Chapter 5

Exploring the relationship between non-native EFL teachers' cultural values and their intercultural identities[7]

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Abstract

This study explored the relationship between the cultural values of teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) and their awareness of themselves within an intercultural teaching context. A teacher's perception of self in relation to two or more cultural groups has been referred to as *intercultural identity*. EFL teachers of different cultural origins can attach differing importance to cultural values, which can influence their identity perceptions. To improve our understanding of teachers' roles and self-awareness with regard to teaching about culture, we explored how cultural values can be used to predict teachers' intercultural identities. We gathered data in two countries that were clearly either very distant from or very close to the cultures of English-speaking countries, i.e., China and the Netherlands. Participants in our questionnaire were Chinese and Dutch EFL teachers (114 in China; 154 in the Netherlands). For the total group and the Dutch group, benevolence, tradition, and power were found to be strong predictors of three underlying factors in teachers' intercultural identity perceptions, i.e., 'Openness to ES cultures', 'Disconnection from ES Cultures', and 'Impartiality with regard to ES Cultures'. Implications for pedagogies and training in language teaching are discussed.

5.1 Introduction

This study explored the relationship between the cultural values of teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and their awareness of themselves within an intercultural teaching context. Against the background of increasing communication across world cultures, the integration of culture and language in teaching and preparing students for future intercultural communication is seen as an important principle of foreign language teaching (Newton et al., 2010). According to that principle, an ideal EFL teacher is a teacher who is not only capable of training the students in speaking the foreign language, but who can also teach students to understand both their own and other cultures, to be interested in other cultures, and to see their own cultures from other cultural perspectives (Byram et al., 2002). It is therefore crucial for EFL teachers to be aware of their roles in teaching about cultures associated with the English language ('ES cultures', such as British and American cultures) (Aneja, 2016; Byram et al., 2002).

The concept of *intercultural identity*, i.e., a person's perception of self in relation to two or more cultural groups, has been used in the literature to improve our understanding of teachers' roles in teaching about cultural issues (Alptekin & Alptekin, 1984; Y. Gao, 1999; Menard-Warwick, 2008). As mentioned in earlier chapters, the ways in which EFL teachers see themselves and perceive their roles in relation to ES cultures are referred to in the literature as 'teachers' intercultural identities' (c.f. Menard-Warwick, 2008). Earlier studies of EFL teachers have found that teachers formed and negotiated their intercultural identities as a result of personal experiences of ES cultures (e.g., Menard-Warwick, 2008; Moran, 2001; Nugroho Widiyanto, 2005; Phan, 2008). The literature reveals that teachers' identity perceptions are shaped by their knowledge, beliefs, and values, their actual and perceived linguistic, intercultural, and teaching competence, their teaching contexts, and their sociocultural backgrounds.

Cultural values, which express shared beliefs and conceptions of what is good and desirable in a particular society, can be seen as central features of a culture (Hofstede et al., 2010; Schwartz, 2006, 2014). On the basis of earlier research about the relationship between people's cultural values and their ideas about contact with other cultural groups (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995; Schwartz, 2006), we may assume that teachers' cultural values influence how they view themselves in relation to both their own cultures and the cultures they teach about, i.e., their intercultural identities.

In class, teachers are expected to act as cultural mediators between their cultures and ES cultures, which requires negotiation of their own particular cultural values and those of other cultures (Moran, 2001). To understand how teachers teach cultural issues in class, it is necessary to comprehend how they perceive themselves in relation to the cultures they teach (i.e., what their intercultural identities are) and how such perceptions are influenced by their cultural values. However, research into how teachers perceive their intercultural identity is a relatively new field and few studies have been conducted. Knowing more about how teachers' cultural values and their intercultural identities are connected could contribute to inspiring pedagogies and training in language teaching. By comparing two countries that were clearly either very distant from or very close to the cultures of English-speaking countries (China and the Netherlands), we explored how cultural values might be used to predict EFL teachers' perceptions of themselves in relation to the cultures they teach about. In the next section, we first elaborate on the literature about cultural values and intercultural identity to provide a theoretical basis for the study.

