
| REVIEW ARTICLE

Exploring pre-service EFL teacher identity: A scoping review from 2014 to 2024

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| ABSTRACT

This scoping review aims to synthesize the literature on pre-service EFL teacher identity across different cultural contexts and diverse theoretical lenses. By systematically mapping 24 studies published between 2014 and 2024, it identifies four core themes: (1) emotion-driven identity construction, (2) technology-mediated teacher identity, (3) dynamic identity negotiation through teaching practice, and (4) cross-cultural identity tensions. Theoretical/conceptual frameworks including sociocultural theory, communities of practice, investment theory, and discursive approaches are commonly adopted in current pre-service EFL teacher identity research. Methodologically, this research has predominantly employed qualitative approaches, particularly case study and narrative inquiry, to capture the complex and context-specific nature of identity formation. However, gaps remain in longitudinal research and studies focusing on technology integration. Drawing on these findings, the paper offers pedagogical implications for teacher education, such as integrating emotional scaffolding, digital literacy training, practicum-reflection cycles, and cross-cultural support, and outlines directions for future research.

| KEYWORDS

Language teacher identity, Pre-service teacher, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Scoping review

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

Identity, as a multidimensional construct, has been conceptualized by Norton (2013, p. 45) as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future.” Building on this foundation, Sedikides and Brewer’s (2001) tripartite model further delineates identity into three interdependent layers: the individual (self-definition), relational (role-based interactions such as teacher-student dynamics), and collective (membership in sociocultural communities). Likewise, teacher identity also encompasses individual, relational, and collective dimensions, which can generally be characterized by a teacher’s beliefs about what it means to be a teacher and the practice of how to work as a teacher (Miller, 2009). Crucially, the three dimensions interact and influence each other, and their interrelationships contribute to the complex and ever-evolving nature of teacher identity development and transformation.

In foreign language education, exploring language teacher identity (LTI) has been increasingly recognized as essential in understanding EFL teachers’ professional growth and has been widely researched through various theoretical frameworks (Yuan & Mark, 2018; Sang, 2020). Research on LTI has been informed by sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Nguyen, 2019), communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), and investment theory (Norton, 2013), which highlight the dynamic, multi-faceted and socially constructed nature of identity. These studies cover a growing number of issues, including teacher emotions, beliefs, motivation, tensions, well-being, agency and professional practice (De Costa & Norton, 2017; Yuan, 2019). This body of work positions LTI not merely as a static attribute but as an ongoing process of meaning-making through engagement with pedagogical contexts and emotional responses to professional challenges.

Over the past two decades, LTI research has expanded significantly, with studies exploring diverse contexts – from East Asian settings, where cultural values like Confucianism shape teacher roles – to Western contexts, where issues of linguistic and racial inequality prevail. Methodologically, LTI research has predominantly employed qualitative approaches, such as narrative inquiry

and ethnography, to capture the complex and context-specific nature of identity formation (Barkhuizen, 2017). Despite these advancements, pre-service teachers (PSTs) or student teachers have received far less attention as language teacher education practices are still largely oriented toward teachers' acquisition of certain skills and knowledge rather than teachers' identity negotiation (De Costa & Norton, 2017; Zhang & Huang, 2024). Their transitional status – from students to professionals – presents unique identity challenges, such as navigating the tensions between theory and practice during practicum (Yuan & Lee, 2015). Understanding EFL PSTs' identity is of great significance, as it directly shapes their pedagogical decisions, adaptability in cross-cultural classrooms, and long-term career sustainability.

