

Unveiling the Teacher Identities of Online EFL Pre-service Teachers

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Abstract. The remote education modality inherited from the global pandemic in early 2020 and the emergence of online schools worldwide led different universities in Colombia to establish pedagogical practicum online as a permanent option. These shifts impact the delivery of FL education and the positioning and self-perception of pre-service teachers as online educators in the post-pandemic landscape. Some previous research has examined how graduate and college in-service teachers developed their identities as online instructors during the global pandemic in early 2020, graduate and college in-service teachers' construction of their transitional identities as online instructors and compared such newly-constructed roles with their already-established identities in face-to-face (f2f) scenarios; overlooking thus a complete examination of the experiences and factors that shape student-teachers online teacher identity in planned remote training settings in post-pandemic realities. This qualitative case study intended to address the research gap by unveiling the online teacher identities that 16 EFL pre-service teachers constructed throughout their online pedagogical practicum at a public university in Colombia. Data were collected employing whole-class discussions, recorded class observations, focus groups, teacher's journals, and surveys. The results showed that the student-teachers constructed multiple online teacher identities based on their experiences as technology users and educational software course students. The pre-service teachers also drew on their recent experiences and interactions with their students and the online factors and events themselves present during the synchronous EFL classes in their pedagogical practicum. These

results posed noteworthy implications for FL teacher education programs, practicum supervisors, and teacher development. The study's limitations entailed the relatively short timeframe of data collection and the selection of participants not based on a carefully designed and checked test on ICT and software-specific skills that could have played a role in the resulting online teacher identities.

Keywords: Computer-mediated communication, EFL preservice teachers, identities, online teacher identity, teacher education.

Introduction

The global pandemic in early 2020 brought about emergency remote education, leading to permanent changes in various teaching and learning methods. Pre-service teachers in different teacher education programs worldwide had to accommodate their instruction in fully online environments for nearly two years. As a result of this and the fact that more online schools emerged worldwide, different universities in Colombia established the pedagogical practicum online as a permanent option. These changes disrupted the way English as a foreign language (EFL) student-teachers, for example, engaged in initial teacher training and affected the way they self-construct as FL instructors. Given this landscape and the fact that remote and hybrid education is expected to increase and stay (World Bank, 2021), it becomes paramount to inquire about the outer and inner factors influencing second and foreign language (S/FL) instructors' teaching practices and the roles they self-assign and are assigned in those online instructional contexts.

Thence, working on online teacher identity both as a research framework and as a pedagogical tool can contribute to a better understanding of teachers' positioning and the factors affecting their online teaching performance, leading them to reflect, make decisions, and better inform their practices to enhance their online language teaching ultimately. Extensive empirical research has been carried out on the professional identities of both practising teachers (Beijaard et al., 2023; Kudaibergenov & Lee, 2022; Mosquera-Pérez & Losada-Rivas, 2022) and pre-service teachers (Ardi et al., 2023; Huang & Wang, 2024; Pita-Castro & Castiblanco-Rincón, 2021), contending that these identities are not fixed, but multiple and shifting depending on instructors' personal, academic, and career experiences and interactions throughout life. However, there is little body of research to date undertaking online teacher identity to the best of my knowledge (El-Soussi, 2022; Engeness, 2020; Lee et al., 2021; Nazari & Seyri, 2021; Richardson & Alsup, 2015). This scarce literature has mainly examined, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, how graduate and college teachers construct their transitional identities after moving from roles as f2f to online instructors and how such newly-developed identities are similar or different to their already-established identities in face-to-face (f2f) scenarios. This poses a research gap in the full exploration of the experiences and factors that shape student-teacher online teacher identity in their planned remote pedagogical practicum in contexts of post-pandemic inherited realities at the undergraduate level.