5.1.1 Cultures and cultural values

Culture is generally regarded as the co-constructed customs, behaviours, and beliefs that serve as the framework of a community (Driscoll et al., 2013; Kramsch, 2014). Cultural values can be considered as central features of a culture, which convey shared beliefs and common conceptions of the desirable things in life (Hofstede et al., 2010; Schwartz, 2006). The set of values a group of people prefer can differ greatly from those preferred by members of another culture (Schwartz, 2006). Particularly if individuals run into conflicts between values, they can become aware of the priority they attach to a specific value or set of values, which can then become a guiding principle (Schwartz, 1996). We know from sociocultural and psychological studies that cultural values are connected to people's attitudes, beliefs, and norms (Bain et al., 2006; Schwartz, 2012), and that they can also forge teachers' identities (Johnston, 2003). On the basis of empirical studies from all over the world, Schwartz (1992, 1996) distinguished ten basic cultural values: conformity, tradition, benevolence, universalism, self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, power, and security (see Table 5.1 for the descriptions of these values). By analysing large amounts of data accumulated in different countries using instruments like the Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ), Schwartz described a common structure of cultural value orientations. The ten values can be organized along two orthogonal

dimensions: (a) Openness-to-Change versus Conservation and (b) Self-Enhancement versus Self-Transcendence (see Figure 5.1).

Table 5.1

Brief description of ten cultural values

Values	Descriptions
Conformity	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms
Tradition	Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide
Benevolence	Preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact
Universalism	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature
Self-Direction	Independent thought and choosing of action, creation, exploration
Stimulation	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life
Hedonism	Pleasure and gratification
Achievement	Personal success through demonstration of competence according to social standards
Power	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources
Security	Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self

Note: Adapted from Schwartz and Sagiv (1995, p. 95). For more detailed descriptions of the value types and categories of value types, see Sagiv and Schwartz (1995);Schwartz (1992, 1996, 2006, 2012, 2014); Schwartz and Bilsky (1990); Schwartz and Sagiv (1995).

Earlier research using Schwartz's cultural value theory and questionnaire has shown that people's cultural value orientations can predict how they view themselves in relation to a different cultural group (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995; Schwartz, 2006). In addition, it was found that people who emphasise openness-to-change (stimulation and self-direction) and/or self-transcendence (universalism and benevolence) tend to be more flexible, and show greater intercultural communication competence, than people who emphasise conservation (conformity, tradition, and security) and/or self-enhancement (power and achievement) (Schwartz, 2006). For example, people's motivation to emigrate (i.e., flexibility) and eagerness for out-group contacts have been found to correlate positively with cultural values related to openness-to-change and self-transcendence, and negatively with the values related to conservation (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995; Tartakovsky & Schwartz, 2001). In sum, previous research shows that the connections between values and identities can be different among various groups emphasizing

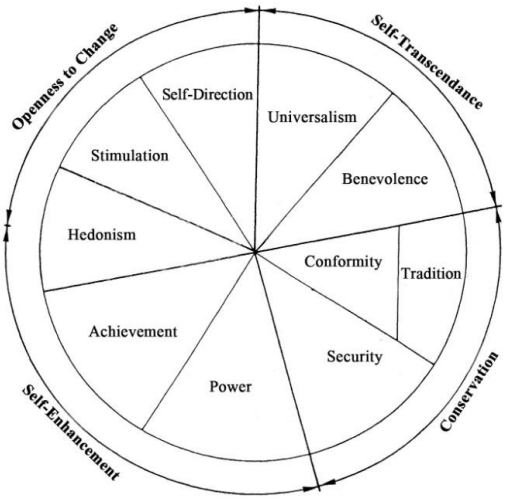

Figure 5.1. *Structure of value types and dimensions (adapted from Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995, p. 96).*[8]

different values, and those connections are dependent on the expectations of the dominant group in a society (Roccas et al., 2010). According to Schwartz (2012), openness-to-change and self-transcendence values express 'anxiety-free' motivations, tending to expand social relationships; these values are more likely to be connected to interest in other cultures, impartiality in comparing cultures, and flexibility in intercultural communication. Conservation and self-enhancement values are connected to avoidance of conflict and maintenance of the current order or control, which can restrain people's acceptance of other cultures and their influences or communication with people of other cultures. As research has shown that people's cultural value orientations can predict how they view themselves in relation to another cultural group, it is reasonable to assume that EFL teachers' cultural values influence how they see themselves in relation to both their own cultures and the cultures they teach about.

