ORIGINAL PAPER

Reflecting on Reflections Concerning Critical Incidents in Developing Pre-Service Teachers' Professional Identity: Evidence from a TESOL Education Project

省視發展職前教師專業認同時對關鍵事件的反思：來自 **TESOL**教師培育計畫的證據

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Abstract

Due to the limited capacity enacted to supervision and the absence of a comprehensive framework leading to the professional identity of the pre-service teachers, the researchers initiate the Growing as a TESOL teacher project that involves the pre-service teachers in a teaching practicum course, engages them in reflecting on reflections concerning critical incidents for conceptualizing their identity as TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) teachers. The study reports the impact of the project on developing the PSTs' identity as TESOL teachers. The dialogical approach suggested by Akkerman and Meijer (*Teaching and Teacher Education*, *27*(2), 308-319, 2011) lays the theoretical foundation of the study. A phenomenological study is undertaken involving 10 pre-service teachers specializing in TESOL at a university in Malaysia. Using multiple instruments, we document the responses pertaining to their perceived identity as future TESOL teachers prior to the project and perceived identities as TESOL teachers after the project. Since the study enjoins the pre-service teachers to share their reflections initially, then receive reflections from others, and finally reflect on self-reflections and reflections of others, the processes induct them into a dialogic activity within the self. With the knowledge gained from reflecting on reflections of critical incidents, the pre-service teachers continue the dialogues to negotiate prior identities with the demanding identities to deal with the classroom realities. The dialogue paves an avenue to readjust and realign their identities as TESOL teachers.

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摘要

由於有限的指導量能及缺乏全面性的框架來引導職前教師形成專業認同， 我們開始了名為Growing的TESOL教師培育計畫， 讓參與實習課程的職前教師對關鍵事件進行反思， 以概念化他們的TESOL教師認同。本研究報告了此計畫對發展職前教師的TESOL教師認同的影響。Akkerman與Meijer（2011）所提出的對話取向法為本研究奠定了理論基礎。本研究為現象學研究， 共有10位馬來西亞一所大學主修TESOL的職前教師參與其中。我們使用了多項研究工具， 記錄了他們在參與計畫前對未來要成為TESOL教師的身份認知， 以及參與計畫後的TESOL教師身份認知。由於本研究要求職前教師先分享他們的反思， 然後再收到其他人對他人的反思， 最後反思其自我及他人的反思， 這個過程激發了自我對話。透過對關鍵事件反思所獲得的知識， 職前教師繼續進行對話， 將他們先前的認同與所需具備的認同進行調和， 以應對課堂的狀況。對話使他們能重新調整他們的TESOL教師認同。

Keyword Pre-service teachers · Teacher identity · Teacher education · TESOL · ESL · Reflective practice

關鍵詞 職前教師 · 教師認同 · 師資培育 · TESOL · ESL · 反思實踐

Introduction

Teacher education programs are meant to gravitate pre-service and in-service teachers' dexterity toward teaching (Karim & Mohamed, 2019; Karim et al., 2019, 2021), and teacher identity is an essential construct that attributes to the dexterities at their disposal. The English teacher education programs, like TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language), and TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language), are meant to achieve professional development of the pre-service teachers (PSTs) and to immerse them in "learning to teach" that constructs their professional identity (Karim et al., 2019, 2020; Hanna et al., 2020; Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010). The formation of teacher identity is the prime outcome of the "learning to teach" process (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Lamote & Engels. 2010). Especially, the teaching practicum embedded in TESOL, TEFL, and TESL programs encapsulates "learning to teach" that develops PSTs' professional identity (Zhang et al., 2018). Yet, the limitation enacted to teaching practicum in forming PSTs' professional identity is evident in the literature (Gu, 2013).

For a start, contextual factors such as shortcomings associated with supervision and/or mentorship hinder the construction of PSTs' identity during teaching practicum (Gu, 2013; Nguyen & Loughland, 2018). One that is identified in the literature is the burdensome stress resulting from the distant relationship between supervisor and supervisees that curtails PSTs' identity construction (Farrell, 2007; Sim, 2011). Due to this, they suffer from the irregular support of the supervisors, which results in the barrier to tailoring new insights, critical thinking, professional growth, and identity formation. Effective supervision is an indispensable part of teaching

practicum since PSTs lack adequate knowledge to reflect critically on their practices during teaching practicum, which may challenge the construction of teacher identity (DeWitt et al., 2016).

PSTs' limited knowledge is prevalent in different polities, which prevents them from performing meaningful reflective practice that stimulates them to conceive teacher identity. Zhang et al. (2018) claim that the increasing attrition rates of PSTs are observed in teacher education programs in many countries. In Malaysia, for instance, PSTs' growth is challenged by limited knowledge of how to use critical thinking during reflective practice in teaching practicum (Choy et al., 2019; Goh & Matthews, 2011). Besides, the presence of inadequate support from the supervisors, which yields weaknesses and challenges for PSTs, is also reported in the studies (Senom et al., 2013). Thus, they were unable to move beyond superficial teaching toward connecting more sophisticated skills to ensure effective learning (Goh & Wong, 2014). Moreover, the fundamental concern of Malaysian PSTs is shaped by the desire to be evaluated well by supervisors (Choy et al., 2019). Eventually, seldom do they exert emphasis on their identity formation as teachers.

