Excerpt 3. NATO—No Action Talk Only

178	Jos:	Hm do you think your teacher- your pamong teacher could (.) encourage the students herself?
179	Helen:	I didn't think so ((laughs))
...	...	...
183	Helen:	So (.) I can (.) conclude that (.) she apa ((what's the term)) NATO?
184	Jos:	No Action [Talk Only
185	Helen:	[NO ACTION TALK ONLY ((laughs))

Commitment to unfinalizability has now led me to think in what ways I, or student teachers, have been NATO ourselves. Yes, Helen (and maybe I) laughed at the mentor's being NATO. But I begin wondering if language instructors like me have been so once in a while in our pedagogical journey. How, then, can we guard ourselves against NATO in language teaching profession? Furthermore, the mentor teacher's being NATO is a finalizing cue that may have accounted for Helen's (and her friends') failure in implementing the inductive method in their real teaching practices. That is, the mentor did not provide a good role model in utilizing the method. But my question is nonetheless why Helen and her friends could not apply the method without a proper example from the mentor. Is this a failure on the part of our EFL teacher education program to provide sufficient teaching preparation and more supervision besides that of the mentor's?

Discussion

The dialogic approach to narrative analysis (DNA) sheds light on the process through which a narrator's constructions of self in relation to other people (1) occurred in a storytelling event and (2) were responded to or challenged (a) synchronously in the storytelling event, and (b) beyond (i.e., the current analysis of what happened when I elicited Helen's story; see Figure 1). This process allows us to look into story contents (or themes), positioning through language forms (or use), and commitment to unfinalizably "responding to what is heard" (Frank, 2012, p. 37). In terms of content, Helen's narrative case reflects conversations in a larger context in terms of similar stories where student teachers challenge their mentor teachers (see Mambu, 2009) and blame their students. Emerging themes in Helen's narrative have also become bases for my rejoinders that attempt to call into question her (or my own) finalizing inclination in the storytelling event, despite my co-

construction of (or support to) her positioning (e.g., the NATO episode). With specific regard to positioning, stories of mentor-trainee relationship, represented by Helen's narrative, encapsulate power relations (1) in a past narrated event (e.g., a student teacher like Helen characterizes herself as being in a lower position than her mentor and yet characterizes herself as being in a higher position than his/her students; cf. Jane who was in a lower position the dominant society at the time [Wortham, 2001]) and (2) in a storytelling event when power relations in the past are re-enacted.

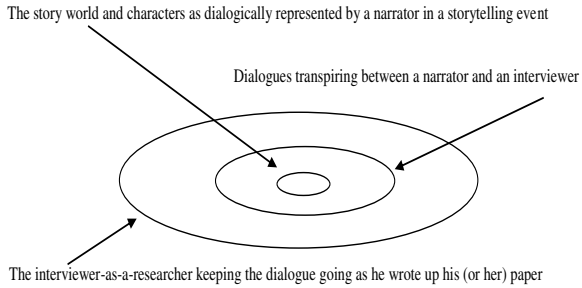

Figure 1. Multi-Layered Dialogues as a Narrative is Analyzed

In the storytelling event, Helen never confronted her mentor teacher frontally the way Jane in Wortham's (2001, p. 3) study did to a city orphanage woman (e.g., "bring me my baby") in a past narrated event. Helen's sense of agency only surfaced during the telling of her complaints about her mentor teacher's unfair grading and insistence on the inductive method by quoting her mentor and the mentor's colleague and by labeling the former with the predicate "NATO." However, this is a kind of "low-agency" which is restricted to demonstrating her "construction of a victim role," to use Bamberg's (2012, p. 106) words. Her agency during storytelling increased, though, as she resisted explaining much more fully her implementation of inductive method. From my view as someone who was actively involved in the interview, Helen did not want to be further victimized by me, a researcher who questioned her credibility as a student teacher. She got over my challenge by referring back to her mentor (e.g., using NATO as an evaluative indexical to mock the mentor). With her agency, she also became defensive and at times even blamed the students during the interview. I did not address this during the interview, but in retrospect I find it necessary for EFL teacher educators and student teachers to learn from Helen's positioning (i.e., demonizing a mentor teacher and blaming students' low proficiency) to problematize the tendency of merely reproaching other people, while accentuating one's own "comportment" as "morally" or pedagogically "superior to that of another protagonist" (Ochs & Capps [2001, p. 47]), and to be more self-reflexive.

As my meaning was negotiated, which turned out to fall flat when I insisted on knowing much more about how she utilized the inductive method during a teaching practicum session, we eventually came up with a "locally accomplished" goal, to appropriate Mann's (2011, p. 27) phrasing. For instance, we problematized the credibility of the mentor teacher by labeling her as NATO. As such, I personally abandoned my agenda to pursue the detail of her utilization of inductive method, and succumbed to my interviewee's agenda to simply criticize the mentor, thus confirming her initial alignment with me to say negatively about the mentor.

