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Delving into Indonesian EFL Pre-Service Teachers' Professional Identity Configuration in Teaching Practicum

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Article information	Abstract
	This paper aims to scrutinize the trajectory of the professional identity configuration of Indonesian EFL pre-service teachers in socialization during a two-month teaching practicum at a private school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Two female EFL pre-service teachers carrying out a teaching practicum at the school participated in this study. A narrative inquiry was employed to capture the dynamic development of the professional identity configuration from the participants' points of view. The researchers developed stories based on participant interviews, daily reflective notes, and weekly conferences. The stories were then analyzed to identify the professional identity configuration. The findings suggested that the participants configured their professional selves as EFL teachers in socialization in the school through identification and self-internalization. Their identification was influenced by how they saw themselves and others viewed them as EFL teachers, which was then internalized as self-concepts. Moreover, the socialization process encouraged the student teachers to construct their professional selves, reflected in the emerging themes of the stories: language-, pedagogy-, organizational role-, and spirituality-driven identities. The findings also highlighted that spaces, artifacts, and positioning influenced how the pre-service teachers made meaning of their professional selves. The researchers emphasized the importance of reflection to facilitate the meaning-making of EFL pre-service teachers' professional selves by contemplating their professional socialization experiences during the practicum.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher identity has gained greater attention from scholars in education (e.g., Barkhuizen, 2017; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Flores, 2020; Teng, 2017; Yazan, 2018). Zhang and Wang

(2022) reveal that the issue will remain a prominent topic despite being scrutinized over the past two decades. As it refers to how teachers continuously understand who they are in relation to their social contexts and make meaning of their professional selves over time and space, teacher identity impacts language teachers' pedagogical practices and professional growth (Richards, 2023). However, the nature of teacher identity is not static but ongoing, multifaceted, and dynamic (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Flores, 2020; Sadeghi & Bahari, 2022), encompassing their cognitive, social, emotional, ideological, and historical dimensions (Barkhuizen, 2017). Its construction is negotiated and shaped across settings, influenced by teachers' past experiences, shaped by the current context, and developed as the teachers contemplate their professional practices (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2010; Buchanan, 2015; Flores, 2020; Hong et al., 2017; Sadeghi & Bahari, 2022).

Since teacher identity development is currently seen from a sociocultural standpoint, stressing the role of socialization in its formation (Johnson & Golombek, 2020; Sang, 2022, 2023a), teachers' participation and membership in professional communities of practice contribute to their identity development. Beijaard (2019) argues that teachers' identity construction is a part of their professional learning. Hence, the process of teacher learning is also that of identity learning as it constitutes what is meant to be a teacher (Richards, 2017). This entails that initial language teacher education is paramount in teacher identity formation (Mosquera-Pérez & Losada-Rivas, 2022; Pérez-Gracia et al., 2022) since pre-service teachers (PSTs, henceforth) learn "a core set of knowledge, principles, beliefs and practices that will inform the teacher's understanding of language teaching and of his or her identity and role as a language teacher" (Richards, 2023, p. 256).

Despite the importance of initial teacher education, EFL PSTs face critical tensions in their process of identity learning. In transitioning from being learners to becoming teachers, PSTs may face a number of conflicts between their experiences as students in their previous educational histories and their understanding of teachers and the teaching profession in the initial teacher education programs (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). For years during their study time, they have observed and dealt with the classroom teaching styles of their English teachers, and their ideas about teachers and teaching might have been formed during this extended observation. However, their observation is limited to what is happening in the classrooms, without understanding the pedagogical considerations that teachers have to make during the actual lessons. Even though past encounters with teachers can serve as a resource of identity formation (Davin et al., 2018; Kılıç & Cinkara, 2020; Posada-Ortiz, 2022), PSTs' apprenticeship of classroom observation during courses may have impacted their views of becoming teachers and may create professional tensions as they take pedagogical courses such as teaching practicum, which accentuates pedagogical reasoning behind teachers' actions, various teaching strategies, and other administrative works a teacher should do (Borg, 2004; Botha, 2020; Nue & Manara, 2022).

Practice-centered models for pre-service teacher education, integrating theoretical courses and practices in the language education curriculum during teaching practicum, arguably accelerate EFL PSTs' identity learning because professional practices can only be learned in the classroom and school contexts (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Zeichner & Bier, 2012, 2015).

The schools where the students practice teaching provide the social and cultural contexts for engaging in teaching communities of practice, allowing them to negotiate and re-negotiate their teacher identity (Arvaja & Sarja, 2021; Horvath et al., 2018; Nue & Manara, 2022; Torres-Cladera et al., 2021; Zhu et al., 2020). While teaching at schools, PSTs engage in the teaching community, interact with the community members, and use the resources available. During the time, they are generally assigned multifaceted tasks, such as designing lesson plans, managing classrooms, evaluating students' progress, and accomplishing administrative tasks. Thereby, teaching practicum is not seen merely as the ELT practice in classrooms but also as the dialogic space that envisages EFL PSTs' imagination as real teachers in the future (Aguirre-Garzón & Ubaque-Casallas, 2022; Yazan & Peercy, 2018). What PSTs are doing at schools can function as their participation and membership in professional communities of practice.

Even though previous studies have highlighted the paramount importance of some factors in the process of becoming a teacher, such as emotions (Pasaribu & Harendita, 2018; Teng, 2017; Yuan & Lee, 2016), transformative learning (Zhu et al., 2020), mentors (Aguirre-Garzón & Ubaque-Casallas, 2022; Goktepe & Kunt, 2021; Kuswandono, 2017), and different personal, experiential, and socio-cultural factors (Ariza-Quiñones et al., 2022; Villegas et al., 2020; Yazan, 2017), EFL PSTs' professional identity formation through socialization within the school context has not been much addressed (Sang, 2022). Socialization provides them with the real world of teaching since they do what the real teachers do, such as learning how to teach, dealing with school rules, and interacting with colleagues and school authorities (Farrell, 2001; Turhan & Kirkgöz, 2023). As such, their teacher identity is shaped and negotiated within the school's institutional and sociocultural contexts as they mingle with its members to accomplish the given tasks. Their apprenticeship of observation is confronted with the reality of being teachers, which may instigate identity tensions. The tensions are even more significant when they face the interplay between their personal and professional selves. In particular, they still feel like students but are expected to think like teachers (Flores, 2020). Nue and Manara (2022) further revealed that the tensions between the two selves as students and teachers raised the students' awareness of their current psychological states, which later informed their pedagogical choices.