Notably, a surge in empirical studies over the past decade (2014-2024) has yielded novel theme, methodologies, and theoretical perspectives that merit further exploration. The growing number of publications may bring challenges for scholars in obtaining a comprehensive understanding of LTI, underscoring the need for synthesized reviews of the existing literature. Nevertheless, existing reviews lack a focused and comprehensive analysis of PST-specific identity dynamics within EFL contexts. Therefore, this scoping review addresses this critical gap by systematically investigating the features and trends in research foci, theoretical perspectives, analytical frameworks, methodologies, and pedagogical implications for stakeholders over the past decade. By charting the current intellectual landscape, it also aims to guide future research agendas while equipping teacher educators with evidence-based strategies for fostering PSTs' identity development in an era of educational digitalization. Based on 24 peer-reviewed journal articles focusing on pre-service EFL teacher identity from 2014 to 2024, this scoping review intends to answer three research questions: (1) What themes and topics did previous studies on pre-service EFL teacher identity focus on? (2) What theoretical perspectives, analytical frameworks and research methods did previous research employ? (3) What are the pedagogical implications and directions for future research?

2. Methodology

2.1 The scoping process

A scoping review (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005; Anderson et al., 2008) aims to map existing evidence on a particular topic, identifying key concepts and gaps in the literature. Aligned with the PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR) reporting guidelines and checklist (Tricco et al., 2018), the scoping process encompasses four iterative phases: (1) Identification, (2) Screening, (3) Eligibility, (4) Inclusion.

Following the above principles and guided by the research questions, the criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of studies were established with an aim to identify relevant research on PSTs' identities in EFL context spanning from 2014 to 2024. Only empirical studies published in English and peer-reviewed journals were considered. Book chapters, web papers and conference proceedings were not included. Using the key phrases "pre-service teacher", "student teacher", "teacher identity" and "EFL (English as a Foreign Language) / TEFL / TESOL / ELT (English Language Teaching) / ESL (English as a Second Language) / EMI (English Medium Instruction)", a literature search was conducted through Web of Science, Google Scholar, ERIC and the author's university library.

We also conducted a manual search in the following 8 journals published in the relevant field of foreign language teacher education to avoid publication bias: *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *Language Teaching Research*, *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, and *TESOL Quarterly*. In the final stage, we employed the Mixed-Methods Appraisal Tool (Hong et al., 2018) to assess the methodological rigor of the selected studies, and only studies that have five "Yes" in the judging criteria can be included. After the quality review was completed, 23 studies met the required criteria. The subsequent citation tracking added another study. Thus, a total of 24 articles met the inclusion criteria for further analysis (see Table 1).