Fundamentally, teacher identity, according to Day (2011), delineates "the way we make sense of ourselves and the image of ourselves that we present to others" (p. 48). It plays a crucial role in determining the daily practices of teachers (Yuan & Mak, 2018). It is a dynamic process that undergoes continuous refinement and reconceptualization (Noonan, 2019). Generally, PSTs immerse in teaching practicum with self-drawn images of what a teacher should be (Othman & Senom, 2018) that are revisited, rethought, and revised as they start gaining experiences from school-based teaching practicum (Farrell, 2012). Teaching practicum sets an impetus for the PSTs to engage in the active and ongoing process of teacher identity construction, which can be "constituted through relations of participants" who are PSTs in a community of practice (CoP) (Wenger, 1998, p. 56). This implies that the identity of PSTs could be reified because of their lived experience in a CoP during their teaching practicum in the schools and is aided by reflective practice (Trent, 2010; Vega et al., 2021; Wenger, 1998). Reflective practice paves an avenue for PSTs to involve in active and meaningful problem identification, evaluation, and innovation that immerse them in the trajectory of teacher identity formation (Farrell, 2013; Lee, 2010). Generally, it involves reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, which entail teachers' reflection on not only what they do, but also how and why they do it (Farrell, 2015). In reflection-on-action, the teachers ponder on what happened in the class and critique it, whereas, in reflection-in-action, they report a surprising problem and share what they think during the class (Farrell, 2004). Nevertheless, scholars have reported the limitations of such reflections. Mann and Walsh (2017) assert that when writing the reflections, the PSTs often focus on the writing itself in pursuit of obtaining a good grade in teaching practicum. On a pragmatic level, such an intention does not trigger the formation of their identity and professional growth.

The aforesaid backdrops raise the demand for engaging PSTs in such a form of reflective practice that would ensure students' active participation, generate in-depth reflection and that would lead them to construct teacher identity. In-depth reflection situates the PSTs in the trajectory of developing their identity (Flynn, 2019). Thus, the researchers differently applied reflecting on reflection as a form of

reflective practice. Akbari (2007) argues, "it is good to reflect, but reflection itself also requires reflection" (p. 2005). The researchers took the insights into account and introduced "reflecting on reflections" concerning critical incidents to offer two things. Firstly, they opted to demonstrate quality supervision in a teaching practicum, which becomes an undeniable priority for PSTs to embrace teacher identity (Zhang et al., 2018). Secondly, they intended to showcase a productive way, which is necessitated in numerous studies (e.g., Nichols et al., 2017; Schaefer, 2013), to guide PSTs' identity formation in teaching practicum.

On these grounds, the current study would shed light on how supervisees can work under the effective guidance of the supervisors to construct their professional identity. Particularly, considering Malaysian PSTs and the status of supervision, developing and implementing a support system in teaching practicum that guides PSTs to immerse in the trajectory of teacher identity formation is of particular importance. The researchers framed the guidelines that involved Malaysian PSTs in reflecting on reflections concerning critical incidents for conceptualizing their professional identity as teachers through a project titled "Growing as a TESOL Teacher (GaaTT)." We involved the PSTs in reflecting on and analyzing the critical incidents as an essential way of introducing reflective practice (Brennon & Green, 1993; Farrell, 2004). Besides, taking critical incidents into account is instrumental in maintaining professional growth and surviving in the profession (Kilic & Cinkara, 2020). Farrell (2008) identifies a critical incident as an event that occurs in the classroom and is unplanned or unanticipated. For example, in a language classroom, PSTs of TESOL education may face diverse critical incidents (Atai & Nejadghanbar, 2016). The behaviors of the students and teachers, language proficiency, clashes, individual differences, class participation, and teachers' unpreparedness are identified as the potential source of critical incidents in the classroom (see Nejadghanbar, 2021 for details). These allow the identification of what Wethington, Clausen, and Cappeliez call, "Changes in individual perception about self-identity, life significance and self-concept" (as cited in O'Shea, 2014, p.5).

The GaTT was undertaken in a teaching practicum course that engaged PSTs in conducting classes in different schools, writing reflections on critical incidents, receiving reflections from peers, reflecting on self-reflections and reflections of others concerning the incidents, and defining their identity as TESOL teachers (overview of "Reflecting on Reflections of Critical Incidents" is explained in the "Methods" section). The study intended to explore how PSTs conceptualized their identity as future TESOL teachers before the GaaTT project and how they reconceptualized their identity as TESOL teachers after the project to learn their trajectory of shifting from pre-conceived teacher identity to a newly formed one, which would inform the dynamic process of teacher identity development (Nguyen & Loughland, 2018).

Literature Review

PSTs' identity may reify during a teacher education program, in which awareness of teacher identity could be instilled and sewn (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Identity is rooted both in a person's self-concept and social context; it is an ongoing process,

performed rather than possessed, and constantly shaped by internal and external factors (Barkhuizen, 2017). Experts suggest incorporating reflections on PSTs' teaching practices during teaching practicum courses since it introduces internal and external factors, which would shape their identity. According to Farrell (2018), PSTs should reflect on their teaching practices comprehensively to ensure the growth of their professional identities. Besides, Luehmann (2007) contends that a pedagogical strategy for creating teacher identity is reflective writing on teaching practices. In addition, Kumaravadivelu (2012) elucidates that teacher identity formation largely depends on "how they make sense of contemporary realities, and how they negotiate contradictory expectations, and how they derive meaning out of a seemingly chaotic environment" (p. 58). We conceive that critical incidents are made up of current realities and chaotic situations. Revising and further reshaping one's identity as a teacher during teaching practicum results from reflecting on critical incidents (O'Shea, 2014), whereby the incidents could be linked to what happens in classrooms and the school compound or incidents involving their colleagues, administrators, or even the wider school community. Guided by the above scholarly voices, we firmly ascertain that reflecting on reflections of critical incidents, which is a form of reflection on teaching practices, is incremental for the growth of PSTs' professional identities.

Critical incidents play a pivotal role in teacher identity (re)construction (Sisson, 2016). Kılıç and Cinkara (2020) articulate that reflecting on these, whether positive or negative, is important in shaping PSTs' identity. They argue that the repertoires or dynamics in dealing with a negative situation to turn it into a positive result plausibly benefit an individual to build his or her identity as a teacher. Besides, Buendía-Arias et al. (2020) uncovered that values, beliefs, personality traits, pedagogical decisions, and context concerned a small number of critical incidents that resulted in a change in PSTs' identity. For reflecting on these and yielding the meaning, the concurrent literature highlights the importance of collaborative reflective practice since it triggers deepening thoughts, insights, and knowledge for the PSTs. For instance, Gutiérrez et al. (2019) unveil that the collaborative reflective practice, in which sharing of reflections occurs, develops the PSTs' professional identities. For sharing, arguing, and placing counterarguments for favoring or refuting one's experiences, enabling reflection-oriented group discussion is required (Mack, 2005). In short, documenting the critical incidents, reflecting on these, sharing these with peers, and receiving constructive feedback are meant to stimulate the growth of teacher identity (Chien, 2018; Serna-Gutierrez & Mora Pablo, 2018).