In EFL settings, like that in Indonesia, the tensions are more complex since the idea of good English teachers stems from the mastery of English and pedagogical knowledge. As PSTs are still learning both English and ELT pedagogy, and English serves as both the means and the subject of teaching, their perceived English proficiencies influence how they view their professional selves and how others see them as English teachers in the teaching practicum (Nunan, 2017; Richards, 2017, 2022, 2023; Tutyandari, 2022; Yazan & Peercy, 2018). Nue and Manara (2022) found that the interplay between good English proficiency and pedagogical practices was paramount in the teaching practicum at Indonesian schools because the students at the teaching practicum setting would acknowledge PSTs as their real English teachers who gave them English exposure and made them accustomed to using the language. However, it is also obvious that Indonesian PSTs often mix the use of English and Indonesian in English classes to help students understand the materials. Mudra (2018) revealed that Indonesian students favored the mixed use of the languages. Such a teaching decision shows that PSTs face the tensions of dual selves as students and teachers, in which they are feeling like students but being required to think like teachers (Flores, 2020). They understand the challenges and

problems faced by their current students, resulting in the choices made in their teaching practices (Nue & Manara, 2022). Zurrahmi and Triastuti (2022) have identified that Indonesian EFL teachers benefited their students in this way because their socio-affective skills successfully instigated their students' English learning. As they have learned English as a foreign language, they can feel empathy with the current psychological state of their students, identify the encountered challenges, and contemplate their pedagogical practices to find the best strategies to help them learn the language.

Indonesian EFL PSTs, in general, experience the tensions regarding teacher identity formation in the teaching practicum, such as conflicts between their previous experiences as students and their understanding of teaching profession, their dual selves as students and teachers, and the mastery of English and pedagogical knowledge. The meaning-making of their professional identities is influenced by personal factors and the schools' sociocultural contexts, where they become a part of the community of practice and socialize with the community members. Delving into EFL PSTs' professional identity formation, this study focuses on two EFL PSTs carrying out a two-month teaching practicum at an Indonesian senior high school. As the school considers PSTs as real teachers and members of the school, their professional socialization occurs (cf. Farrell, 2001; Turhan & Kirkgöz, 2023). The PSTs not only teach students in the classrooms but also deal with administrative tasks, mingle and communicate with other staff members, and follow the rules and activities of the school. Their encounters with the school's members bring about tensions and negotiations regarding their teacher identity development. Therefore, this study investigates the trajectory of the EFL PSTs' identity formation through the school's socialization during the practicum. The research question addressed is "How do the two EFL pre-service teachers configure their teachers' professional identities during the teaching practicum?"

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

To address the inquiry, it is essential to grasp the essence of second language teacher identity and how it is shaped through the socialization process within the community practice and teaching practicum. The following sub-sections delve into the intricacies of the issues.

Second language teacher identity

Language teacher identity refers to how teachers view and express themselves in their professional practices (Wu et al., 2011). It is influenced by both internal factors, such as self-concept, personality, beliefs, commitment, and values (Hsieh, 2010; Gee, 2001), and external factors (Barkhuizen, 2017; Pennington & Richards, 2016). As personal and external factors are subject to change over time and place, the formation of language teacher identity is dynamic and contextually situated, considering their ongoing professional experiences (Pennington, 2015; Richards, 2023).

Recently, researchers in TESOL have shown interest in second language teacher identity (SLTI, henceforth). This concept includes unique characteristics specific to second language teachers,

such as proficiency in the target language, the language's status, and the differences between native and non-native teachers (Li, 2019; Nunan, 2017; Pennington, 2015; Pennington & Richards, 2016; Richards, 2017, 2022, 2023; Yazan & Peercy, 2018). In addition to the mentioned qualities, SLTI involves how second-language teachers perceive themselves and their professional roles as self-concepts (Posada-Ortiz, 2022). Its configuration is relational and experiential since it is influenced by how they view themselves and how they are seen by others, whose results are continuously negotiated over time and situated in particular contexts (Sadeghi & Bahari, 2022; Thompson, 2022; Tsui, 2007). Its ongoing construction is influenced by previous experiences, shaped by the present situation, and advanced as language teachers contemplate their practices and interpersonal interactions with others in the community of practice (Ardi et al., 2023; Buchanan, 2015; Flores, 2020; Hong et al., 2017; Horvath et al., 2018). Hence, SLTI formation encompasses a never-ending, fluid, and multifaceted process that cannot be isolated from any context.

TESOL scholars (e.g., Pennington, 2015; Pennington & Richards, 2016; Richards, 2023) have offered frameworks to delve into teacher identity configuration. Pennington (2015) has offered practice-centered and contextual frames. The practice-centered frame is based on the orientation of TESOL works and reflects teachers' different selves, including instructional, disciplinary, professional, vocational, and economic aspects. The contextual frame defines teachers' identities based on factors such as global, local, and sociocultural attributes. According to Pennington and Richards (2016), there are two types of competencies that develop TESOL teachers' professional identity, namely foundational and advanced competencies. The first category includes identities related to language, discipline, context, self-awareness, and students. The latter refers to three important aspects of teaching, namely the ability to put knowledge into practice, the ability to turn practice into knowledge, and being a part of professional communities.