5.1.2 Conceptualizing intercultural identities of EFL teachers

According to Beijaard et al. (2004), a teacher's professional identity consists of different sub-identities for different contexts. In an extension of this, intercultural identity can be

[8] The present figure slightly differs from the original one in that the margin between Hedonism and the neighbouring values were originally dots which suggests that Hedonism is related to both Openness-to-Change and Self-Enhancement. This relationship is not a matter of concern in this dissertation.

regarded as a sub-identity of EFL teachers' professional identity, because it focuses on the identity of teachers in the specific context of teaching about cultures instead of the general teaching context. Intercultural identity was previously defined by Alptekin and Alptekin (1984) as an identity which may cross the boundary between different cultures, through people understanding and appreciating cultural diversity while not losing their own norms and values. Various definitions and related concepts can be found in the available literature related to intercultural identities. In the current study, based on our findings described in Chapter 4 in section 4.5.1, we distinguish four factors underlying teachers' intercultural identity perceptions: namely, *'Openness to ES cultures', 'Connection to ES cultures', 'Disconnection from ES Cultures',* and *'Impartiality with respect to ES Cultures'*. The factor 'Connection to ES cultures' shows teachers' general perceptions of themselves in relation to ES cultures. The factors 'Openness to ES cultures' and 'Disconnection from ES Cultures' illustrate from different perspectives how well teachers are able to notice and experience cultural differences, i.e., their *intercultural sensitivity* (Hammer et al., 2003). The factor 'Impartiality with respect to ES cultures' reveals teachers' attitudes towards ES cultures in their teaching practice. As mentioned in Chapter 4, in different sociocultural contexts, teachers may have different perceptions of themselves in relation to ES cultures with respect to these four factors. EFL teachers of different cultural origins may also attach differing importance to cultural values, and this can influence their identity perceptions. As outlined earlier in this chapter, we assume that EFL teachers' cultural values influence their perceptions of themselves as teachers in relation to both their own cultures and the cultures they teach about, i.e., their intercultural identities.

5.1.3 The current study

In this study, we aimed to contribute to the knowledge base for inspiring pedagogies and training in foreign language teaching, in particular with regard to teaching about culture in an intercultural context. To understand how EFL teachers teach cultural issues in class, we need to know more about how their cultural values and their intercultural identity perceptions are connected. To that end, we explored how cultural values might be used to predict teachers' intercultural identities.

We focused on non-native EFL teachers in China and the Netherlands in this study; this enabled a comparison between two countries that were clearly either very distant

from or very close to the cultures of English-speaking countries. China is more distant from ES cultures than the Netherlands. Moreover, because of the different geographic distances, only a small proportion of Chinese EFL teachers have opportunities to go to ES countries each year. Though the number of Chinese students who study abroad has increased dramatically in recent years, considering the large population, the proportion of overseas Chinese students is still quite small and opportunities to contact foreigners or travel to ES cultures are limited (CCTV, 2015). Compared with Chinese students, Dutch students have more opportunities to go on holiday or on school trips in ES countries, or to study there after graduation from secondary school (OECD, 2016).