There are studies on the different types of critical incidents (e.g., Atai & Nejadghanbar, 2016), critical incidents and teacher identity, and collaborative reflective practice and teacher identity (e.g., Gutiérrez et al., 2019; Kılıç & Cinkara, 2020). Admittedly, there is a paucity of literature on the inclusion of reflecting on reflections pertaining to these incidents during teaching practicum. In addition, Nazari and De Costa (2021) inform the prevalence of inadequate research to learn the role of such incidents in language teacher identity construction. Thus, the researchers incorporate the incidents to induct students into reflective practice in the GaaTT project. In pursuit of understanding the impact of the project, the current study is undertaken. The following research question guides the study.

1. What is the impact of the GaaTT project on developing the PSTs' identity as TESOL teachers?

The motivation of the study is rooted in the relevant urge that is reverberated in several studies. First, Horvath et al. (2018) show that an individual's identity as a teacher retains his or her dedication to teaching. This is reflected in one of the amendments mandated in the Malaysian Education Blueprint (MEB)—to enable PSTs to be critically reflective practitioners who will be the agents of their professional growth (Wright, 2010) and become active and thoughtful in making decisions (Borg, 2003). Thus, involving them in teacher identity formation is essential through the means of reflecting on reflections of critical incidents since the identity will determine their dedication and drive their endeavor to serve the nation as TESOL teachers. Second, the complexity associated with identity development sets the demand for more investigations related to teacher identity (e.g., Prabjandee, 2020). Third, the paucity of a comprehensive framework for yielding PSTs' professional identity and the absence of productive pathways leading to the formation of teacher identity are voiced in the literature (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Eren & Söyle-mez, 2017). Finally, most of the studies that encompassed the development of the identity of PSTs during teaching practicum encompassed the Inner Circle countries (e.g., the USA, the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand), with little attention being paid to non-Western polities, including ASEAN countries such as Malaysia (Othman & Senom, 2018).

To seek the answer to the research question, the study intends to explore the perceived identity of the PSTs as TESOL teachers prior to the teaching practicum embedded in the GaaTT project and their conceived identity of them as TESOL teachers after the practicum. We expect the conceptualization of their identity as TESOL teachers to be constructed by reflecting on reflections of critical incidents after the practicum. Classroom realities comprise critical incidents and introduce PSTs to diverse conflicts that yield tensions, dilemmas, and stressful periods (Fuller & Brown, 1975). In other words, these are unanticipated and unplanned events that constitute classroom realities and invite conflicts and stress for the PSTs (Farrell, 2008). To understand the identity of the PSTs, who would experience the incidents, and eventually, suffer from tensions, dilemmas, and stress, the researchers consider the dialogical approach proposed by Akkerman and Meijer (2011). In other words, the dialogical approach lays the theoretical foundation of the current study.

Fundamentally, the self of a PSTs consists of multiple I-positions (Hong et al., 2017). Akkerman and Meijer (2011) considered "an I-position as a 'voiced' position; that is, a speaking personality bringing forward a specific viewpoint and story" (p. 311). Hong et al. (2017) argue that any of the I-positions may appear to serve different roles depending on the requirements of the situation. In other words, the emergence of different roles depending on the situation brings multiple I-positions or multiplicity in PSTs' identities. Multiple I-positions may subsume a PST's identity as a lecturer, facilitator, coach, or even drill sergeant according to the demand of the situation. That same teacher might carry the identity of a spouse/partner, father/mother, friend, or basketball player. Apart from the identities that the PSTs possess depending on the situation, they also conceive an identity as TESOL teachers before

going to the classroom. The construction of their identity in this stage is preceded by their experiences as students. Levin et al. (2013) opine that when PSTs initially enroll in teacher education programs, they contain identities that are driven by many beliefs concerning the work of a teacher based on their experiences as students. Driven by their prior belief, they may form their initial identity as good lecturers (McAdams, 2001). When they start teaching during teaching practicum, they might face critical incident that results from the distant relationship with the students that demands a friendly attitude from them. Consequently, their initially perceived identity as good lecturers becomes in conflict with the demanded identity as friendly teachers. Akkerman and Meijer (2011) identify such a situation as conflicting I-positions. Eventually, the PSTs initiate dialogue among conflicting I-positions to settle a particular I-position. Akkerman and Meijer (2011) explicate that when different I-positions conflict, the dominance of a certain I-position is negotiated through dialogical relations with other I-positions. In the aforesaid case, the dominant I-position as "good lecturers" negotiates with the demanding I-position as "friendly lecturers" and readjusts their I-position as "friendly lecturers." Hong et al. (2017) conclude that throughout the negotiation process, the self maintains continuity in realigning and readjusting pieces of self (e.g., good lecturer and friendly lecturer) together to establish a coherent self (friendly lecturer) to repair the relationship with the students. Fundamentally, the dialogical approach, suggested by Akkerman and Meijer (2011), presents the trajectory of how a PST's views and ideas about his or her identity prior to teaching practicum negotiate with the demanding identity during the practicum through dialogues between multiple I-positions and settle particular I-position at the end of the practicum. The current study incorporates reflecting on reflections that enables the PSTs to initiate dialogue among conflicting I-positions to settle a particular I-position. Besides, this practice of reflection on critical events involves the negotiation process that stimulates PSTs to form a coherent identity. Hong et al. (2017) postulate that throughout the negotiation process, the self maintains continuity in realigning and readjusting pieces of self together to establish a coherent self.