Research Aim and Research Questions

This study addressed this research gap by intending to explore 16 EFL pre-service teachers' online teacher identity construction. It set out to answer the question of *how EFL pre-service teachers construct their online teacher identities throughout their pedagogical practicum mediated by ICT.*

Literature Review

Identity

Although identity has been defined from different perspectives and has been used in several ways, many poststructuralist researchers drawing mainly on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory agree that it is not an individual's static trait determined from birth but a dynamic, ongoing process individuals go through when constructing conceptions, definitions, and perceptions of themselves and co-constructing those conceptions as a result of interaction with others in specific contexts throughout their life trajectory (Darvin & Norton, 2023). In this context, identity involves the continual process of assuming roles and shaping one's self-concept, which can fluctuate based on self-perception and external perceptions from others. These shifting roles are affected by language, discourse, and interaction, all of which are mediated by power relations within which subject positions are resisted, negotiated, and legitimised in particular situations. Likewise, individuals have multiple identities. Defining an individual by only one identity is not appropriate given the numerous subject positions they adopt through life experiences and according to their particular contexts and the perceptions of the other people with whom they interact (Clément & Norton, 2021).

Language Teacher Professional Identity

Teacher professional identity can be described as teachers' continuous construction of their self-concept, embracing roles as professionals, and reflecting on the significance of their work within their workplace environments (Beauchamp, 2019). It is the changing process and product of self-positioning and being positioned by others as teachers. These positions are socially and discursively negotiated and reshaped through their personal, academic, and professional experience and by influencing sociocultural factors surrounding their instructional environments such as educational background and beliefs, teaching history, education policies, school culture, as well as relationships and interaction with colleagues, students, supervisors, and the community. In regards to language teacher professional identity, these situated adopted roles and perceptions of themselves as language teachers are mainly shaped by language teaching personal assumptions, language teaching experience, second or foreign language (S/FL) policies, S/FL mainstream methodologies, culture-language issues, and literacy practices (Norton et al., 2020; Richards, 2023).

Viewing a language teacher's professional identity as a research framework and a pedagogical tool to address teacher development holistically is a compelling task. Through this endeavour, teachers understand themselves as S/FL teachers in their contexts. Through identity work, teachers can be aware of what they are doing, how they are doing it, and why they are doing it. In this process, teachers understand the inner and contextual factors affecting their teaching and professional identities, later making decisions regarding their roles and power dynamics, better informing their practices, and modifying subjective assumptions, leading thus to effective language teaching. Such a process also allows language teachers to regard their labour as critically reflective, self-reflective, and transformative practices (Freire, 2020; Hassani et al., 2020; Morgan, 2017). These elements become bottom-up sources for curriculum, pedagogy, and agency.

Online Teacher Identities

Online teacher identity is a construct that has been paid little attention in foreign language education and identity research. I define it as the roles and positions teachers adopt in a particular online instructional

environment, varying through personal, academic, and career experience and interaction with technology devices, literacy on ICT applied to foreign language (FL) didactics, online educational contexts, and according to how they are perceived by themselves and by other stakeholders involved in those contexts such as students, colleagues, supervisors, and student's parents. Working on online teacher identity is paramount for teachers, teacher educators, and practicum supervisors. Online learning has grown increasingly over the past two decades (Richardson & Alsup, 2015). This growth became more apparent following the rapid shift to emergency remote education in early 2020 when in-person education was restricted due to COVID-19 safety measures (Hajar & Manan, 2023).

In the FL realm, this phenomenon has resulted in primary, secondary, and tertiary educational institutions demanding and measuring teachers' quality instruction, efficacy, and ICT competencies in such online environments to widen their offered products. Nonetheless, although EFL teachers, for instance, have long been trained on basic ICT and FL learning software in teacher education programs, not all are academically and psychologically prepared and firmly positioned to cope with fully online education experiences.