Figure 1
The scoping process

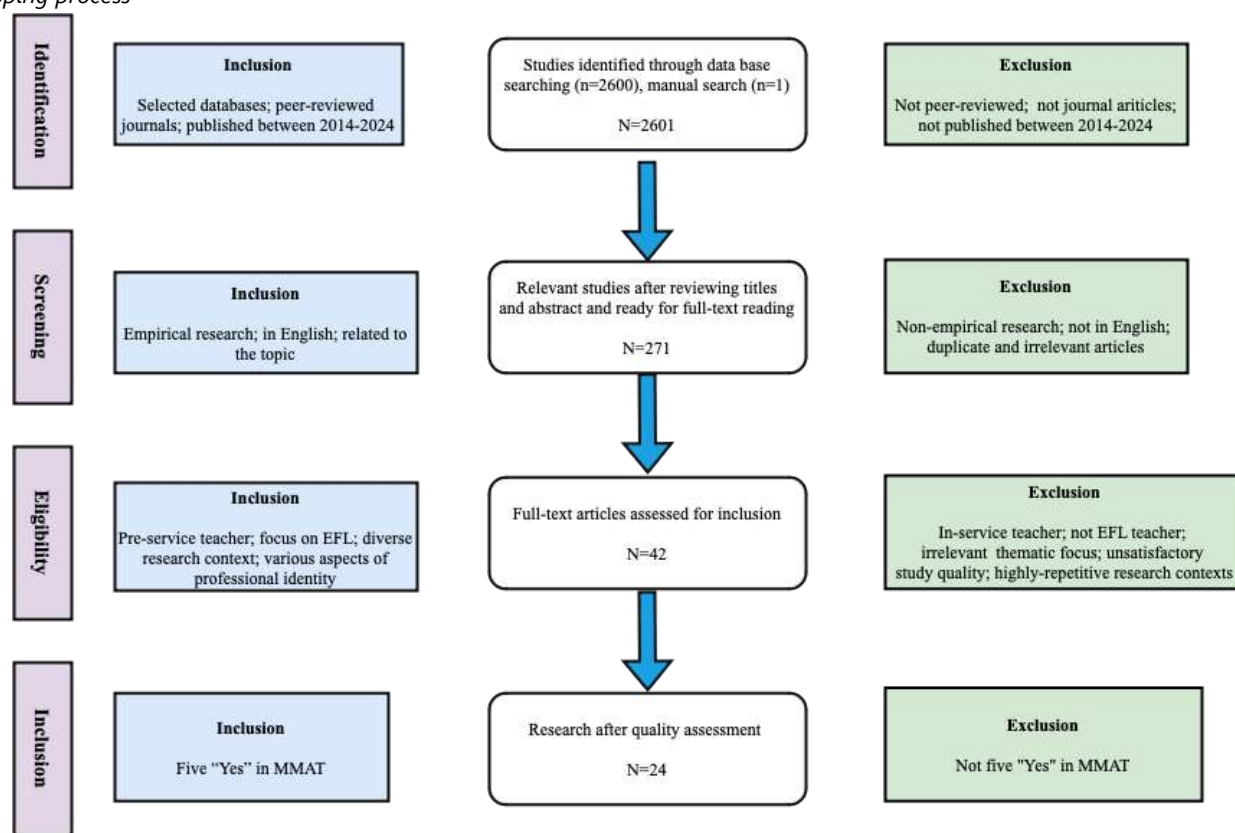


Table 1
The overview of EFL PST identity research

Author	Year	Context
1. Yuan & Lee	2015	China
2. Yuan	2016	China
3. Yuan & Lee	2016	China
4. Chang	2018	Taiwan
5. Yuan & Mak	2018	Hong Kong
6. Yuan & Liu & Lee	2019	China
7. Jiang & Yuan & Yu	2020	Macau
8. Kılıç & Cinkara	2020	Turkey
9. Vallente	2020	Philippines
10. Lin & Wu	2021	China
11. Banegas & Pinner & Larrondo	2022	Argentina
12. Barahona & Toledo-Sandoval	2022	Chile
13. Uştuk	2022	Turkey
14. Dewi & Fajri	2023	Indonesia
15. Eren	2023	Turkey
16. Nazari & Seyri & Karimpour	2023	Iran
17. Nguyen & Ngo	2023	Vietnam
18. Sang	2023	China
19. Varis et al.	2023	Finland
20. Banegas	2024	Argentina
21. Bülbül & Özelçi	2024	Turkey
22. Kudaibergenov & Lee	2024	South Korea
23. Liu et al.	2024	China
24. Zhang & Huang	2024	Mainland China, Hong Kong and New Zealand

2.2 Data analysis

The 24 studies came from different EFL contexts, including Mainland China ($n = 7$), Turkey ($n = 4$), Argentina ($n = 2$), Hong Kong ($n = 1$), Taiwan ($n = 1$), Macau ($n = 1$), Indonesia ($n = 1$), Finland ($n = 1$), Chile ($n = 1$), South Korea ($n = 1$), Vietnam ($n = 1$), Iran ($n = 1$), Philippines ($n = 1$). Notably, one longitudinal case study (Study 24) traced a PST across different educational contexts – Mainland China, Hong Kong, and New Zealand – offering unique insights into transnational identity negotiation. The articles were selected in order to represent the wide scope of research on EFL PST identity in terms of both research areas and methodology. Thus, though the scope of the review is limited to a relatively small number, the database, derived from a diverse range of L2 settings, can, to some extent, generate a holistic profile of pre-service EFL teacher identities and their (trans)formation.