Emphasizing that the configuration of teacher identity is closely related to the essence of teaching, Richards (2023) articulates that teachers manifest their professional identities through commitment, self-esteem, agency, and self-efficacy:

1. Commitment has to do with teachers' engagement in teaching, sense of calling, and personal investment to excel in teaching.
2. Self-esteem refers to teachers' belief in their success and competence, which are valuable to others.
3. The agency covers teachers' contribution to ownership of their teaching and professional development.
4. Self-efficacy encompasses how teachers view themselves as effective teachers with positive teaching experiences to help their students learn well.

Moreover, teachers' professional identities are formed by past experience, education, and language proficiency (Richards, 2023). The way teachers were taught and observed their own teachers in the past affects how they teach their students. They may follow good examples from their previous teachers or avoid negative experiences. Their training to become teachers also plays a role in shaping their identities. The knowledge, beliefs, and practices they gained from their education inform their professional identity. In second language teaching, language

proficiency is important in being seen as a competent teacher. In this regard, EFL teacher identity is frequently seen from the advanced or native-like level of English. As English is a worldwide language that belongs to various linguistic communities of practice around the world (see Boonsuk et al., 2021; Iswandari & Ardi, 2022; Sugiharto, 2023), EFL teachers are encouraged to think about themselves as multilingual users of English instead of focusing on the dichotomy between native and non-native English language teachers (Richards, 2023; Zacharias, 2017).

SLTI configuration through socialization in the teaching community of practice

From a sociocultural perspective, SLTI is perpetually (re)shaped by the interplay between personal factors, structures of different contexts, and professional practices through which teachers make meaning of their professional and agentic selves in the social structures (Cross, 2020). In this sense, socialization within the community of practice plays a significant role in constructing SLTI, as the professional selves of language teachers are socially constructed through teachers' participation in the community and encounter with community members. In socialization, language teachers attempt to gain legitimate membership in the teaching profession by negotiating their self-concepts (Sang, 2022, 2023). Furthermore, their encounters with the community members help shape the tensions of their identity, as they may give different professional expectations to the teachers (Duff, 2017). Hence, socialization within the professional community is central to enacting and shaping SLTI.

As the negotiation of SLTI in socialization is dynamic, contextual, and discursive, understanding how teachers position themselves and are viewed by others within their professional community is crucial (Sang, 2023a; Tavakol & Tavakoli, 2022). In this regard, their professional identities are shaped by the positions and views addressed to them in the professional community. Teachers' encounters with other teachers across time and space in the teaching community dynamically influence their negotiated identities since the contextualized interaction encourages teachers to re-negotiate their identities. Furthermore, their positioning in such interaction is essential to understanding SLTI tensions and professional development as it can also capture the issue of unequal power in the professional community (Kayi-Aydar, 2019; Tavakol & Tavakoli, 2022). Hence, the power relationship in the community of practice contributes to teachers' meaning-making of themselves.

EFL pre-service teacher identity configuration in teaching practicum

In EFL teacher education, teaching practicum at schools serves as a route for PSTs to learn how to teach by putting theories they learn in coursework into classroom practices. More importantly, as the PSTs socialize with the members of the professional teaching communities, the practicum provides them with a reflective and dialogic space that encourages them to construct the meaning of their professional selves. In this stage, they transform their student mindsets into teacher mindsets and construct their imaginative selves as real teachers in the future (Aguirre-Garzón & Ubaque-Casallas, 2022; L. Li, 2022; Lofthouse et al., 2021; Yazan & Peercy, 2018). Such constructed professional identities are quintessential in this stage as they will influence their committed actions in their future teaching careers.

The socialization process in the teaching practicum assists EFL PSTs in negotiating their identities. Their professional identities are enacted and developed "in social interaction with teacher educators, learners, other teachers, administrators, and the broader community, and material interaction with spaces, places, and objects in classrooms and institutions" (Barkhuizen, 2017, p. 659). Moreover, as English proficiency and teaching performance have been attributed to the nature of EFL teacher identity, the construction of EFL PSTs' identity is influenced by how they and others view their English and teaching performance (Nunan, 2017; Richards, 2017, 2022, 2023; Yazan & Peercy, 2018).

As global and local discourse impacts teachers' professional identity and classroom practice (Li, 2019), the school contexts where EFL PSTs are placed for the practicum shape their professional identity construction. The socialization in the school fosters them to learn the schools' cultures and the professional workloads of the school staff members, which reflect "their thinking, their positioning, and their individual and collective images of being teachers" (L. Li, 2022, p. 109). The school's shared understanding of professionalism and professional practice configures PSTs' conceptions of their professional selves. In this sense, professional identity is a product of institutional contexts constructed through socialization. Hence, the construction of teacher identity is situated and contextualized since different schools have unique socio-cultural characteristics, which influence how teachers make meaning of their professional selves.

Since the configuration of EFL PSTs' identity in the socialization is greatly influenced by the members and context of the school, the shaping of professional identity can be captured through never-ending reflective activities. The PSTs contemplate their experiences as school members and make sense of their positions and images as professional teachers. Hence, considering their stories of the meaning-making from their professional experiences in the school's socialization can cast light on the dynamic configuration of their professional identity. The use of narratives in teacher identity studies has been proven to successfully encapsulate the influence of emotions and beliefs on identity development (Nazari & Karimpour, 2023; Sang, 2023b; W. Li, 2022), the representation of possible professional identities through metaphors (Maddamsetti & Yuan, 2023), the process of manifesting a haunted identity (Woolhouse, 2023), and the pursuit of professional recognition (Do & Hoang, 2023).