Because of the differences between ES and non-ES cultures, it is generally a challenge for EFL teachers who work in non-English-speaking countries to help students to 'understand and appreciate cultural diversity' while 'not losing sight of native norms and values' (Alptekin & Alptekin, 1984, p. 19). We expected to find significant differences between the intercultural identities of EFL teachers from these different national groups, presumably as a result of their different emphases on cultural values. We assumed some cultural values, such as tradition, benevolence, universalism, stimulation, power, and security, might be connected to teachers' intercultural identities, while conformity, self-direction, hedonism, and achievement were not likely to be relevant. Our expectations were based on earlier research into people's cultural values in relation to their attitudes towards intercultural communication (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995; Schwartz, 1996; Tartakovsky & Schwartz, 2001), and on studies of teachers' intercultural identities (Menard-Warwick, 2008; Newton et al., 2010; Sercu et al., 2005). We also considered the descriptions of the values (see Table 5.1) measured in the Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ) of Schwartz et al. (2001), our own concept of intercultural identity, and the situation of non-native EFL teachers who work in their own countries.

In the current study, we focused on non-native EFL teachers, because they are the largest group of EFL teachers, and they are faced with big intercultural challenges in their teaching. To explore the relationships between the cultural values and the intercultural identity perceptions of Chinese and Dutch teachers, our specific research questions were:

1. What similarities and differences exist between the cultural values of Chinese and Dutch EFL teachers?

2. How do the teachers' cultural values relate to the intercultural identities of Chinese and Dutch EFL teachers?

5.2 Method

5.2.1 Context of the research

Our research focused on Chinese and Dutch non-native EFL teachers from various secondary schools in both China and the Netherlands. The cultures of the two countries differ not only from each other, but also from ES cultures (Hofstede et al., 2010; Schwartz, 2006, 2014). China, as we know from the research of Schwartz (2006, 2014), is a mostly Confucian-influenced region that combines an emphasis on security, power, and achievement with an emphasis on a hierarchical structure in society. The Netherlands, in contrast, is a Western European country which encourages individuals to pursue their own ideas and intellectual directions independently, to recognize each other as equals, and to aim to fit into the world as it is.

As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, China and the Netherlands differ in distance from and convenience of access to ES cultures and education systems. The status of the English language and ES cultures in society and school education also differs between the two countries. Such differences may cause Chinese and Dutch teachers to have different perceptions of their connection to ES cultures, and the need for and purposes of culture teaching.

5.2.2 Participants

We invited Chinese and Dutch EFL teachers from various secondary schools to participate in our questionnaire, limiting our selection to teachers whose mother tongue was not English. Participation was voluntary. Of the 456 teachers we approached, 268 (58.8%) completed the questionnaire. The final sample was composed of 114 Chinese and 154 Dutch teachers of English. The questionnaires were completed anonymously. An overview of the general characteristics of the respondents is presented in Table 4.1 and Chapter 4.

5.2.3 Instruments

To measure EFL teachers' cultural values in both China and the Netherlands, we adopted the English version of the 40-item Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) of Schwartz et al. (2001) (see the first section of Appendix 2). The PVQ has both more general and more context-free items to measure cultural values than the other available instruments and the language is more suited to the level of non-native speakers of English. Because items are phrased in the form of the characteristics of a third person and respondents are asked to indicate how much they perceive this person as similar to themselves, the items are less confronting than self-portrait statements with first-person pronouns. For example, items such as *'He thinks it's important to be interested in things'* and *'He likes to be curious and to try to understand all sorts of things'* describe a person who emphasises self-direction values. In the PVQ statements as well as in other parts of the questionnaire, we used 'he' to mean both 'he' and 'she.' The question for each item is 'How much like you is this person?' Each item is followed by six response options: (a) very much like me, (b) like me, (c) somewhat like me, (d) a little like me, (e) not like me, or (f) not at all like me. To measure teachers' perceptions of their intercultural identities, we used the questionnaire described in Chapter 4. The items are listed in Appendix 1. For the factors underlying the relevant items in the questionnaire, see Figure 4.1, which presents the factor loading matrix for the final solution. As stated in Chapter 4, Cronbach's alphas for each of the scales were mostly moderate. Independent-samples *t*-tests were run on the composite scores of the factors to explore the differences in perceptions between the Chinese and Dutch teachers who completed the questionnaire. We also used *t*-tests (for the gender variable) and one-way between-subjects ANOVA (for the teaching experience variable) to see if there were any differences in teachers' ideas related to these two variables in their personal backgrounds. The findings can be found in Tables 4.2 and 4.3, and are summarized in the results section of that chapter.