During the data analysis phase, the author carefully scrutinized the content of each of the 24 studies for critical review. Guided by the research questions, four major categories are identified: (1) research foci; (2) theoretical perspectives and analytical frameworks; (3) research methods and (4) specific pedagogical implications. To be specific, the reviewed studies collectively unveil the hybrid professional identities enacted by pre-service EFL teachers, the identity trajectory they experienced from student to teacher, as well as the interplay of personal agency and contextual constraint in shaping their identity formation. A synthesis of the findings will be discussed in the following section.

2.3 Limitations

While this scoping review provides a systematic mapping of current scholarship, three methodological constraints warrant acknowledgment. First limitation of the review relates to the relatively small number ($n = 24$) of existing studies on EFL PSTs' identity, which suggests that this area is still at its infant stage. It is hoped that this review can help spark more research interest by making recommendations for ongoing research on PSTs and their professional identities. In addition, this review excluded research papers published in other languages and other forms besides journal articles (e.g. book chapters, dissertations, and conference proceedings in different languages) which might be relevant to the review scope. Finally, the rapid evolution of technology-enhanced language teaching environments – particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic – poses a recency challenge, as our 2014-2024 time-frame may not fully capture emergent AI-driven pedagogical tools reshaping PSTs' digital professional identities.

3. Findings

Emerging from the analysis of 24 studies across 13 educational contexts, four salient themes encapsulate the complexities of EFL PST identity development: emotion-driven identity construction, technology-mediated teacher identity, dynamic identity in teaching practice and cross-cultural identity negotiation. Theoretical frameworks interrogating sociocultural theory, communities of practice, investment theory, and discursive approaches are presented and analyzed. Then, a methodological review is provided to examine the strengths and limitations of current research methods with implications and recommendations for future research. Figure 2 presents the main research themes and topics in the existing literature on pre-service EFL teacher identity.

3.1 Research foci

Figure 2

Research foci distribution in selected studies ($n=24$)



3.1.1 Emotion-Driven Identity Construction (3, 4, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18)

Eight studies explore how emotions influence the identity development of PSTs, employing sociocultural perspectives to analyze the interplay between emotional labor (EL), identity formation, and factors like motivation, tension, and agency in LTI. These studies, conducted across diverse contexts such as China, Chile and Vietnam, demonstrate that PSTs' emotional experiences and identity construction are shaped by their interactions with students, mentors, and the school environment. The findings reveal that PSTs undergo recursive cycles of identity fluctuation and reconstruction as they navigate the complexities of learning and teaching. This process is influenced by their personal beliefs, teaching practices, socio-cultural contexts, and affective experiences. The research also shows that PSTs must constantly negotiate their identities across different contexts to reconcile the discrepancies between reality and their ideals. These insights offer valuable implications for the design of teacher education programs, emphasizing the importance of emotional support and professional guidance in fostering language teacher identity.

In sum, these eight studies collectively demonstrate the profound influence of affective factors on the identity construction of pre-service EFL teachers. They reveal that emotions – whether arising from classroom conflicts, institutional pressures, or personal aspirations – play a vital role in shaping PSTs' professional identities. Particularly during the transitional "learning-to-teach" phase, PSTs are highly susceptible to emotional fluctuations, which can either hinder or facilitate their identity development. These findings not only enrich our understanding of LTI but also highlight the need for teacher education programs to integrate emotional support mechanisms, such as reflective mentoring and collaborative peer networks, to help PSTs navigate the emotional complexities of their professional journeys. Future research could further explore the recursive dynamics of identity construction and the role of institutional support in mitigating emotional challenges, ensuring a more holistic approach to PST development.

3.1.2 Technology-Mediated Teacher Identity (15, 21, 23)

In the digital era, innovations in technologies have profoundly transformed the landscape of language teaching and learning. In response, emerging research on LTI, particularly through quantitative and mixed-methods research designs, has recognized technology as an important factor in reshaping teacher identity and professional development. Notably, three studies in the selected literature address the interplay between technology integration and PST identity, offering novel insights into digital literacy, telecollaboration, and AI-driven pedagogies.