Moreover, the change in teacher identity occurs due to the passage of time, which reflects Pillen et al.'s (2013) argument that the construction of teacher identity is a continuous process that entails continuous and discontinuous trends. The continuous and discontinuous nature of identity development is observed based on the contexts and particular phenomena that emerged in the contexts. Hong et al. (2017) exemplify that a teacher might act in an authoritative way to handle a particular classroom dynamic, and it might be the perfect approach to deal with that situation. Yet such an authoritarian self might not be the teacher's central I-position. This kind of discontinuity is observed when tensions appear between multiple I-positions and when dilemmas concerning the environment a teacher is situated in emerge. The discontinuity of identity has been instrumental in providing insights into complex identity creation (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). Continuity, in contrast, sheds light on how teachers maintain their sense of self with time through patterned behavior which forms routine practices (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). Given the prevalence of discontinuity of teacher identity due to various pedagogical factors, teachers should attempt to maintain a coherent sense of self (Chandler et al., 2003). Akkerman and

Meijer (2011) have claimed that continuity of identity is maintained through narratives. They furthered the discussion by explaining how "personal continuity of self is warranted by narration, taking place both within the self and in the form of verbal accounts to others" (p. 313). In this study, the PSTs write and post their reflections on critical incidents on the Facebook group (briefly discussed in the "Methods" section), which constitute narratives. Based on an individual's incidents and reflections posted, others are advised to share their reflections on the same event. It is expected that one will shape his or her identity through reflecting on the self-reflections and reflections of others. PSTs need to receive support from their peers for conceiving their identities as TESOL teachers (Pillen et al., 2013).

In terms of research methods, as the review implored, we embraced, previous researchers' preferences for qualitative studies, in particular, the phenomenological approach to understanding the phenomena of reflecting on reflections (please see Amstutz, 2012; Kabilan, 2007), teacher identity (please see Ashadi et al., 2022; Goh and Matthews, 2011), and critical incident (please see Hall & Townsend, 2017; Kılıç & Cinkara, 2020) in the settings and contexts of teaching practicum (Kabilan, 2013; Kaur et al., 2021). This is because a phenomenological study is concerned with "lived experience and seeks reality in individual's narratives of their experiences of and feelings about specific phenomena, producing their in-depth descriptions" (Cilesiz, 2009, p. 240), which are very much pertinent to the elements investigated in this study. Furthermore, the "presuppositions or expert knowledge" of the researchers may contribute meaningfully to the phenomenological inquiry (Lopez & Wills, 2009, p. 729). These suggest that both research participants' and the researchers' involvement in a phenomenological study, via open-dialogic communication (Liou & Cheng, 2011), bring about a synergetic understanding and interpretation of the phenomena in question, thus, yielding greater trustworthiness of the findings.

Methods

Research Design

In this phenomenological study, critical incidents were the phenomena that were described through the reflections reported by the participants who have all experienced the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2017). In teaching practicum, the PSTs experienced diverse critical events that were reported in their reflections, and through reflection on reflections, they were informed about the incidents that occurred in the classrooms. The present study embarked on capturing PSTs' conceptualization of their identity as TESOL teachers as. For these purposes, we utilized the interpretive phenomenological approach (Heidegger, 2019) as this study involved the "lived experiences" and realities of the PSTs' "narratives of their experiences of and feelings" of their "specific phenomena" (i.e., critical incidents) and "in-depth descriptions" (i.e., writing and sharing reflections) of their experiences during their teaching practicum (Cilesiz, 2009 p. 240). Generally, researchers use the approach when they intend to explore how individuals perceive the meaning of significant experiences (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Thus, to explore individuals'

accounts of how they generate the meaning of the incidents through reflection on reflections and, subsequently, conceptualize their identity, the current study adopted the interpretative phenomenological approach.

The Context and the Researchers

The researchers shared a similar research interest that falls under the umbrella of "teacher education." We were motivated by Farrell's (2016) call for more holistic approaches to reflective practice. Besides, Zhang et al. (2018) highlight the global concern related to the need for conferring quality supervision in teaching practicum. Moreover, the lack of a comprehensive framework for yielding PSTs' professional identity coupled with the absence of productive pathways leading to the development of teacher identity has been echoed in previous studies (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Eren & Söylemez, 2017). Being conscious and thoughtful teacher educators, we assumed that it is our fundamental responsibility to address the global need; thus, we attempted to put reflecting on reflections into practice that goes beyond the conventional reflective practice (e.g., reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action) and becomes an additive to the prevailing practices of reflection. Specially, we have involved PSTs in reflecting on reflections concerning critical incidents since Kılıç and Cinkara (2020), and O'Shea (2014) found it effective for achieving teacher identity. We believe that the incidents are common phenomena that they would face while working as in-service teachers in the schools; thus, we feel the need to guide them to be able to consider the incidents as the content for reflective practice to shape professional identity.

An Overview of the Teaching Practicum, GaaTT, and Participants

The GaaTT project involved 10 PSTs (anonymized as PST1, PST2, PST3…PST10) specializing in TESOL. They had to complete their teaching practicum as the final requirement to graduate with a Bachelor's degree in TESOL. The teaching practicum for the 2020/2021 academic session was completed between April and July 2021 (about 4 months) amid the peak of the COVID-19 epidemic in Malaysia, when face-to-face (F2F) interactions were prohibited following Malaysia's lockdown that was imposed at the end of May 2021. Each PST was assigned to teach two grades (e.g., 4A involving students of 16 years old and 2B with students of 14 years old) for 4 months (each week about 10–12 classes). In the first 2 months (April and May of 2021), the PSTs were able to teach in classrooms, i.e., F2F classes. But with the immediate nationwide lockdown due to the rise of COVID-19 cases, the PSTs were forced to conduct the remainder of their classes in the online environment, i.e., fully online mode beginning June 2021 until the completion of teaching practicum in July 2021 (Annamalai et al., 2021).