The positionings and self-perceptions of teachers and pre-service teachers play a crucial role in their FL teaching performance and, ultimately, in the online instructional quality demanded by educational institutions. In other words, how teachers view the professional roles they take on in the online classroom impacts their effectiveness, confidence, and professional growth and may also hinder their ability to adapt to changes in the field of education (Buchanan, 2015). These assumed or assigned roles can enhance or inhibit the efficacy and quality of practices such as designing, facilitating, and assessing online experiences, all of which comprise efficient online learning (Allen & Seaman, 2013).

Identity exploration of online EFL teachers is crucial for a better understanding inner and contextual factors affecting such teachers' online instructional practice. Through this endeavour, teacher educators can address and research holistic teacher development by assisting and preparing the teachers while providing space and time for a critical reflection for them to make decisions in the online environment, better inform their teaching practices, and modify already-existing assumptions. Even though in-person classes have resumed, online and distance education is expected to grow in strength and reach globally (World Bank, 2021). In the case of Colombia, despite internet issues in rural and remote areas and unequal access to technology resources, online teaching and learning are expected to prevail given the accessibility ease to education from remote places and the enhancement of opportunities students had to approach multimodality and digital literacy development.

There is limited research on online teacher identity (El-Soussi, 2022; Engeness, 2020; Lee et al., 2021; Nazari & Seyri, 2021; Song, 2022). These studies have mainly aimed at exploring identity shifts and transitions in experienced in-service teachers when moving from face-to-face (f2f) to online classes, comparing such teachers' resulting adopted roles to their established identities in f2f teaching. Such literature has also focused on the identity changes in-service college teachers go through when shifting to emergency remote language education in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic (Kwon et al., 2021; Lee et al., 2021). Likewise, studies of this kind have advocated the importance of emotional reflexivity based on embodied experience; this body of research has thus posed a gap in the examination of experiences that shape the self-perceived and assigned roles of student-teachers in their training process with little to no experience in f2f education. In other words, a research void exists in exploring pre-service teachers' online teacher identity in planned remote language education delivery as part of post-pandemic inherited realities.

Therefore, this study contributes to addressing the gap in this body of research by inquiring how EFL pre-service teachers construct their online teacher identity in their pedagogical practicum mediated by information and communication technology (ICT).

Materials and Methods

Drawing on the qualitative paradigm to deeply understand the dynamic complex experiences in identity construction (Norton & McKinney, 2010), this study adopted a case study design since it analysed in depth a process of one or more individuals which is little known or poorly understood (Creswell, 2014), as it is the process of EFL pre-service teachers' online teacher identity construction in a synchronous online instructional environment in a FL context.

Sample and Participants

This study was carried out at a public university in Colombia. The participants were 16 ninth-semester undergraduate EFL pre-service teachers aged 20 to 24 from the B.A. in English and Spanish program. This teacher education program offers fully f2f courses in all ten semesters, including the two English pedagogical practicum courses; however, students can carry out their practicum in online schools. The convenience sampling method was employed to select the participants, given the ease of accessibility and the fact that they would exhibit participation, considering that I was one of the pedagogical practicum teachers. Also, to keep the homogeneity of their online teacher identity status before the online practicum interventions, unstructured interviews with 25 pre-service teachers enrolled in the online pedagogical practicum course were accomplished to ensure they had similar experiences in ICT skills and online EFL teaching. These unstructured interviews comprised questions related to their involvement with technology-related tasks and projects throughout their previous semesters, both in their undergraduate program and outside it as part of their hobbies or prior studies. A cohort of 16 student-teachers was successfully enlisted, after which I verified their program pensums at the onset of the semester to ensure their eligibility for enrollment in the final two English practicum courses. These pre-service teachers have just finished developing their linguistic skills, and their average English proficiency level is B2+, according to a faculty-driven test. During the pandemic, they all had little experience in f2f English teaching from previous small-scale intervention pedagogical practicums and occasional replacements at local private English institutes in 2020.