Among the 24 studies, three of them specifically focus on how technology shapes PSTs' professional identities. These studies explore digital literacy, mobile learning motivation, and value beliefs about technology use, revealing that digital competence is not only a practical skill but also a key factor influencing identity formation. They suggest that PSTs' engagement with digital tools can shift their self-perceptions and teaching orientations, particularly when combined with motivation and belief in technology's utility.

To advance the field, we expect future research to adopt longitudinal, mixed-method designs, embrace interdisciplinary frameworks (e.g., AI ethics, critical digital pedagogy), and prioritize underrepresented contexts to ensure teacher education programs align with the complexities of digitally mediated classrooms. By doing so, teacher education can better prepare PSTs to navigate the complexities of 21st-century language teaching.

3.1.3 Dynamic Identity in Teaching Practice (1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 19, 20)

Eleven studies – accounting for the largest part ($n = 11$) within the reviewed articles – exemplify the dynamic and multifaceted nature of LTI, foregrounding its recursive negotiation across temporal, spatial, and relational dimensions. Guided by sociocultural and poststructural frameworks, these investigations collectively map how PSTs enact, contest, and reconstruct their professional selves through praxis-oriented reflection (e.g., lesson planning, classroom interactions) and context-responsive adaptability (e.g., navigating institutional constraints, cultural expectations). The findings challenge static conceptualizations of identity, instead positioning LTI as an emergent phenomenon shaped by dialectical tensions between individual agency and structural forces. Such knowledge may inform teacher education programs and curriculum development from a humanistic and holistic angle which considers student-teachers as complex individuals with fluctuating sources of identity in tension with their dynamic contexts.

Collectively, these studies illuminate the dynamic and context-dependent nature of PST identity, emphasizing the interplay between personal beliefs, cultural resources, and institutional expectations. They highlight the importance of adopting a holistic approach to teacher education that acknowledges PSTs as multifaceted individuals navigating complex identity landscapes.

3.1.4 Cross-Cultural Identity Negotiation (22, 24)

Two recent studies focus on cross-cultural identity negotiation, which consists of one collective case study examining professional identity tensions of three international PSTs, and one longitudinal study tracking PSTs' identity trajectories across different stages of careers. These findings highlight the complex tensions international PSTs face, such as language ideologies, native-speaker norms, and mobility constraints, and underscore the importance of context in shaping identity. However, the

limited sample sizes and lack of comparative analysis suggest that future research should involve more diverse participants to deepen our understanding of identity negotiation in transnational contexts.

In light of the above analysis, future research can explore the experiences of a larger and more diverse group of PSTs across different contexts. This would offer a more comprehensive view of cross-cultural identity negotiation in the field of teacher education.

3.2 Theoretical perspectives

Synthesizing findings across the 24 studies, four dominant theoretical perspectives emerge as foundational in understanding how pre-service EFL teacher identity is constructed: Sociocultural theory (2, 3, 7, 11, 12, 17, 18), Communities of Practice (1, 9, 16), Investment theory (18, 24) and discursive approaches (5, 22). Rooted in sociocultural theory, scholars foreground identity as a dynamic process mediated by tools, interactions, and systemic contradictions (Vygotsky, 1978; Nguyen, 2019), while communities of practice frameworks emphasize identity formation through legitimate participation in shared endeavors (Wenger, 1998). Complementing these perspectives, investment theory (Norton, 1995, 2013; Darwin & Norton, 2015) interrogates how power, capital, and ideology shape teachers' strategic commitments to language teaching. Simultaneously, discursive approaches unravel identity as a performative act constructed through multimodal semiotic resources (Fairclough, 2003; Gee, 2015; Trent, 2012).