Besides teaching the English language, during their teaching practicum, the PSTs carried out duties and responsibilities as the normal in-service teachers would in their respective schools. All the PSTs completed their teaching practicum in different secondary schools, except for two who taught in the same school. The study was

carried out during the final 2 months of the practicum, i.e., June and July of 2021, as PSTs gained the needed experiences of teaching, as well as the experiences of functioning and performing as a "real" English language teacher in an actual school environment in the first 2 months (Kabilan, 2013). Without these experiences, the phenomenon (reconceptualization of their identity as TESOL teachers) that we wanted to explore through the GaaTT project would not be reified. Prior to the project, the discussions, meetings, and consultation sessions between PSTs and the first and second authors, who were also the PSTs' supervisors for the teaching, were mainly done through WhatsApp Group Discussion, Webex conference-cum-meeting, and FaceBook Group (Sabani & Istiqomah, 2021). We presented and explained the concepts of critical incidents and critical reflective practice (including reflecting on reflections) to the PSTs at a Webex conference (Fig. 1). The project followed the steps below:

Research Instruments

Four instruments were used to answer the research question. Firstly, reflective writing that the PSTs wrote and shared in their Facebook Group to activate reflecting on reflections concerning critical incidents. All 10 participants and the two researchers were included in the Facebook Group. These reflections were guided by the input given in the Webex conference about critical incidents, teacher identity, reflective practice, and reflecting on reflections. Secondly, we circulated the prompted question (Table 1) for conceptualizing identity as TESOL teachers. This tool assisted the researchers in data collection, as well as understanding PSTs' reflections that were shared and reflected by them and how these contributed to the conceptualization of their identity as TESOL teachers. Thirdly, we administered an open-ended

> Today, I gave my class a reading activity, which focused on skimming. I gave them an article to read called "Study Paints Grim Pictures" and asked them to skim through the article to identify the social problems mentioned. After a few minutes, I checked the answers and asked the students to number the paragraphs. They had to dig the paragraph, which contain information on each of the social problems. Then I gave one handout, which contained five paragraphs and another handout, which contained five headlines. Students had to match them.
>
> Timing again was a problem. I originally planned to check the answers of the matching exercise but there was not time.
> Less time should have been spent on explaining expressions as it defeated the objective of my lesson – skimming.
> I should have allocated a specific amount of time to practice skimming.
> I should have opened the lesson with a discussion of social problems so that students could compare their answers with what they found in the article.

Fig. 1 An example of reflections and afterthoughts (Richards & Lockhart, 1994, p. 8)

Table 1 Steps followed in the GaaTT project

Steps	Supervisors' facilitation and directives to PSTs
Step 1	• Presentation and explanation of critical incidents based on Tripp (1993), Farrell (2008), and Nejadghanbar (2021) • Introduction to critical reflective practices (including reflecting on reflections) in a Webex conference • Instruction to reflect on critical incidents faced during teaching practicum
Step 2	• Instruction to embrace Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) for understanding that teacher identity may reify during a teacher education program, in which aware-ness of teacher identity could be instilled and sewn, and then further shaped and reshaped during teaching practicum by "the nature of the educational institu-tion, teacher colleagues, school administrators, their own students and the wider school community" (p. 186)
Step 3	• Instruction to write, share, read the reflections, and reflect on the reflections, based on Kabilan (2007), during the teaching practicum • Advice to understand and espouse Richards and Lockhart's (1994) suggestion to write reflections and afterthoughts, i.e., as an example (Fig. 1) • Instruction to describe the critical incident(s) in the light of the questions relevant to why and how did it happen, and what is their understanding/explanation of the incident(s) now
Step 4	We advised the PSTs to follow the guidelines given below: • Weekly, four PSTs will post their respective critical incidents. These should be connected or impacted or contributed to their identity formation • When an individual posted critical incident(s) and reflections, the remaining nine (9) PSTs were asked to read, comment, and reflect on the reflections based on the incidents and reflections shared by one • Reading should lead to critical understanding; commenting could include providing suggestions, new ideas, and criticisms, reflecting could mean how PSTs reflect on the shared reflections and thus resulting in layers and layers of reflection
Step 5	Once PSTs completed their sharing of their critical incidents and reflections and received reflections from others, we circulated the following guideline for invit-ing them to highlight the incidents and conceive their identity as TESOL teachers based on reflecting on reflections. We advised them to send their responses to the supervisors via email Describe your Critical Incident(s) Since you have posted the critical incidents and reflections on Facebook Group (Growing as a TESOL teacher) and you have read others' reflections, how do you conceive your identity as a TESOL teacher after reflecting on self-reflec-tions and reflections of others concerning the critical incident(s)?

questionnaire and sent it via WhatsApp to all PSTs before the GaaTT project. We invited the responses to the following question:

1. Before the GaaTT project, have you ever thought/pondered/reflected on your identity as a future TESOL teacher? If you have, please describe your thoughts/ponder/reflections. Please explain with examples. If no, why not?

Finally, we circulated another questionnaire via WhatsApp that comprises the following item and three sub-items:

2. How do you describe your identity as a TESOL teacher after the GaaTT project?

    a. What kind of a teacher are you, in terms of your identity as a TESOL teacher?
    b. What helped/assisted/guided you in recognizing your identity as a TESOL teacher?

The process of deploying the instrument is depicted in Fig. 2. The validity of the third and fourth instruments was checked by two teacher educators who hold expertise in reflective practices and professional development.