Instruments and Procedures

To address the research question, data were gathered through multiple sources involving surveys, focus groups, recorded class observations, whole-class discussions, and teacher journals (Creswell, 2014). The data collection process lasted two academic semesters and was focused on the six months of the participants' practicum intervention, which ICT fully mediated. As the author was the participants' practicum teacher, the author handed them the informed consent, which dealt with requests of permission to be observed in their recorded online classes and audio-recorded during the online synchronous encounters on Microsoft Teams, wherein the focus groups and the whole-class conversations took place. All the 16 pre-service teachers agreed to participate. Once they were allocated to the public and private institutions in the fourth week of semester A, and After one week of their online interventions, I began the conversations with the students in our synchronic practicum encounters every week via Microsoft Teams. In such whole-class discussions in English and Spanish, student-teachers engaged in and were asked about critical reflections, perceptions, practices, and experiences in their online English lessons each week. I wrote

notes and reflections on such information in the teacher’s journal. Besides, I observed their recorded online English classes every two weeks and wrote notes and reflections on evidenced issues and factors affecting student-teacher roles during their online courses. Some comments were also written down to be used in the individual feedback sessions with each student-teacher every other week.

In late semester B, students were divided into two focus groups so each had more time and felt free to engage in discussions and answer questions about past and present personal and academic experiences and their adopted and assigned positions in their online classes. Both focus groups were conducted in the same week, and students used Spanish. Three days after the pre-service teachers finished their online practicum at institutions, they were sent a survey via Microsoft Forms to get deeper information for data analysis and triangulation purposes. These surveys comprised open-ended questions in Spanish that inquired about the pre-service teachers’ past and present experiences that may have contributed to shaping their identities before their online practicum intervention, as well as self-assigned and assigned roles as online English teachers throughout their six-month online practicum intervention. Upon completion of these surveys, all the data was gathered and prepared for analysis. Table 1 below summarises the abovementioned data collection process and instruments.

Table 1

Summary of the Data Collection Process

Order	Data collection tool	Amount	Timeframe
First	Whole-class conversations	32	2 semesters
	Recorded class observations	63	2 semesters
	Teacher’s journal entries	71	2 semesters
Second	Focus groups	2	2 days
Third	Surveys	16	2 days

Data Analysis

The thematic analysis process was followed to analyse the data. According to Creswell (2014), in this process, researchers start by looking for patterns among the identified phrases and sentences or coded data to build more abstract categories. These categories were organised and integrated to create recurring broad concepts or thematic clusters. Accordingly, my journal reflections on the whole-class discussions, the student-teachers recorded classes, the focus group transcripts, and the survey answers were initially coded using colours to segment the data and identify phrases that the pre-service teachers used regarding how they constructed their online teacher identities. Then, commonalities and patterns among such phrases were analysed to form more abstract categories. These categories comprised information on different perceived roles and enabled action-taking capabilities of the online pre-service teachers such as those of creative, hesitant, encouragers, facilitators, risk-takers, attitude of resourcefulness, encouraging behaviour as well as aspects affecting their online teaching practices such as school teachers’ denial of permission to carry out innovative practices, lack of ICT competency, weak internet connection, among others. Finally, such categories to develop prevalent themes were organised and interconnected. Said themes were named,

refined, and filtered until they provided insights into the way the EFL pre-service teachers constructed their online teacher identities throughout their online classes.

Results

The main themes that emerged from data analysis to answer the research question were: (a) a nuanced online teacher identity construction, (b) transforming online EFL learning through resourcefulness, student-centeredness, and empowerment, and (c) agency constraints in online EFL teaching. For the aim of this article, the findings related to the first theme were presented: a nuanced online teacher identity construction. To illustrate the elaborations on such a theme, excerpts translated from Spanish to English with some of the pre-service teachers' reflections and notes were presented hereafter. Fictitious names were intentionally used for the participants to ensure their anonymity and protect their identities when referencing them in these excerpts.