5.2.4 Data collection and analysis

The teachers received the invitation and questionnaire through a contact person in the school, the organizer of a teacher training programme, or a post in an online teacher forum. The ranks, means, and standard deviations for the ten cultural values were calculated using the scoring key recommended by Schwartz (2001). The centred value

scores and standard deviations for the items measuring the values of the two groups of teachers were calculated and compared. Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 5.2.

To determine how cultural values were associated with aspects of the teachers' intercultural identities, we conducted standard regression analyses. Based on the definition of the values, the results of previous studies, and our trial analysis, we selected six values for the regression analyses (i.e., tradition, benevolence, universalism, stimulation, power, and security; we excluded conformity, self-direction, hedonism, and achievement). The second section of Appendix 2 shows which questions in Schwartz's PVQ instrument represent the respective values. Three prediction models were formulated. In Model 1, we entered nationality and gender as independent predictors of the factors of teachers' intercultural identities, because in our pilot analyses we found these demographic variables to account for a considerable amount of the variation in the participants' responses. In Model 2, we added the six cultural values from Schwartz's theory (i.e., tradition, benevolence, universalism, stimulation, power, and security) in separate analyses for each of the intercultural identity factors. In Model 3, we split the teachers according to nationality and entered only gender and cultural values as independent predictors of the factors of their intercultural identities.

5.3 Results

5.3.1 Chinese and Dutch EFL teachers' intercultural identities: similarities and differences

For a better understanding of the results of our exploration into the relationship between non-native EFL teachers' cultural values and their intercultural identity perceptions, we first summarize the results of the comparison between Chinese and Dutch teachers' intercultural identity perceptions (see also Table 4.3). From our large-scale exploration of teachers' intercultural identity perceptions in Chapter 4, we found that teachers in both China and the Netherlands generally considered themselves open to ES cultures, more connected to ES cultures than disconnected from them, and impartial in teaching about ES cultures. Furthermore, we found that the two groups differed significantly in three of the four factors underlying their identity perceptions: namely, 'Openness to ES Cultures', 'Disconnection from ES Cultures', and 'Impartiality with regard to ES

Cultures'. There was no significant difference in the scores for 'Connection to ES Cultures'. The comparison of the means suggests that, when considering their intercultural identities, Dutch teachers placed more emphasis than Chinese teachers on Openness to ES Cultures and Impartiality with regard to ES Cultures, and agreed less than Chinese teachers with Disconnection from ES Cultures.

In addition to the 'national group' variable, we found that teachers' gender could be related to two factors in their intercultural identities. Male teachers emphasised Openness to ES cultures and Connection to ES cultures more than female teachers. Such differences were more apparent among Dutch teachers. There were no significant differences between the Chinese male and female teachers on these factors, nor did we find any significant differences in the four factors related to their teaching experience (see Appendix 3).

5.3.2 Comparison of teachers' cultural values

Table 5.2 shows that the ten cultural values of the Chinese and Dutch EFL teachers differed markedly. The most prominent differences are outlined below. While universalism ranked as one of the most important values in both groups (most important for the Chinese, and second most important for the Dutch), Dutch teachers attached significantly more importance to it than did the Chinese teachers. Chinese teachers ranked security as the second most important value; Dutch teachers, however, ranked security as moderately important. For the Dutch teachers, self-direction ranked as the most important value; Chinese teachers, however, ranked self-direction as moderately important. Benevolence ranked as the third most important value in both groups, although Dutch teachers attached significantly more importance to it than did the Chinese teachers. Conformity ranked moderately important in both groups, although Chinese teachers attached significantly more value to this than did the Dutch teachers. Finally, tradition and achievement ranked among the least important values in both groups, although Chinese teachers attached significantly more importance to these than did the Dutch teachers.