METHOD

This study was framed within a narrative inquiry approach, focusing mainly on the centrality of stories in the "sense-making of social phenomena by both the participants and the researchers" through the dialogic processes (Barkhuizen, 2022, p. 6). As narrating stories is a meaning-making activity (Golombek & Johnson, 2021), the researchers and participants of narrative studies simultaneously co-construct the meaning of participants' lived experiences within particular spatial and temporal contexts. Thus, the narrated experiences can capture the dynamic changes in participants' lives over time and space.

As stories have a central role in unpacking language teachers' meaning-making of themselves

(Barkhuizen, 2014, 2022; Barkhuizen et al., 2014; Golombek & Johnson, 2021), narrative inquiry helped the researchers to better understand the trajectory of Indonesian EFL PSTs' professional identity formation in the teaching practicum. The participants revealed their negotiated professional identities in the school's socialization by telling stories. As Barkhuizen (2022) highlights the importance of the contexts in which the stories are told, the school's context is paramount in shaping the stories and is reflected in the stories.

Context and participants

This study was situated in a private Catholic senior high school in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Since its establishment in 1949, the school, run by a group of nuns whose work is focused on education, has only been intended for female students. As one of the outstanding schools in Indonesia, its students come from various backgrounds and places around the country. Moreover, the school is well-known for its discipline, academic and non-academic achievement, and students' good English proficiencies. Due to its excellence, it has been used for teaching internship programs, in which EFL PSTs become the school's members.

Lena and Aurelia (pseudonym), female EFL PSTs who conducted a two-month teaching practicum in the school, participated in this study. They were part of the ELT department at a private university in the same city and were the only ones taking the practicum at the school. The first author served as the coordinator of the teaching internship of the ELT department and the field supervisor of the two teacher candidates during their teaching practicum. Both PSTs were selected and placed in the school for their excellent English and teaching performance. They had performed well in the English skill courses and teaching pedagogies taken before the teaching practicum. Having access to the participants, the first author could dig more deeply into their professional experiences during the practicum. However, prior to the commencement of the study, the PSTs were informed about the study's nature and asked for their consent to participate.

As the school was concerned with preparing future teachers, the PSTs placed in the school were considered real teachers during the teaching practicum. They were encouraged to follow all school rules as the other members of the school did. They engaged in school activities, worked on administrative tasks, and interacted with all school members. Furthermore, two experienced English teachers were assigned as their mentor teachers, who assisted them in planning the lessons, teaching the classes, and assessing the students. The participants filled out a daily logbook and reflected on their daily activities. The logbook focused on four main aspects: activities, challenges and strategies to overcome, feelings toward a particular activity, and the meaning-making of the experiences in regard to their identities as English teachers. The reflections were submitted to the mentors from the school and university. In addition, weekly conferences between the participants and field supervisor were carried out to reflect on participants' experiences and professional identity formation.

Data collection and analysis

Data were collected over two months. As the participants filled out daily-reflective notes on

the logbook, the reflective notes yielded some information about their meaning-making process as teachers related to their socialization in the school. The first author took the information from the logbook to be discussed further in the weekly conferences. The questions focused on how they socialized in the school and the identity tensions resulting from the encounters with the members of the schools. Therefore, the conferences facilitated the dialogic meaning-making process between the first author and the participants. The results of the conferences provided a clear picture of the participants' weekly socialization and its impacts on their EFL teacher identity formation.

The second author conducted audio-recorded semi-structured interviews with the participants to gain full stories. The interviews aimed to investigate further the participants' socialization and their identity negotiations due to the socialization in the school. Probing questions were used to elicit the stories from the participants. The questions were related to participants' experiences in the socialization process in which they took on the job responsibilities of real teachers and their professional identity negotiation in the process. Having built a good rapport with the participants, the second author conducted the interviews more relaxedly, and the participants comfortably narrated their experiences. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian, each lasting for about one hour. The use of the first language enabled the participants to express themselves more accurately and comprehensively, and allowed the interviewer to grasp subtleties and references that might be embedded in their responses. Hence, it led to a more comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences.

The interviews were transcribed, and the transcripts were repeatedly read to ensure accuracy. Each participant's story was developed by the first author mainly based on the data from the interview and supported by the data from daily reflections and weekly conferences. In crafting the stories, the first author also translated the interview transcript to provide direct quotations from the participants. The use of multiple data sources is to ensure the trustworthiness of the stories. Furthermore, the researchers used a member-checking strategy, i.e., by returning the stories to the participants (Candela, 2019; Creswell & Miller, 2000). The participants checked the accuracy of their narrated voices, and they were encouraged to give additional points if necessary or delete the parts they disagreed with. The practice of member checking could provide a reflective space for the participants (Candela, 2019). Finally, the researchers employed thematic analysis of the participants' stories to find the themes related to the professional identity configuration (Barkhuizen, 2014).

FINDINGS

Lena's story: "It (my excellent English) is not enough"

After finishing her study at a state senior high school, Lena started her new academic journey as an ELT student at a private university. Nevertheless, she decided to focus solely on mastering English instead of becoming an English teacher. As time went by, Lena became accustomed to the teaching principles and ELT discourse. Soon after finishing the coursework and campus-based teaching practicum, she was placed in the private school for a school-based teaching practicum.

Becoming an excellent English user: Language-related identity and linguistic investment

Lena was initially anxious about the practicum as she learned from others that the school was known as an excellent school where most students could speak English fluently. She recalled:

> I know that the students in the school outperform others with their English. [...] If my English is not as good as theirs, they will laugh at me. In fact, I still make a lot of mistakes in pronunciation and grammar. I will be embarrassed if I am not better than my students.

Accordingly, Lena spent her time re-learning English pronunciation and grammar. In order to increase her English fluency, Lena made it a priority to practice her speaking regularly. For her, English performance was crucial in classroom interaction. To make her English natural, she practiced giving English instructions since she would use them frequently in classrooms. She believed an English teacher had to be exemplary in using English in front of the class. Her encounters with previous English teachers and teacher educators who used excellent English in the classroom confirmed that she had to speak English well. She believed that her excellent English mastery could make her students respect her, and she could easily manage them. Hence, her English mastery was a powerful tool in class management, showing her expertise to the students. She highlighted:

> I must show my excellent English to the students. [...] I learn more and more to make sure that my English is better than my students' English. I believe it makes the students respect me, and I will easily control them.