A Nuanced Online Teacher Identity Construction

Throughout their online pedagogical practicum, one of the roles pre-service teachers adopted was that of *creative facilitators*. The thematic analysis revealed that some student-teachers characterised themselves as facilitator teachers who expressed their concern on positioning not as the does-it-all teacher but as one who creatively designed and provided digital tools, strategies, and guidelines so that their learners could achieve the set goals and objectives in the school's curriculum. Similarly, the pre-service teachers recognised that designing innovative lessons requires significant time and effort.

Teacher, I consider letting students do the activities themselves more effective. For example, I give them time to develop the tasks based on some instructions, rather than simply telling and giving them everything or, let's say... sharing my screen and having them tell me the move or action to take or the option to choose. (Allison, whole-class discussion 5)

Based on what I experienced in the first two weeks [of the practicum], I think we as online teachers need to be very creative with technology in our classes so students experience meaningful learning; since... my fourth class, I started to plan and design more innovatively the activities, and, for example, slides, flashcards, and tasks that I wanted to show and... yes, implement in each class. It takes a lot of time, but it is worth seeing that our students can do things in English on their own without my presence in person. (Sara, focus group 2)

The student-teachers drew on their past experiences as educational software course students, which contributed to constructing their identities as creative facilitators. Their responses and my notes showed that they guided their learners in their online EFL learning process with the facilitation and implementation of several educational software and websites such as Google Docs, YouTube, Educaplay, Wordwall, Flippity, Classtools, Edpuzzle, Kahoot, Socrative, and PowerPoint. They applied their creativity in developing and adapting activities using these resources, employing them as techniques to present language and provide learners with practice on such topics, carry out literacy practices, and allow for language use.

Two semesters ago, we saw how to use some apps, or more precisely software programs because it is through computers, and I decided to use them in my [online] classes as through those resources, my students can get more effective learning and develop all their skills in the foreign language. (Kaleth, survey)

It is pertinent to see the intelligent incorporation of the two websites to accomplish the lesson plan's objectives. (Teacher's journal)

Another role the pre-service teachers adopted throughout their online EFL classes was that of *diffident risk-takers*. The results from the thematic analysis indicated that some pre-service teachers characterised themselves as diffident online teachers. These student-teachers competence in (ICT), specific software, and computer-mediated communication (CMC) are not high. Also, their experience as technology users and as students of the ICT in education and educational software courses throughout their degree program seemed not fruitful for them due to several factors such as personal dislike, course quality, absences, and underestimation of the subject. Despite their firm steps in the online EFL teaching field, they took risks in implementing techniques and resources they were not savvy about in their classes and could manage to finish their online practicum appropriately. Similarly, some indicated their interest in receiving guidance on various resources and strategies to improve their online teaching methods and promote their students' independence.

Teacher, in most of my classes, I am not entirely convinced or... like confident if the process I am taking them through is of quality... the thing is that I have not been much of a technology fan... even from school... I just started to consider its importance for lots of stuff like... a year ago. Even though we took some subjects about technology, like in the fifth semester, I don't know... .. it was [taught] in Spanish... isolated from our field... I didn't find it interesting. (Ayleen, focus group 1)

I consider myself good at technology, but talking specifically about [educational] recourses, I feel a little void there... I am not very autonomous in that matter... here [at the university], we were taught some things about that, but I couldn't attend much at that time because of personal issues. When I attended, we saw how to manage certain websites and programs but were not very focused on English teaching. (Claudia, whole-class discussion 8)

The pre-service teachers' reflections and my notes on the observed recorded class also revealed that their experiences with unstable connection, not only from their side but also from their learners' get them frustrated and contribute to shaping their identity as diffident and making it more evident. Their predisposition in each class based on connection incidents in the previous courses added to their perception of themselves as illiterate in software-specific management. CMC provided elements for them to construct such an online teacher identity. Nevertheless, these student-teachers worked hard until the end of the practicum interventions. They tried some strategies and essential online resources they were unfamiliar with to develop their learners' skills in English.