Table 5.2

Comparison of cultural values for Chinese versus Dutch EFL teachers (N = 268)

Individual levels	CN (*n* = 114)				NL (*n* = 154)				*t*
	rank	*M*	*SD*	*α*	*rank*	*M*	*SD*	*α*	
Conformity	6	-.02	.48	.625	6	-.32	.71	.646	4.76***
Tradition	8	-.39	.62	.533	9	-1.02	.69	.483	7.85***
Benevolence	3	.19	.49	.691	3	.70	.59	.625	-7.49***
Universalism	1	.37	.42	.738	2	.71	.61	.776	-5.38***
Self-Direction	4	.18	.37	.510	1	1.04	.55	.671	-15.24***
Stimulation	9	-.47	.75	.580	7	-.37	.83	.722	-1.07
Hedonism	5	.03	.68	.522	4	.09	.85	.809	-.63
Achievement	7	-.09	.51	.738	8	-.48	.87	.813	4.49**
Power	10	-.63	.98	.597	10	-1.06	.79	.627	3.86***
Security	2	.27	.43	.721	5	.02	.58	.631	3.94***

Note. M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation. CN = Chinese EFL teachers; NL = Dutch EFL teachers.
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, *t*-test results, two-tailed.

5.3.3 Relationship of teachers' cultural values to their intercultural identities

The results of the standard regression analyses are presented in Table 5.3. As to the significance of the three models in prediction: Model 1 explained all of the variance in the factors of teachers' intercultural identities; Model 2 explained only two factors (disconnection from ES cultures and impartiality with regard to ES cultures); and Model 3 predicted the factor of disconnection from ES cultures in the Chinese group only while in the Dutch group all of the variance was predicted (Table 5.3). From another perspective, connection to ES cultures was the only factor that could not be predicted with the selected cultural values (in the Dutch group, only gender was significantly correlated with the factor in Model 3). To make comparison of the results for Chinese and Dutch teachers easier, in Table 5.4, we report only the significant results of Models 2 and 3 regarding the question of how much variance in the intercultural identity items is explained by the set of selected cultural values (the β value) in both the Chinese and

the Dutch groups of teachers.

Table 5.3

Regression of items concerning factors of teachers' intercultural identities on nationality, gender, and selected cultural values: Comparison of three models (N = 268)

Factors of intercultural identities	Regression models		R^2	Sig. F Change
Openness to ES cultures	1		.063	.000
	2		.104	.076
	3	CN	.047	.630
		NL	.095	.039
Disconnection from ES cultures	1		.371	.000
	2		.447	.000
	3	CN	.198	.001
		NL	.140	.002
Connection to ES cultures	1		.045	.002
	2		.068	.396
	3	CN	.052	.559
		NL	.098	.032
Impartiality with respect to ES cultures	1		.077	.000
	2		.211	.000
	3	CN	.113	.071
		NL	.243	.000

Note. For Model 1 we used nationality and gender as independent predictors of the factors of intercultural identities of the teachers. For Model 2 we used six cultural values from Schwartz's theory (i.e., tradition, benevolence, universalism, stimulation, power and security) in separate analyses for each of the intercultural identity factors. In Model 3, we split the teachers according to nationality and entered only gender and the selected cultural values as independent predictors. CN = Chinese EFL teachers; NL = Dutch EFL teachers.

Table 5.4 shows the predictability of the factors underlying the Chinese and Dutch teachers' intercultural identities on the basis of the cultural values the teachers reported adhering to (Models 2 and 3); only those factors that can be significantly predicted by cultural values are presented. Three of these values —benevolence, tradition, and power— were found to be strong predictors of three factors of teachers' intercultural identities in Models 2 and 3, namely: Openness to ES cultures, Disconnection from ES

Cultures, and Impartiality with regard to ES Cultures. However, these three values were found to be related to more variance in the factors of intercultural identity among the combined group of teachers and among the Dutch teachers than among the Chinese teachers. None of the values was found to be a statistically significant predictor of intercultural identity perceptions among Chinese teachers (see Table 5.4 for the results).