Apparently, as she believed that her good English mastery was a capital in her teaching practices, Lena made linguistic investments. In this regard, she projected a language-related identity.

Performing professional routines: Artifact, space, commitment, and acknowledgment

On the first day of her teaching practicum, Lena and Aurelia met the school principal, a Catholic nun. She welcomed them as school members and explained the school's rules, emphasizing that starting from that day, they were considered the school's teachers. Therefore, they needed to follow all school agendas, except the teachers' weekly meeting, as it was intended for permanent teachers only, and to know the rules and how to behave in front of the students and other teachers. The principal also described the administrative tasks they should accomplish in the practicum and reminded them how to dress in a teacher style, asking them to wear the school uniform on particular days. Lena was slightly annoyed about the dress code, but then she realized that it was attributed to the essence of being a teacher in the school. The artifact showed her professional self. She said:

> My being a teacher in the school starts with the professional look. This may seem trivial, but the first impression that the teacher makes on the students depends on the teacher's appearance. [...] I always wear the school's uniform.

Moreover, Lena felt accepted in the school community as she spent time in the teacher's room

and mingled with other teachers. She did what other teachers did. She learned about the real lives of teachers outside the classroom, finding that teachers' responsibilities ranged from lesson planning to evaluating students' learning. They also accomplished administrative tasks and got involved in students' extracurricular activities. Lena was overwhelmed by the tasks in the first week of her practicum. She found that her current experience of being a teacher differed from the impressions she had from previous educational experiences, through which she observed that the main task of teachers was only to teach the class. Dealing with the complexity, Lena managed her time well. Good time management would determine her success in accomplishing the tasks. Therefore, she was committed to using her time wisely in order to complete the given tasks. Indeed, the given spaces provided her with ample opportunities to experience and take professional roles and shaped the configuration of her professional identities.

Since the school organized a daily morning prayer, Lena also regularly got involved in the activity. The morning prayer featured reflection on the school members' divine works of helping students grow as human beings. The spirituality-based activity made her more aware that her teaching had to be a blessing for her students. She learned that spirituality was more profound than religion, but it was a power to act. Her interaction with senior teachers who had worked at the school for years affirmed that teaching was a profession and a godly vocation. Being a teacher was one of the divine works that helped young people achieve their full potential. She admitted, "I need to humanize and help them achieve their whole persons." In this respect, she configured a spirituality-related identity.

As she interacted with the school members, her presence as an English teacher was acknowledged. Some teachers had English conversations with her. Some also asked about the meaning of English vocabulary. The principal also used English when she had a conversation with Lena. Moreover, Lena welcomed the students in the morning, which became a daily habit of the school. She admitted that greeting the students in the morning had also played a role in building her self-concept as an English teacher. The students used English to address her. In this sense, the fact that both students and school members used English to address her helped shape her image as an English teacher. The school principal and other teachers also praised Lena's fluent English, encouraging her to build a positive image of her professional self as an English teacher. The addressing terms Bu (an Indonesian term to refer to a female teacher) and Miss were also frequently used by the school members when interacting with her. Lena admitted that both terms made her aware of her current teacher status. She added, "the term Miss is specifically addressed to me, and it reminds me that I am an English teacher." Hence, the acknowledgement from the school's members shaped her self-image of an English teacher.

Striving for a subject matter mastery and agentic teacher

An experienced English teacher named Mrs. A was assigned as Lena's teacher mentor, who assisted her in accomplishing the tasks. Mrs. A and Lena often discussed the agenda of the two-month practicum, including the schedule of her teaching practice in English classes. As the mentor informed her that the English curriculum of the school followed the national curriculum, Lena needed to learn the provided English materials to prepare for her teaching

practices in the classroom. For her, mastering the materials could indicate her professional self as an English teacher. For this reason, she would understand the materials well before teaching English classes. She admitted:

> Mastering English materials properly and correctly is the essence of being an English teacher. So, later if students ask questions about the materials, I can answer clearly and correctly. [...] I always explored the materials a few days before teaching by reading the relevant materials from various resources, which broadened my views and knowledge.

Lena also used other resources as the mentor gave her the freedom to choose materials to help the students achieve the learning objectives. She intentionally chose materials with contemporary topics that attracted students' interest. Such a professional decision indicated that she was agentic because she took the initiative to find out which materials were best suited for her students. Moreover, Lena designed some teaching materials. The designed materials were intended to express her mastery of the contents being taught. She highlighted:

> I designed three units based on the given topics. Really, I can express myself in the designed materials. I mean I could express my understanding and my creativity in the units. I am so happy because the materials are so me. I put my name on it.

Teaching the students: The interplay among language, content mastery, and pedagogical knowledge

Assigned to teach the tenth-grade students, Lena tried to build her image as an English teacher by using English continuously in the classroom. As her mentor gave her the authority to manage the classes, Lena was responsible for students' English learning. In so doing, she wanted to give English exposure to the students by explaining and asking questions. However, even though the students possessed good English proficiency, they sometimes did not respond to Lena's explanations and questions. Some students even fell asleep in class. She came to the realization that she had to apply the pedagogical knowledge she acquired from the teacher education program. She recalled:

> I felt lucky since I got the first-year students. The students were still new and innocent. Initially, they were so enthusiastic. However, in the next two or three meetings, I found them sleeping in the class. I felt frustrated.

Lena thought her English and content mastery were insufficient to instigate students' learning. Her self-belief that having excellent English skills could make the students learn English was re-negotiated in this regard. She discovered the importance of learning activities that boosted students' learning motivation and enthusiasm. She said:

> I built my image as a good, competent, and creative English teacher by designing fun learning, such as using icebreakers, singing songs, and watching videos. As a result, the students were motivated and enthusiastic about participating in the learning process.