3.3 Analytical frameworks

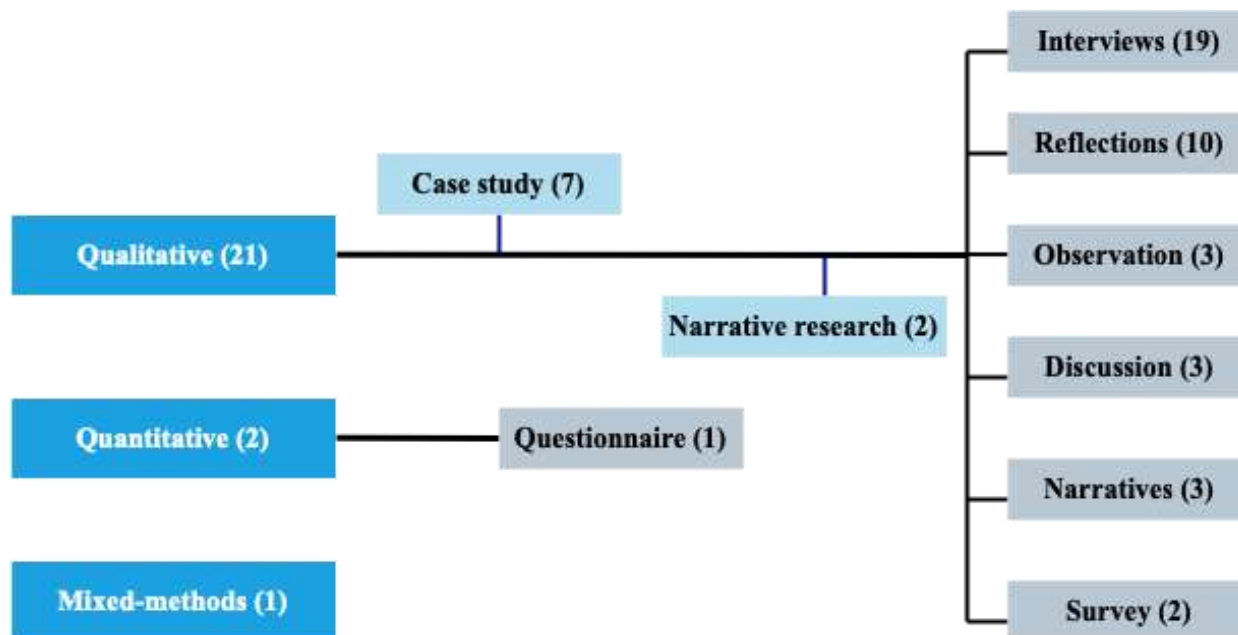
Considering that the selected studies cover different aspects of LTI, it is natural to find that they apply diverse analytical frameworks. The frameworks used include thematic analysis and reflexive thematic analytic approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013, 2019, 2020; Terry et al., 2017) (n = 7; 13, 16, 18, 19, 10, 22, 24), Wenger's (1998) theory of alignment as a mode of belonging (n = 1; 9); content analysis (Cohen et al., 2018; Puppis, 2019) (n = 3; 8, 11, 14); Miles et al.'s (2014, 2020) three-stage model of qualitative data analysis (n = 3; 7, 14, 18); grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2014) (n = 2; 15, 24); Merriam's (1998) cross-case analysis (n = 4; 1, 5, 6, 7); qualitative inductive analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) (n = 6; 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 24); Patton's (2002) indigenous concepts (n = 1; 2). Note that several studies employed more than one analytical framework to enrich their interpretation and triangulate the data.