Maybe the problems I've had with the internet [connection]... that is like the most complex aspect I've experienced since the online practicum started, teacher... it makes one feel unstable in this online modality... I mean, it is good that you teach us some strategies and software programs to use in our classes and that I look for by myself how to use more resources to facilitate learning, but, well... this is an issue that refrains one a lot in the [online] lessons. (Diana, whole-class discussion 17)

The connectivity of my students is a factor that I have been very concerned about. I often plan the lesson thinking about portraying a video or song on YouTube or giving them a Wordwall link to practice the topic. Still, I am unsure if I can carry it out fully because, at that moment,

my connectivity or theirs can fail, and it has already happened several times. Still, anyway, there I keep on guiding them in their learning process. (Christian, survey)

Participants' reflections also indicated that even though some of their learners opened their cameras, the inability to perceive their reactions, emotions, and moods in a close way made them define themselves as shy and restrained. This situation influenced their teaching strategies and instructional approaches in the online EFL classroom.

I feel pretty limited as it doesn't allow me to perceive my students' gestures, emotions, and reactions towards the events happening in the English class. (Danna, survey)

Well, very few students turn on their cameras, teacher. So, an online teacher is always unsure about the faces they are making, their feelings..., and many other things. And besides that, almost none of them give us feedback, so... I am not sure if what I'm implementing in the class is adequate. (Camila, whole-class discussion 20)

Furthermore, another contextual factor that contributed to shaping the online pre-service teachers' identities as diffident risk-takers did not have a certainty sensation regarding the learners' thorough investment in the online. English class, specifically, regarding whether their students were actively participating in whole-group activities and attentively listening to the pre-service teachers' input, instructions, and feedback. The participants commented that sometimes it was difficult for them to keep going with the synchronous classes while seeing that some learners with the camera open seemed to be doing something different to the explanations and tasks they provided them as some students' participation and engagement with the class activities were absent.

Something constant in my encounters with the kids was seeing and hearing them getting distracted by things and other people at their homes at certain moments. It was kind of awkward and annoying. I didn't know if they did so because they hadn't heard what I told them to do or because they hadn't understood my explanation. Anyway, I called them by name or remained silent for some seconds, and they returned to class. (Marlon, survey)

It is frustrating to see that they are there in the class. Still, some of them stay quiet, don't participate in group activities, answer my questions, or don't use the topics as they were explained and corrected, so... one is like... are they even concentrated? Did they understand my explanations...? (Angeline, whole-class discussion 13)

Discussion

The findings of this case study revealed that EFL pre-service teachers developed multiple online teacher identities during their practicum experiences facilitated by ICT. This study adds to the research that depicts teacher professional identity as shifting, dynamic, and multi-faceted (Beijaard et al., 2023; Engeness, 2020; Pita-Castro & Castiblanco-Rincón, 2021). Similarly, studies on teacher identity have demonstrated the close connection between teachers' professional roles and personal characteristics (Bukor, 2015; Darvin & Norton, 2023), and this study relates to such an approach as some of the identities the participant student-teachers constructed were more potent than others. They varied according to their past and present personal, academic, and professional experiences and interactions regarding technology,

educational software, online classroom management, socio-emotional management in online environments, and literacy on FL didactic frameworks applied to online instructional contexts.

Some of the abovementioned factors contributed, for instance, to some pre-service teachers' characterisation as creative facilitators. They considered being an innovative teacher who facilitates online learning by using several digital tools vital in their online practicum classes. This agrees with the skills pyramid model that Stickler et al. (2020) recall, which accounts for the necessary abilities online language instructors should have. In this model, creativity and choice are on top over the facilitation of communicative competence and socialisation and technical expertise on specific software.