Lena regularly shared her teaching practices and challenges with Aurelia. They jointly made meaning of their professional practices. Lena got a suggestion from Aurelia to use social media in her classes. Hence, she integrated Instagram into her classes. Instagram was a popular form of social media that the students favored. This teaching approach made her closer to her students. She was happy to interact with the students using virtual media. She considered the close relationship between the teacher and students influential since an effective teacher must build a good rapport with the students. At this point, she viewed her professional self as a companion to the students, who facilitated their English learning.

Interacting with the mentor and supervisor: A reflective space

Lena's professional self-configuration was also shaped by her interaction with the teacher mentor and supervisor. Her mentor was strict with the lesson plans and classroom activities she designed, emphasizing that the designed activities had to be implemented in the teaching practices. In this regard, she viewed herself as a student-learning designer. She had to understand her students' characteristics and sociocultural backgrounds. Accompanying Lena in her teaching practices, her mentor often provided feedback on her teaching performance, which focused on the pedagogical activities. She remarked:

> My mentor said I forgot about time management in my teaching since I had too many learning activities. When the learning activities were too long, I changed them. […] The students would be uncontrolled if the activities were not engaging.

Lena viewed her mentor's feedback as helping her become a better English teacher, realizing she had to possess good English proficiency and pedagogical skills. Intertwining the two, she could instigate effective English learning in classrooms. Weekly conferences with the supervisor also encouraged her to be a reflective teacher.

Aurelia's story: "I can help my students open their minds"

Aurelia had learned English since elementary school by attending an English course. She never thought of becoming a teacher, believing that teaching was boring because she had witnessed her teachers doing the same things and delivering the same materials in different classes. Nevertheless, in the final year of her study at a senior high school, Aurelia changed her mind after her female best friend, who had problems with English, asked for her assistance in English learning. Indeed, she enjoyed helping her friend. "It was the first time I found my hidden passion," Aurelia said. Eventually, she was thrilled when her best friend passed English with good results. Since then, she has started considering a future career as an English teacher.

Unveiling the existing teaching belief and prior teaching experience

After completing her study, Aurelia pursued a bachelor's degree in ELT with the specific objective of becoming an English teacher. She was focused on this goal from the start of her program. She realized the role of a teacher was to educate young people. To achieve her dream, Aurelia enriched her English proficiency and learned pedagogical skills in the ELT program. Furthermore,

the campus-based teaching practicum equipped her with managerial skills to organize English teaching in the classroom.

With an IELTS score of 7, Aurelia had the privilege of attending a six-month student exchange program at a Dutch university. She also experienced teaching English to young children in a local Dutch elementary school. The exchange program shaped her acquired professionalism and flexibility in teaching, which influenced her subsequent journeys as an EFL teacher candidate. She recalled:

> I learned more practical teaching skills in the Netherlands, where I was assigned to a local primary school with no student speaking English at all, and yet, we managed to communicate with each other. [...] My advisor at the school once told me that it was crucial to have clear rationales and outcomes when teaching, but we could not forget that each student was unique. [...] The students should be encouraged to use what they learned in learning activities. I always try to create learning activities that involve students using English.

Mingling with the school's members: Acknowledgement, commitment, vocation, and committed action

Being placed in the private school for her school-based teaching practicum, Aurelia was excited; she felt prepared because she had acquired English and teaching skills in her teacher education program. She believed she would learn more from other great teachers and students in the school. Furthermore, as the school was famous for its discipline, Aurelia had a high expectation that the students would be primarily well-behaved and respectful. Therefore, she felt optimistic when she was introduced to the school environment by the school principal, highlighting that she became a member of the school for two months. Finding out the principal graduated from a Dutch university, Aurelia shared her experience of the exchange program and discussed some perspectives on education in the Netherlands. Later, the principal applauded her experience and English skills, which made her feel appreciated. Those words made her even more determined to become an English teacher.

Like Lena, mingling with other teachers and wearing the same uniforms made Aurelia feel accepted in the community and position herself as a real teacher. The other teachers also addressed her as Bu or Miss, which made her their colleague. The other school members recognized her presence as an English teacher by greeting her using simple English. Dealing with curricular, non-curricular, and administrative tasks, Aurelia defined herself as a multitasker who could accomplish several tasks simultaneously. Moreover, she kept in mind that all the tasks eventually aimed to develop her professional self as a teacher. She contended, "the tasks are tiring but they make me develop my professionalism." In this respect, commitment is crucial to becoming a successful teacher.

Interacting with dedicated senior teachers having worked for years in the school, Aurelia was amazed by their shared views. She learned from them that being a teacher was to fulfill the human longing to help others. Their shared understanding of the essence of being a teacher

was due to the service-oriented school culture, which was based on the school's religious teachings and differed greatly from a profit-oriented school. Such a value was echoed in her mind. She said, "on most occasions, including in the morning reflection, it is emphasized that we, teachers, are servants." She observed that the lived values were manifested in student-teacher relations, in which the teachers spent their time serving the students. She was aware that value-driven activities were meaningful in the act of teaching. In this regard, Aurelia understood that teaching was a vocation.

Aurelia also realized that the teachers had various tasks behind the classroom. It was different from what she had thought before. Seeing the reality, Aurelia admitted, "leadership and managerial skills are important in my future life as a teacher because I lead and manage myself and others." She viewed a teacher as someone who possessed strong leadership and management skills and was deeply devoted to their role.