Table 5.4

Results of regression of factors concerning teachers' intercultural identities and ES cultures on selected cultural values (N = 268)

Factors	Regression models	National groups	*β*		
			Benevolence	tradition	power
Openness to ES cultures	2	CN+NL	.097	-.159	-.028
	3	CN	-.046	-.120	-.148
		NL	.155	-.189*	.010
Disconnection from ES cultures	2	CN+NL	.044	.204***	.150*
	3	CN	.137	.054	.165
		NL	-.047	.298**	.204
Impartiality with respect to ES cultures	2	CN+NL	.202**	-.155*	-.180*
	3	CN	.171	-.012	-.171
		NL	.197*	-.299**	-.254*

Note. The selected values were tradition, benevolence, universalism, stimulation, power and security. CN = Chinese EFL teachers; NL = Dutch EFL teachers.

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$, one-tailed.

5.4 Conclusion and discussion

In the current study, we explored the relationship between non-native EFL teachers' cultural values and their intercultural identity perceptions. We examined how cultural values can be used to predict teachers' perceptions of themselves in relation to the cultures they teach about. The questionnaire responses of the 268 non-native EFL

teachers in our study show different cultural values and intercultural identity perceptions. The most visible difference between the Chinese and Dutch teachers with regard to their cultural value orientations was that the two groups put different emphases on universalism, self-direction, security, benevolence, conformity, and achievement (see Table 5.2 for the rankings and differences). The teachers maintained almost the same set of preferred cultural values as found in earlier, general studies of the respective populations (Hofstede et al., 2010; Schwartz, 2006, 2014). Chinese culture emphasises hierarchy and stability in social relationships, whereas Dutch culture emphasises autonomy and equality.

Furthermore, our findings revealed that for the total group and the Dutch group, benevolence, tradition, and power were strong predictors of three underlying factors in teachers' intercultural identity perceptions, i.e., 'Openness to ES cultures', 'Disconnection from ES Cultures', and 'Impartiality with regard to ES Cultures'. However, none of the values was found to be a statistically significant predictor of the intercultural identity perceptions of the Chinese group of teachers. Benevolence, which was regarded as one of the most important values by both Chinese and Dutch teachers, emphasises 'voluntary concern for others' welfare' (Schwartz, 2012, p. 7). This means that the positive correlation between benevolence and impartiality with regard to ES cultures indicates a connection between teachers' willingness to help others (in this case their students) and their support for impartial positions in comparing the cultures. Conversely, tradition and power values are linked to avoidance of conflict and maintenance of the current order or control, which can limit or hinder people's acceptance of other cultures or their communication with people of other cultures (Sagiv & Schwartz, 1995). Although tradition and power were regarded as not as important as other values by Chinese and Dutch teachers, they appeared to be strong predictors for teachers' identity perceptions, especially as far as 'openness to ES cultures' is concerned. This means that, when teachers emphasised tradition and power, they were less likely to feel open to those cultures.

When exploring the explained variance in teachers' identity perceptions for each of the two groups, we found these results to be statistically significant for the Dutch group and, in two out of the three factors, for the combined group, but not for the Chinese group. This implies that the connection between these cultural values and factors that characterize teachers' intercultural identity perceptions was more obvious among Dutch

teachers than Chinese teachers. At first sight, it seems strange that benevolence and tradition had predictive value for the combined group and for the Dutch group, but not for the Chinese group, because the Dutch teachers attached significantly more importance to benevolence than did the Chinese teachers, and the Chinese teachers attached significantly more importance to tradition than did the Dutch teachers. A closer look, however, shows that the standard deviations for each of the factors of intercultural identity were much higher among the Chinese teachers than among the Dutch, and that the standard deviations for cultural values did not differ that much between the two groups (see Tables 4.3 and 5.2, respectively). This can explain why within-group differences in the Chinese group with regard to intercultural identity perceptions have no clear relation to differences in importance attached to cultural values within the Chinese group. The Chinese teachers possibly interpreted their relationship with ES cultures as a professional one, while they may have interpreted their opinions on cultural values as being more personal.