However, my questions during Helen's storytelling, especially about how she used the inductive method, remain alive. Time constraints forced me to stop the conversation with Helen. At least another question has emerged, though, as I analyzed the transcript: Can student teachers themselves or I be potentially NATO? Such a question acts as a centrifugal force, in Bakhtin's (1981) view, that keeps defying Helen's centripetal force of finalizing her story and my own centripetal force (e.g., of aligning with Helen to simply blame her mentor). In light of Edge's (2011) view, it is possible to ask whether ELT stakeholders, especially English language student teachers and teacher educators like Helen and me, are self-reflexive enough to disrupt and question their (finalized) views and past pedagogical practices that have shaped their current sense of identity (e.g., as a person who keeps hating his or her former mentor teacher; as a teacher who is always against a certain teaching method like the inductive teaching strategy).

CONCLUSION

The current study delves more closely into what emerged dialogically between an interviewer and a narrator. Overall, this study confirms current literature (e.g., Wortham, 2001; Wortham & Gadsden, 2006) and expands on a nuanced understanding of a narrator's positioning by means of voicing (i.e., appropriating and ventriloquating) and evaluating characters in past narrated events through a storytelling event. Furthermore, dialogical narrative analysis allows stories told by narrators claiming to have been oppressed (e.g., Helen) to be listened to with critical ears from an audience (e.g., me as an interviewer in the storytelling event and a researcher who is writing up this paper) who problematizes things finalized by the narrators (e.g., that the inductive method never works for passive and dumb

students). An audience may still co-construct a narrator's story nicely by empathizing with a narrator's past misery (e.g., that Helen was unfairly graded), but an insatiable interlocutor also has the right to be committed to keeping dialogues moving to less finalizable, less predictable directions (Bakhtin, 1984; Frank, 2012) that the narrator—or even the interlocutor him- or herself—may not be aware of prior to, during, or even (long) after a face-to-face conversation takes place. As Bell (2002, p. 209) puts it: "Narrative [analysis] lets researchers get at information that people do not consciously know themselves." In turn, the audience of this paper will have similar or distinct responses to my inquiry into Helen's story.

Implications and Future Directions

Having ears to listen critically to a narrator is not enough. Finding some blind spots in a narrator's story can be a humbling experience for an interviewer, too, when the interviewer is aware of possible short-comings s/he might have were s/he in the narrator's position. I hope, therefore, that when reading this study EFL student teachers like Helen and any educator can self-reflexively begin taking stock of their pedagogical beliefs and practices before they label fellow teachers or students as NATO, "not consistent," "not intelligent enough," and the like. There is always a temptation to finalize one's own belief that some person is such and such. There is also a likelihood that someone else, if a person fails to be self-reflexive or insists on finalized belief(s), will exert some sort of unfinalizability force to problematize the person's deeply ingrained conviction(s). If I encounter other simplistic criticisms by a student teacher to a mentor, for instance, I will ask: "Have you ever made an unfavorable policy such that you sense your students begin to dislike you?" or "What would you feel if you were a mentor who later knew that your mentee stabbed you on the back for some reason you consider untenable?" I wonder how my student interviewee would respond to such queries. More importantly, probing questions may emerge from real interactions with student teachers, and will expectedly supplement a normative demand of being reflective in "microteaching and[/or] teaching an ESOL class" (Richards & Farrell, 2011, p. 4) among student teachers in particular and any English language teachers in general.

Viewed from a dialogic approach to narrative analysis, Helen's case also sparks more questions. In a full-blown ethnographic study, it will be worthwhile to triangulate researchers' (or ethnographers') own narratives when they observe how mentors guide their mentees before teaching a session and how the former provide feedback to the latter after teaching a session (cf. Mann & Tang, 2012). Another question includes, but is not limited to, how student teachers can reflect on, if not also problematize, past tensions (e.g., with mentor teachers) and come up with envisioned transformative teaching scenarios that will benefit themselves, students they teach, and mentor teachers. This question is specifically geared toward mobilizing student teachers, as well as mentor teachers and university supervisors, to question their tendency to have hopelessly finalized, non-self-reflexive views of themselves, their pedagogical beliefs, actions, and realities around them. The scope of being a self-critical (or self-reflexive) teacher-ethnographer (see Heath, Street, & Mills, 2008, pp. 122-125) may not be provided a priori in language teaching manuals; it has to be discovered and addressed through ongoing dialogues that involve language teacher educators, mentor teachers, student teachers, and other school stakeholders.

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[i] Due to space constraints, I will not analyze Tom's interaction with Helen. After all, it was I who did most of the questioning.