Dealing with the students: An exemplary, authentic, agentic, and compassionate figure

Guided by a female English teacher mentor named Mrs. B, Aurelia also had the chance to observe her classes. She found that her supervisor was an outstanding teacher whom she could follow as a model. Mrs. B gave Aurelia an ideal image of an English teacher with excellent English, a good disposition, and creative teaching strategies. Furthermore, her mentor encouraged Aurelia to express her true self in her teaching, as the authentic expression indicated her passion. In this regard, Aurelia learned she had to teach the class with heartfelt authenticity.

Her mentor assigned Aurelia to teach English to the twelfth-grade students. Even though her mentor often observed her class, she was given the freedom to manage the classes and employed creative teaching strategies. In addition to using the predetermined teaching materials, she designed her teaching materials to express herself as a creative teacher. She contended, "I designed English materials that attract my students' interest in learning English." She assessed that the available books did not suit her students best. Various activities, including playing games and singing songs, created an engaging learning atmosphere. In this sense, Aurelia viewed herself as a facilitator for her students to learn English.

Despite her good English, Aurelia continued to practice her speaking skills outside the classroom to prepare herself to speak English fluently in front of her students. She made such a linguistic investment because she wanted to be an excellent example of an English user for her students. Furthermore, whenever she met and interacted with the students, she showed excellent and respectful behavior toward them. She remarked:

> In our local culture, a teacher is called *guru*, which means *digugu lan ditiru* (to be trusted and followed). I want others to see me as a real guru inside and outside the class through my behaviors and English performance.

The school allowed her to experience the true nature of the teaching profession, both in and outside the classroom. She had a responsibility to shape students' good character. Once, she encountered a student who showed impolite manners outside the class, and she wanted to

rebuke her. However, as the student did not belong to her classes, she neglected Aurelia. She was not as powerful as the real teachers of the school outside the class. She realized that her position was still an outsider in this case. She could only use her power in her classes to teach her students good behavior. Aurelia recalled:

> While I was explaining the tasks, one of the students sitting at the back of the class looked so busy with herself and ignored me. I knew she was playing with her phone. I looked at her, but it seemed she did not care. I took her mobile phone then. I did not want to do this, but I thought it was necessary to make her respect me.

This experience led her to become a principled teacher, especially when addressing students' discipline and character. Her mentor appreciated what she did to deal with the student's misbehaviors. In this regard, her role as a formator for her students was affirmed. Despite being a principled teacher, she also showed flexibility in her approach to teaching English to students. Most of the time, Aurelia used English to be exemplary for her students. However, when she found her students were confused by her explanations, Aurelia switched from English to Indonesian, understanding the challenges experienced by her current students as she also experienced them in her previous educational experiences. Aurelia benefitted from using Indonesian in her explanation. "It was impossible in the Netherlands as I do not speak Dutch," she recalled.

Connecting the dots with the supervisor

The weekly meetings with the field supervisor helped her to accumulate experience and formulate a teaching philosophy. Aurelia said, "my role as a teacher is to help my students to open their minds so that they develop their good personalities."

DISCUSSION

The participants' stories suggested that forming professional identities in the teaching practicum at the school constituted identifying and internalizing the meaning-making of their professional selves (Posada-Ortiz, 2022). The participants' identification was influenced by how they saw themselves and others viewed them as English teachers. Their past learning experiences and significant others contributed to this self-identification (Ardi et al., 2023; Davin et al., 2018; Kılıç & Cinkara, 2020; Posada-Ortiz, 2022; Trent, 2011), which made the identity configuration relational (Sadeghi & Bahari, 2022; Thompson, 2022; Tsui, 2007). Their images were internalized as professional self-concepts in the trajectory of the teaching practicum. The findings also revealed that the participants' professional identities were shaped and negotiated as they were socialized in various professional practices, in which they took professional roles and encountered different school members, such as the principal, teachers, and students. This resonates with the idea that identity formation is experiential (Sadeghi & Bahari, 2022; Thompson, 2022; Tsui, 2007). Accordingly, the socialization in the school allowed the participants to project their professional selves as future English teachers (Aguirre-Garzón & Ubaque-Casallas, 2022; L. Li, 2022; Lofthouse et al., 2021; Yazan & Peercy, 2018).

The participants' familiarity with the school gave them a clear disposition on what they had to do to be part of the community. As they learned that most school students had good English proficiency, the participants invested their time and energy to shape their English and pedagogical skills. Equipped with the skills, the student teachers could perform their professional responsibilities and roles and participate in the community of teaching at the school (Nue & Manara, 2022). As English was a distinctive attribute of their teaching performance, the participants configured themselves as EFL teachers with excellent English proficiency. Their encounters with past significant figures, such as English teachers and teacher educators, affirmed their built self-image that they had to show their proficient English in the classroom. Even Lena considered her English a powerful tool she could use to control her students. In the Indonesian context, teachers are considered authority figures whom the students should follow and obey, commonly found in teacher-student relationships in Javanese culture, as indicated by Ardi (2017) and Dardjowidjojo (2001). Therefore, their English mastery served as a significant capital to position themselves as English teachers in front of their students (cf. Kayi-Aydar, 2019; Tavakol & Tavakoli, 2022). In this sense, the student teachers employed this language-related teacher identity to initially project the image of their professional selves as EFL teachers in the teaching practicum (Nunan, 2017; Pennington, 2015; Pennington & Richards, 2016; Richards, 2017, 2022, 2023; Yazan & Peercy, 2018).