Although our findings provide insight into the extent to which Chinese and Dutch teachers' cultural values predict their intercultural identity perceptions, we have to acknowledge that our study has limitations. First, the specific characteristics of the non-native EFL teachers in our study may explain our findings. For example, teachers who work in their native country do not face the same pressure to acculturate and adapt to a foreign culture as do teachers who have emigrated to a foreign country (e.g., a Chinese speaker in the USA, or a Russian speaker in the Netherlands), and they may understand the items about intercultural identity from the perspective of the setting of their teaching. It would, therefore, be an interesting topic for future research to further delineate the common features of EFL teachers across countries (and possibly across other contexts), in order to identify not only the roots of their similarities but also how these similarities can be used to benefit students and EFL teachers worldwide.

Second, the number of variables included in our study was limited. Apart from the variables of cultural values, national group, gender, and teaching experience, which were included, other variables could be considered in future research into the intercultural identity perceptions of EFL teachers, such as teaching context and institutional climate. In this respect, future research needs to complement our study with small-scale qualitative research. Such an approach would also enable meaningful consideration of variables such as teachers' responses to aspects of ES cultures

presented in textbooks, teachers' levels of language proficiency, and teachers' interpersonal skills.

Our findings indicate the need for EFL teachers to be aware of their own perspectives when teaching about ES cultures. These findings also underline the importance of considering the diversity of EFL teachers worldwide when investigating how non-native teachers teach about ES cultures. An implication of our findings may be that EFL teachers need more opportunities to increase their experience of ES cultures by travelling to those countries more often. This could help EFL teachers to develop greater understanding and critical views of those cultures, as can be seen from the experiences of teachers in previous studies (Guerrero Nieto & Meadows, 2015; Ortaçtepe, 2015; Phan, 2007, 2008; Phan & Phan, 2006). In the meantime, if teachers and their students gain more opportunities to explore or experience ES cultures by themselves, such as through conducting peer interviews, joining communities of EFL teachers, or making portfolios to promote intercultural understanding, this might yield interesting possibilities for culture-related language teaching from which both students and teachers can benefit (Nguyen, 2016; Su, 2008, 2011). Furthermore, our findings might encourage EFL teachers and other practitioners in language teaching to reflect on their own ideas with regard to foreign cultures, be critical of possible prejudices among themselves, colleagues and students, and think about how to respond to that (Byram et al., 2002).

Although our findings have helped to pin down the characteristics of Chinese and Dutch EFL teachers, we must be careful not to create stereotypes. For researchers and teacher educators, such connections offer an opportunity to understand different intercultural identities by looking into the values of EFL teachers. However, it should be noted at the same time that the connections between teachers' cultural values and their intercultural identities were not the same in the two national groups. These connections were more apparent among the Dutch teachers. Teachers in different cultures attach different importance to values, but the values are not totally context-free and they need to be interpreted in specific contexts (Schwartz, 2006). For example, because the traditions in Chinese and Dutch cultures are different, what Chinese teachers consider helpful to their students when teaching about ES cultures might be different from what Dutch teachers would consider helpful. Wette and Barkhuizen (2009) found that Chinese EFL teachers wanted to maintain their traditional status as authority figures and still make sure that their teaching content was appropriate for students' developmental

levels and affective needs. Considering our findings about Dutch teachers' emphasis on self-direction and their greater agreement on wishing to avoid imposing on students (one of the items in the factor of impartiality), it is very likely that Dutch teachers would not do the same as Chinese teachers. This is why it is important to take into account the characteristics of specific cultural contexts so as to avoid forming new stereotypes about teachers' intercultural identities. Furthermore, although research has shown that the cultural values of members of the same national group tend to develop in similar ways, recent research also indicates that increasing numbers of educated young Chinese people are becoming more individualism-oriented (Y. Liu, 2012). This means that the development of the cultural values of various national groups may be influenced by globalization and the promotion of English language teaching. In the future, therefore, attention should also be paid to the roles of, for instance, popular culture, which may have different effects on the intercultural identity perceptions of students and teachers (Menard-Warwick, 2011). It is our hope that our exploratory study will raise awareness of the marked variation in EFL teachers' identities and the many factors that shape them, and of the need for additional research in this area.