Likewise, research on synchronous CMC suggests that it is vital for online language instructors to implement key methodological focuses such as online collaboration, task-based learning, and problem-based learning to promote communication in online language teaching (Hampel & Stickler, 2024; Marani et al., 2020; Zeng, 2017). Participants in this study identified themselves as cautious risk-takers because of their limited knowledge of CMC principles. They also shaped such a weak identity due to reflections on past negative experiences with technology, low software-specific competence, unstable internet connection, and uncertainty regarding their learners' total investment and acquisition of content in the online classes, which constitute similarities to Song's (2022) autobiographical findings.

In conclusion, every participant in this study participated in critical reflection on their online practice during their pedagogical practicum. Such critical reflective practices allowed them to inform pedagogical choices better, self-develop, modify their underlying assumptions about online teaching and learning, and ultimately transform their online EFL practice (Freire, 2020; Hassani et al., 2020; Morgan, 2017). In this context, it is crucial to remember Lamy and Hampel's (2007) views on teachers as reflective practitioners in the computer-mediated language learning environment: "reflecting on one's teaching via online tools, and reflecting on one's online teaching" (p. 73). The former encourages online language teachers to exchange their thoughts and reflections on their online practice with colleagues or teacher educators, and the latter enables them to reflect on their own practice by employing instruments such as journals, critical peers, and self-observation based on their own recorded classes.

Limitations of the Research

Like many other research studies, this study is limited by factors that may impact the generalizability of the results. One limitation has to do with the length of time spent collecting data. Although I spent two semesters exploring pre-service teachers' online identity construction, I consider that a longitudinal inquiry of over three or four semesters could constitute higher consistency and external validity of results.

Moreover, another limitation of this research is that participants were not selected based on a carefully designed and checked test on ICT and software-specific skills. Starting the exploration of the pedagogical practicum with homogeneity in pre-service teachers' ICT and software abilities could have made a basis factor that may have influenced the participants' online teacher identities and thus contributed to strengthening the generalisability of results.

Conclusions and implications

Focusing on the needs, challenges, experiences, and various internal and external factors that impact the positions and practices of online S/FL teachers is essential, especially in light of the widespread expansion and established presence of remote education globally. The student-teachers constructed two

different identities, both strong and weak, based on their past experiences as technology users and educational software students as a result of reflecting critically through the interaction with them, as well as based on their experiences with the online contextual factors and teaching events themselves present during the synchronous classes. Further, these pre-service teachers' awareness of their solid professional identities enabled them to take action to enhance their students' online EFL learning.

The results of this study have noteworthy implications for language teacher education programs, teacher educators, practicum supervisors, and teacher development. EFL teacher education programs must integrate online identity into curricula and instructional practices. Working on this type of identity not only for research purposes but also for holistic addressing of teacher development is vital given the multiple opportunities they can have to engage in critical self-reflection on their online teaching practices and instructional contexts. This study emphasises the importance of comprehensive designs for teacher development programs that place equal emphasis on the personal lives and professional roles of FL teachers. Teacher educators and practicum supervisors are then encouraged to promote tasks and spaces via online tools or f2f wherein pre-service teachers feel free to exchange both their online personal and professional experiences and find out the online contextual factors affecting the roles they adopt and, in turn, their practices in remote FL education to enhance their online EFL teaching and the learning experiences of their students.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research focusing on the construction of online teacher identities among pre-service teachers is anticipated to prioritise a participant-centred research approach. Regarding the participants as active subjects in the investigation process can involve autobiographical affairs in the data collection process as well as a more heterarchical inquiry ambience, all of which may play a vital role in identity development.

Additionally, future research is anticipated to investigate the online teacher identities of both EFL pre-service and in-service teachers to explore the potential impacts of experience on how student-teachers construct and perceive themselves in the online teaching environment. In addition, future research can examine pre- and in-service teachers' online teacher identities throughout more extended periods to gain deeper and novel insights into the factors related to history and experience affecting their teaching practices and positioning in diverse online instructional environments.

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Conflict of Interest

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