3.4 Research methods

Across the 24 reviewed studies, qualitative designs overwhelmingly prevail (n = 21), with case studies (n = 7) and narrative inquiries (n = 2) dominating the field. Nearly all qualitative inquiries rely on semi-structured interviews (n = 19) and reflective artefacts such as journals and written reflections (n = 10), while smaller subsets incorporate classroom observations (n = 3), focus-group discussions (n = 3), and collected narratives (n = 3) to capture the context-sensitive, processual nature of PST identity development. Quantitative approaches remain rare (n = 2), typically using surveys or questionnaires, and just one study employs a mixed-methods design. Analytical techniques in qualitative work are led by thematic and content analysis, whereas quantitative and mixed-methods studies apply validated scales alongside statistical procedures such as structural equation modeling, correlation and regression analysis to examine relations among digital literacy, motivation, and identity orientations. Most studies remain cross-sectional, constraining insight into how identities evolve over time; by contrast, four longitudinal studies (Banegas, Pinner, & Larrondo, 2022; Barahona & Toledo-Sandoval, 2022; Nazari, Seyri, & Karimpour, 2023; Zhang & Huang, 2024) track PSTs across multiple program stages. Moving forward, the field would benefit from more longitudinal mixed-methods, systematic classroom observations, and digital ethnography to triangulate self-reports with enacted practices and capture identity trajectories in blended and online learning environments. Figure 3 provides a visual summary of these research methods.

Figure 3

A review of research methods of selected articles



3.5 Pedagogical implications

The selected articles have put forward a range of pedagogical implications for language teacher education in supporting EFL PSTs' identity. The following summarizes some of the common implications of these studies.

For the emotional dimension of LTI, language teacher education should dissolve the divide between coursework and practicum by scaffolding teaching experiences and reflections at each stage. This approach creates mediational spaces where PSTs, mentors, and supervisors collaboratively explore identity shifts and tensions (Urzúa & Vásquez, 2008). Embedding an integrated framework of emotional awareness, cognitive learning, and social engagement (e.g., book clubs, online forums) alongside structured reflection cultivates emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) and helps student teachers build resilient professional identities. In parallel, targeted mentor training and organized peer-support networks enhance PSTs' capacity to navigate everyday challenges and foster a supportive community (Gao & Benson, 2012).

For technology-mediated teacher identity, language teacher education should first integrate telecollaboration into intercultural pedagogy to support teacher candidates' dynamic, multilingual identities and promote mutual understanding while reducing cross-cultural bias in increasingly diverse learning contexts. Moreover, teacher education programs must systematically embed technology training (particularly tools for language-skill instruction) into their curricula and professional development (e.g., workshops, conferences), so that PSTs develop both a strong belief in the value of these tools and a dual identity as subject-matter experts and learning facilitators. Finally, specialized training should build PSTs' digital literacy and investigate its classroom impact through field-oriented research, while support programs foster mobile learning motivation by teaching interactive strategies and techniques. Guidance on how digital competencies shape professional identity, and updated education policies that reflect these connections, will further strengthen student teachers' adaptive, future-ready selves.

For the dynamic and often contested identities that emerge through teaching practice, along with the crucial influence of ideal identities on professional development, teacher education institutions should formally recognize and cultivate novice teachers' hopes and imagined professional selves. Support should then be provided to those who lack a clear vision so they can develop one. They should also broaden their understanding of identity "resources" by helping PSTs identify and draw on valuative, disciplinary, and anticipatory funds as they negotiate their professional selves. Institutions must then guide all PSTs to align these aspirations with the realities of the profession and tailor individualized support to each teacher's unique identity negotiations, thereby strengthening agency and fostering resilient professional growth. At the same time, curricula must attend to the social production of space by embedding discussions and hands-on activities across physical, digital, and hybrid environments to show how place and materiality shape professional identity.

Finally, as for cross-cultural identity negotiation, teacher education programs must critically examine how shifting sociocultural contexts (EFL/EMI/ESL) and differential valuation of capital affect PSTs' self-positioning and investment in professional identities. For international PSTs, the language of instruction has been viewed as an important source of conflict between their expectations and lived experiences. To address this, English teacher education should adopt EMI and investigate

how it influences identity formation and related tensions. Concurrently, maintaining a robust theory-practice balance via classroom observations, micro-teaching, and extended practicums is essential to help PSTs reconcile pedagogical conflicts across cultural contexts. Moreover, teacher educators should actively challenge native-speakerist discourses by providing reflective spaces, through lectures, debates, and discussions on bilingualism, multi-competence (Ellis, 2016), and linguistic diversity, to empower non-native pre-service teachers to reconstruct positive professional identities and navigate identity tensions. Crucially, these initiatives must empower PSTs to convert their transnational experiences and capital into professional agency, transforming identity negotiation from a site of struggle into one of resilience across educational landscapes.