Data Analysis

We merged data from all the instruments from each participant into one document, resulting in 10 sets of data. We adopted the hermeneutics inquiry of the phenomenological approach in the analysis and elucidation of the data (Nigar, 2020). The analysis process was recursive, whereby we interpreted the meaning of the data by
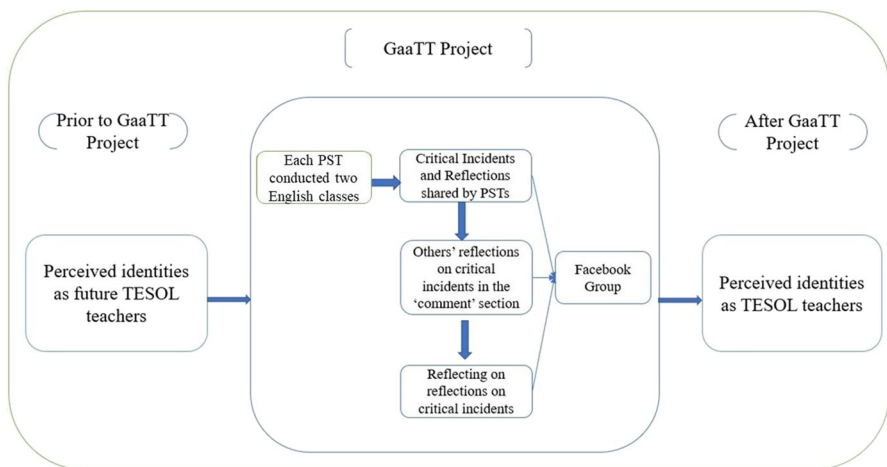
Fig. 2 The process of deploying the instruments

going back and forth between the 10 sets of data. Consistent with the philosophical underpinnings of this study, we also espoused Van Manen's (1997) interpretive phenomenological approach in isolating the themes from the data by integrating the detailed reading approach and the selective and highlighting approach. Firstly, the analysis was initiated by reading and re-reading the raw data provided by the individual PSTs. We focused, reviewed, and considered important keywords and sentences that enabled our fluid understanding of what the information revealed to us about the PSTs' perceived identity as future TESOL teachers before the GaaTT project alongside their conceived identity as TESOL teachers after the GaaTT project. Secondly, the words, phrases, and statements that were meaningful and relevant to the research question were "highlighted and those selected words and phrases were pasted and tabulated in Word document to search for implicit meaning and assigned them into concepts and later categories" (Kaur et al., 2021, p. 2303). Table 2 demonstrates detailed information on the codes and themes of the study, in relation to the open-ended questionnaires that led us to understand the impact of the GaaTT project in developing the PSTs' identity as TESOL teachers.

Trustworthiness

In establishing the trustworthiness and rigor of this study, we utilized Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four criteria—credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. For credibility, we collected data from different sources, and their findings were triangulated to ensure findings were grouped into suitable themes. A thorough description of methods facilitated the transferability of this study to other similar contexts (Guba, 1981). Dependability was achieved as we ensured findings were consistent with the raw data collected by facilitating a member-checking process with the PSTs after the data were analyzed (Varpio et al., 2017). Confirmability was established using the rigorous method of data analysis, how codes were assigned, and how themes were generated (Kaur et al., 2021).

Findings of the Study

The study intends to uncover how the PSTs conceptualize their identity as TESOL teachers after the GaaTT project. Thus, the researchers initially embark on their perceived identity as future TESOL teachers. Finally, they ask the PSTs to reflect on their identity to learn how they conceptualize their identity as TESOL teachers after the completion of the GaaTT project.

Perceived Identity as Future TESOL Teachers

The PSTs were advised to ponder on their identity as future TESOL teachers prior to the GaaTT project. Their responses indicated diverse identities that they accounted to maintain as future TESOL teachers. For instance, PST1 opted to be a "TESOL

Table 2 Themes and codes of the data analysis

Open-ended questionnaire	Themes	Codes
1. Before the GaaTT project, have you ever thought/pondered/reflected on your identity as a future TESOL teacher? If you have, please describe your thoughts/ponder/reflections. Please explain with examples. If no, why not?	Perceived identity as future TESOL teachers prior to the GaaTT project	TESOL teacher to teach how to dream alongside teaching English, supportive TESOL teacher, easy-going TESOL teacher, perfect TESOL teacher, skilled TESOL teacher, caring TESOL teacher, and good TESOL teacher
2. How do you describe your identity as a TESOL teacher after the GaaTT project?	Conceptualization of identity as TESOL teachers after the GaaTT project	Friendly, empathetic, and practical TESOL teacher; creative facilitator; easy-going TESOL teacher; a guide to teaching conscience; TESOL teacher with humanitarian features; and compassionate TESOL teacher

teacher who not only teaches the subject but also the life." "I want to be a teacher who stimulates the students to be brave enough to dream." Likewise, PST2 preferred to be a "supportive TESOL teacher who thoroughly guides the students to enhance their proficiency in the English language." She further explained, "although digital platforms and computerized stuff provide ample opportunities to learn, students are in need of the teachers' support as the teachers can only embrace their emotions and respond accordingly." Similarly, PST3 desired to be an "easy-going TESOL teacher in the future" by yielding a "chilled environment for the students." Additionally, PST4 opted to be a "perfect TESOL teacher who combines fun and learn in English classes." Yet she noted that perfection cannot be achieved overnight. She rationalized, "I should learn to progress gradually to be a perfect teacher. There are challenges and obstacles that need to be addressed and overcome beforehand." In the same vein, PST6 defined her identity as a "future TESOL teacher equipped with a good command in classroom management, material development, and teaching." She explained, "I would be more creative in developing the lesson plans, materials and implementing these. I should be flexible and adaptive to perform the role and responsibilities better."

PST7 expected to be a "caring TESOL teacher in the future" but she was concerned about "the extent to which a teacher should be caring to the students and what are the consequences of being caring because sometimes what seems to be good does not always work." Yet she expressed the hope to revise and reshape her identity as a TESOL teacher through "the experiences that would be gathered from the GaaTT project." PST9 desired to be a "good TESOL teacher to maximize the English language learning of the students." Unlike others, PST10 did not have a clear picture of her identity as a future TESOL teacher. She noted, "I want to be the type of teacher that I myself, as a student, wanted to have." Also, PST8 did not ponder on her identity as a future TESOL teacher. She believed that "being a teacher requires more than just knowledge; constant compassion, dedication, and innovation are essential to attain growth as a TESOL teacher." She emphasized "experience" that would pave "innovation and creativity." The experience would come "through practical exposure to teaching in GaaTT project." PST5 held a relatively different tone stating that "the world is changing rapidly. The way students nowadays learn English is distinct from the way we learned it. Thus, my identity as a future TESOL teacher enacted to the ability to keep pace with the new teaching and learning trends in order to keep my students interested in learning English."