As English functions as the language and content of instruction in EFL contexts, like Indonesia, the participants believed that their excellent English proficiencies provided students with English exposure, and they served as role models of English users in the classroom. This resonates with Nue and Manara's (2022) findings that EFL PSTs' use of English made students accustomed to the language. However, in her story, Aurelia admitted using Indonesian to help her students understand the materials. Her past experiences of English learning and student exchange in the Netherlands contributed to this pedagogical decision. She understood the challenges faced by her students because she was also an English learner. The tension of dual positions as a teacher and learner encouraged her to employ her socio-affective strategies and empathize with the students to instigate students' English learning (Mudra, 2018; Nue & Manara, 2022; Zurrahmi & Triastuti, 2022). She viewed herself as a facilitator who was helping students to learn English. The participants' stories also revealed such pedagogy-related identities due to their socializing with the students in the classroom and reflective discussions with their mentors and field supervisor. Their pedagogy-related identities were manifested in their designed materials and flexible, creative, and fun teaching activities that attracted their students, showing their agentic selves in their professional practices (Cross, 2020; Richards, 2023). Moreover, the participants defined their professional roles as principled but flexible, creative, and friendly English teachers, emphasizing the importance of their positioning to the students (L. Li, 2022; Tavakol & Tavakoli, 2022). Accordingly, the social and spatial context of the classroom encouraged the student teachers to configure their language and pedagogy-related identities, which were formulated through a series of reflective activities with their teacher mentor and field supervisor.

The findings highlighted the importance of spaces, artifacts, and positioning in forming the participants' professional identities in socialization. Staying in the teacher's room and wearing the teacher uniform, the participants felt supported by the school members and authorities,

acknowledging their professional selves as EFL teachers. They accepted them as their colleagues, seeing themselves in the same position as the other teachers. The space enabled them to project themselves as real teachers of the school and to closely observe the teachers' professional lives, dealing with curricular, non-curricular, and administrative roles. The apprenticeship of observation from their previous education was contrasted with the current situation (Borg, 2004; Botha, 2020; Nue & Manara, 2022), in which the participants of this study made meanings of their professional roles as leaders and managers. Furthermore, the term Bu or Miss addressed by the students in the socialization showed that they respected and accepted them as real teachers in the school. However, Aurelia's experience dealing with a misbehaving student who did not belong to her classes indicated that their roles outside the classroom were not as powerful as those inside the classroom. The ownership of the class determined the scope of the pre-service teachers' authority, which contributed to their meaning-making of themselves. Thus, the different spaces in the school encompassed their different positionings, constituting different power relationships and values (Kayi-Aydar, 2019; Sang, 2023a; Tavakol & Tavakoli, 2022).

Based on the findings, the school's values played an essential role in configuring the participants' professional identities in socialization. As the participants socialized with the school teachers, they learned that spiritual values drove their professional lives, considering teaching as a life vocation. Furthermore, the school's members agreed upon the notion that the act of teaching was to humanize young people to achieve their full potential. The creed that teachers were servants of others was echoed every occasion, becoming the school's underlying spirit of professional practices. The school's values were instilled in the EFL PSTs during the practicum. They meant their professional lives in the practicum should be a spirituality-driven service to help their students to grow as whole people. This spirituality-driven identity resonates with Iswandari's (2017) study, revealing that PSTs viewed their professional selves as spiritual guides assisting their students to be good human beings. The lived values impacted their professional growth and pedagogical practices in the school (Pennington, 2015; Richards, 2023). To live their daily professional work, however, they needed to enact their commitment, self-agency, dedication, and compassionate actions. In this regard, the formation of EFL PSTs' identities was shaped by the local discourse of the school, in which a shared understanding of value-based professionalism and a collective image of being teachers were instilled in the student teachers' minds (Li, 2019, 2022; Pennington & Richards, 2016). Therefore, the school's institutional and sociocultural contexts played a critical role in shaping the PSTs' configuration of their professional selves in the teaching practicum (Arvaja & Sarja, 2021; Horvath et al., 2018; Torres-Cladera et al., 2021; Zhu et al., 2020).

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS

This study found that the EFL PSTs' configuration of professional identities in socialization during the teaching practicum at the school was through identification and internalization of their professional selves. Their conceptualizations of professionalism included the identities related to language, pedagogy, organizational role, and spirituality. The dynamic identities were configured and negotiated through their positioning to the members of the schools across

different settings. Hence, in this study, the configuration of EFL PSTs' identities was never-ending, fluid, multifaceted, and context-bound. All in all, the school's willingness to accept them as its members allowed their socialization to take place, thus instigating the configuration and negotiation of their professional selves as EFL teachers.

The findings constitute implications for EFL teacher education. First, the language and pedagogy-related identities entail that EFL teacher education enriches EFL PSTs' pedagogical content knowledge, which is crucial for their professional growth (see Jiang, 2022). As such, PSTs shape their teachers' identity through the interwoven relationship between English proficiency and pedagogical knowledge. Second, infusing teachers' tasks that instigate pre-service teachers' management and leadership skills into the EFL teacher education curriculum allows the PSTs to familiarize themselves with their future professional responsibilities. Third, the partnership between the university and schools needs to be enhanced so that PSTs' socialization takes place. Collaborative training on how to conduct mentoring activities for the student teachers also helps them configure their professional selves during the practicum. Lastly, incorporating regular reflective practices into language teacher education can facilitate the formation of EFL PSTs' identities as they contemplate their professional experiences and make meaning of their professional selves (Mann & Walsh, 2017; Richards, 2023).

Although this study provides valuable insights, it is important to note its limitations. As the study was conducted in a private school that strongly encourages the participants to socialize with its members, the results may not apply to other settings. Therefore, further research is needed to explore how EFL PSTs' socialization in different school environments affects the development of their professional identities. The researchers also admitted that the developed stories could not picture the PSTs' detailed interactions in socializing with the school members. Future researchers can combine a narrative inquiry and Engeström's (2015) activity model as the analytical lens to expose the interaction of individual and collective aspects of professional identity construction in school socialization. Moreover, when this study was reported, Lena and Aurelia had graduated from the ELT department. Lena worked as an English trainer in an international company, and Aurelia took her master's degree in TESOL at a university in the UK. It is interesting to find out how their identity formation in the practicum has influenced their current decisions. Future studies are called to address student teachers' trajectories after the teaching practicum and scrutinize how the configuration of teacher identity in the teaching practicum influences their professional and academic life-related decisions.

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