4. Discussion and conclusion

Over the past two decades, there has been a burgeoning interest in language teacher identity, driven by the overarching goal of fostering language teachers' professional development. Research in this domain, approached from diverse perspectives, has significantly enhanced our understanding of the dynamic and multifaceted nature of LTI. The reviewed studies collectively illuminate the complex interplay between affective, cognitive, technological and contextual factors in shaping pre-service EFL teachers' professional identities. These findings not only deepen our theoretical understanding of LTI but also offer actionable insights for designing more effective and inclusive teacher education programs. By translating research insights into practical strategies, we aim to support PSTs in navigating the multifaceted challenges of identity construction during their transition from learners to professionals.

As emotion and cognition are intertwined in the complex reality of teaching and learning, teachers' cognition and emotion should be combined jointly to contribute to teacher development and teaching effectiveness (Chen, 2021; Golombek & Doran, 2014). Yuan (2016) pointed out that the negative mentoring could potentially dismantle student teachers' ideal identities and create undesirable identities, which impinge on their professional learning and growth. Consequently, teacher education programs must prioritize emotional scaffolding and recognize PSTs' initial motivation of entering into teaching professionals, as affective experiences are inseparable from identity construction. In addition, digital literacy and critical engagement with technology should be framed not merely as skills but as tools for empowering PSTs' professional identities. Considering that the value belief in technology serves as a crucial mediator between teachers' professional identity and technology integration, as posited by Liu et al. (2024), it is of utmost importance to cultivate in EFL PSTs a self-identification as educators who are eager to embrace new technological advancements and are adaptable enough to incorporate them into their lesson plans. This stands in contrast to the traditional perception of an English teacher who solely focuses on the acquisition of subject knowledge and skills. Last but not the least, given that PSTs' identities are dynamic and context-bound, curricula should integrate reflective practices to help them navigate tensions between personal beliefs and institutional demands. By providing practical, reflective and coherently linked tasks, student teachers can reflect on and explore "who they are" and "who they are becoming" in relation to their professional practice and interactions in their embedded activity systems (Yuan & Mak, 2018).

Three specific pedagogical implications are put forward. Firstly, it is suggested to incorporate teaching practice into English teacher preparation program, as it significantly contributes to the growth and development of EFL PSTs, ultimately leading to the formation of their professional identity. Teaching practice can boost student teachers' confidence and allow them to form a clearer understanding of their professional identity as English teachers. Secondly, language teacher education programs should create more opportunities to allow emerging PSTs to communicate with peers and teacher educators. Activities like seminars or informal gatherings foster community and support professional growth through shared experiences. Finally, specialized training programs should be developed to increase the digital literacy levels of PSTs, and there should be a focus on field-oriented research to understand the effects of digital skills in classroom applications. Additionally, support programs need to be established for them to enhance mobile learning motivation. These programs should concentrate on adopting interactive learning strategies and improving skills to offer personalized learning experiences for students.

In conclusion, this review highlights the complex, dynamic nature of pre-service EFL teacher identity shaped by emotions, teaching experiences, technology, and sociocultural contexts. To support PSTs' professional growth, teacher education should take a holistic and context-sensitive approach that fosters emotional resilience, encourages peer collaboration, and enhances digital literacy. Practical strategies such as teaching practice, peer engagement, and targeted digital training can empower PSTs to construct resilient and adaptive professional identities. Future research should further explore how technologies like AI impact identity development to prepare future language instructors for the digitalized classrooms of tomorrow.

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