Conceptualization of Identity as TESOL Teachers after the GaaTT Project

After the project, the PSTs are asked to reflect on their identity as TESOL teachers. Accordingly, PST1 conceives her identity as a "friendly TESOL teacher." "I faced a critical incident…students were reluctant to take part in the activities."

> When I shared my reflections concerning it in FBG, received others' reflections and reflected on reflections, I learned to be friendly to motivate the

students and assign them to the activities with a friendly approach. I incorporated various games. The use of games to engage my students in language learning symbolizes friendly attempts.

In addition, she finds her identity as a practical and empathetic TESOL teacher. "Many of the students are underprivileged…unable to afford the necessary equipment to induct to online classes. As such, I have to take their reality into account." She necessitates being "empathetic" because "sometimes the students feel helpless and humiliated and the teacher becomes the only support." She exemplifies a critical incident that concerns a religion-based humiliation and mockery done by other students addressing another student who belongs to another religion.

> I scolded the ones who made religion-oriented fun. Yet when I reported the incident on FBG, received others' reflections, and reflected on reflections, I learned to be empathetic. I was advised by my peers in the FBG to not only stop those who are victimizing but also support the victim empathetically so that he/she can avoid a mental breakdown. Moreover, I need to act as a counselor to inform others about maintaining equal respect for other religions.

Similarly, PST3 finds his identity as an "easy-going TESOL teacher who is inclined to be more lenient." Yet he does not claim it as a permanent identity. "I believe that too much of anything isn't good. Being too much nice to students sometimes backfires." He reports an incident that was an eye-opener. "I planned a small, casual and funny debate. Yet the late joining of the students, breaking the rule of the activity and extra preparation time in the class made the blunder." Another critical incident entails "students' reluctance to complete and submit the homework and to attend the classes." He posted these on FBG and received others' reflections. While reflecting on reflections of these, he realizes to be strict sometimes. He further argues, "identity should not be stagnant. Time is changing. I have to be flexible and adaptable to inculcate new methods and approaches of teaching." He also recognizes him as a "creative facilitator" to "introduce student-friendly learning content." He adds the following:

> Students are more into Tiktok, Instagram, Snapchat, and trendy songs. I'm aware of this and try to use these in my teaching. For instance, for one of my literature lessons, I asked them to analyze songs using literary devices.

By the same token, PST5 identifies her as a "friendly TESOL teacher" that would help the students "understand and learn English better." Such an identity also helps to get more connected to the students. She cites an incident that helped her in building this identity.

> There was a student who had been irregular in online classes. Even when she joined, she remained silent. I thought she is not interested in my teaching methods. It frustrated me at times. One day I called her and asked her about it with a friendly approach. Her response surprised me. She had to share a mobile phone with her mother and could not join the google meet

session regularly. Yet she presented the proof of the homework. Also, she was shy to participate verbally in the classroom discussion that was done in English. I was ashamed of myself for not paying close attention to my students and perceiving something wrong.

She claims that the "knowledge and information derived from practical teaching and interactions with the students in the GaaTT project" helps her to shape this identity. PST6 also builds her identity as a "laid-back and easy-going TESOL teacher." She believes in "creating an environment for the students to share their opinions." Yet she wants to continue this identity "during online classes" since she founds students "quieter and well-behaved compared to face-to-face sessions." Thus, she warrants that this is not the permanent identity. She would be "a strict but approachable TESOL teacher" in the physical classes. "I would like to be recognized by them as a teacher not as a friend. Setting boundaries and specific rules are crucial in managing a classroom." Thus, she accentuates a "professional relationship" to be maintained. Also, PST8 conceives her identity as a "friendly and easy-going TESOL teacher but with some restrictions." "Depending on the situation, I have to be strict." She reports a critical incident that makes her realize it.

In the second week of teaching practicum, I felt that students were too comfortable with me and acted in ways I would call disrespectful. They acted out of control and passed unwanted statements about my class...talked loudly, screamed, and left the seats and classroom randomly. While reflecting on reflection of it, I learned to be confident and strict in classroom management. Students might identify the friendly approach as a weakness and try to abuse it.

PST8 also feels the need to be a "creative TESOL teacher" that wants "to achieve gradually." "I still need to develop my creative skills in lesson planning to confirm the undivided attention of the students. I would have avoided the aforesaid incident by designing funny and interesting activities." She also conceives her identity as a "guide" for the students "who will inform the sense of right and wrong." Another incident helps her to think in this way.

Suddenly, a student started sharing dirty jokes and adult stuff. It really bothered me how the boy got exposed to sexual materials at the age of 13. I believed that they lack parental guidance. When I shared it on FBG, received others' reflections, and reflected on reflections, I realized that as a teacher I have to guide my students in developing their conscience.

Similarly, PST9 recognizes her as a "welcoming and friendly teacher" to tailor a gateway for the students "to ask questions and celebrate their questions." "I like to encourage my students to be fine when they make mistakes. I want to guide them to reduce mistakes". She also finds her "a well-prepared teacher" due to the following incident:

Suddenly, I lost internet connection. It was unexpected. While reflecting on reflections of it, I saw that time management was emphasized. I could pre-

pare the lesson and material way early and upload the materials beforehand so that students needed not to suffer because of my inconvenience.

PST10 also perceives her as a "flexible and friendly TESOL teacher." "I want to gain positive responses from not only my students but also from my colleagues." She believes that the "friendly" nature would help "to be approached by the students and colleagues" and become "conducive to the institution." She exemplifies the following:

My colleagues might have a good plan for the students. If I maintain rigidity, then they would feel insecure to share it with me but if I become approachable, then I would be able to carry out strong bondage and effective discussions with my colleagues.

Furthermore, PST2 defines her identity as a TESOL teacher "who loves to teach students not just the English language but also overall knowledge about humanity." Her identity is more enacted to instill humanitarian values. "It is pointless if someone has wide knowledge with zero value to humanity," PST2 argues. An incident that is shared in FBG by PST7 strikes her.

A student lost his father due to a road accident, but the local people started to talk bad things about his father. His father was a drug addict, and it was better for him to die rather than trouble people. This event provoked the need to teach students about humanitarian values.

Yet this is not PST2's permanent identity. "Formation of identity is a continuous process. With the challenges and critical incidents, my identity will continue to evolve." PST7 constructs her identity as a "compassionate and creative TESOL teacher." She notes the following:

I want to treat my students fairly regardless of their background. I don't want to downgrade or make them ashamed of speaking English. That's how I want to retain their positive aptitude in classes and achieve their respect. I'm in favor of engaging them in something that they have never tried before. I can call myself a 'creative TESOL teacher'. During the teaching practicum in the GaaTT project, I activated debate in the class, engaged them in making animal costumes, watching movies, and accomplishing English videos about tourism in Terengganu.

PST4 defines her identity as a "FUNZY (fun and easy) TESOL who wants to see the happy faces of the students." This identity becomes a "driving factor" for her to create a different learning environment. Besides, she focuses on "being creative" to respond to different learning styles and needs. An incident offers her insight.

"On a particular day, all of them were passive and none of them responded to any of my questions. I was teaching a new topic with some videos and pictures but there was no sign of life. While reflecting on reflections of it, I learned that a TESOL teacher should be able to attract the students to learn and love the English language."

Discussion

Before commencing the GaaTT project, PSTs of the current study define certain identities as future TESOL teachers who are constituted by their experience as students and beliefs about teaching and learning. PSTs hold certain identities that are formed by many beliefs concerning the work of a teacher based on their experiences as students (Levin et al., 2013). Moreover, internal factors including educational background and beliefs about teaching and learning influence the identity formation of PSTs (Botha & Onwu, 2013; Sudtho & Singhasiri, 2017). Before the project, they perceived their identities as "supportive TESOL teacher," "perfect TESOL teacher," "a teacher with good command in classroom management, material development and teaching," "caring TESOL teacher," "good TESOL teacher," and so on yet with the common aim to maximize the students' learning by employing creativity and innovation, which might be driven by their experiences as students.

However, the postmodern perspective advocates the shifting, unstable, and continuously changing nature of the identity that emerges when the PSTs think "who am I at this moment" (Beijaard et al., 2004; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Thus, after the GaaTT project, they refined their previously perceived identities as future TESOL teachers. The teaching practicum poses classroom realities, including critical incidents, to the PSTs. Fuller and Brown (1975) argue that classroom realities introduce PSTs to diverse conflicts that yield stressful periods. It gives birth to multiple critical events that entrench stressful periods and that entail dilemmas and tensions, and eventually, conflicting I-positions emerge (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). As a result, after the GaaTT project, the seemingly unstable nature of preconceived identity is observed as the PSTs were presented with critical incidents during teaching practicum (Zhang et al., 2018). To elaborate on it, prior to the project, PST1 opted to be "a TESOL teacher who not only teaches the subject but also the life". During the GaaTT project, however, an incident pertaining to religion-based mockery in the classroom conflicts with her previously held I-position. Similarly, PST2 aspired to be a "supportive TESOL teacher who thoroughly guides the students to enhance their proficiency in the English language." But this identity is challenged by an event that involves passing bad comments about a student's deceased father. Likewise, PST4 desired to be a "perfect TESOL teacher who combines fun and learn in English classes" prior to the GaaTT project, but in teaching practicum, she experiences an incident concerning the presence of passive and non-responsive students that challenges the continuation of her identity as a "perfect TESOL teacher." Karim et al. (2022) document the tensions that result from teachers' identity as content teachers on one hand and as EMI (English Medium Instruction) teachers on other hand, which requires their dialogues among two I-positions to negotiate their identity in English medium universities in two polities. Finally, the teachers define their coherent identity as bilingual teachers, which is deemed to be effective for delivering lectures and facilitating the students' learning.

Hong et al. (2017) argue that an individual settles a particular I-position that may appear to be functional to serve the requirement of a situation. Thus, the

PSTs of the study perceive several identities as future TESOL teachers to render student-friendly teaching and learning atmosphere to scale up their English language proficiency. Yet the real classroom experiences, which are linked to critical incidents, demand different roles of the PSTs to fulfill the requirements of various situations. Hong et al. (2017) put forward the idea that the emergence of different roles depending on the situation brings multiple I-positions or multiplicity in PSTs' identities. To illustrate, the prior beliefs and ideas shape their identities as "perfect TESOL teacher," "supportive TESOL teacher," and so on, but the critical events demand them to maintain their identities as TESOL teachers "teacher who loves to teach students not just the English language but also overall knowledge about humanity," "empathetic TESOL teacher," "creative TESOL teachers," and so on. As such, multiple I-positions come into prominence and require the PSTs to stimulate dialogues among conflicting I-positions to settle a particular I-position (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011).

Now the question is, how do the PSTs initiate dialogues to settle a particular I-position? Their involvement in reflecting on reflections opens the gateway for maintaining the dialogues. To illustrate, such a practice of reflection engages the PSTs in reporting and reflecting on the critical incidents that yield dilemmas, tensions, and conflict with their perceived identities as future TESOL teachers. Based on each PST's shared incidents and reflections, others also write their reflections. Finally, each PST reflects on the reflections. While reflecting on reflections, they continue dialogues that enable them to conceptualize identities as TESOL teachers. To cast light on this, when critical incidents occur, the PSTs share the critical incidents coupled with self-reflections in the Facebook group, read others' reflections, and, finally, reflect on reflections. While reflecting on reflections, they can see the incidents from multiple lenses; thus, reflecting on reflections caters to an effective base for them to maintain dialogues among conflicting I-positions to negotiate between the perceived I-position and demanding I-position in order to settle a particular I-position. In other words, reflecting on reflections concerning critical incidents involves the negotiation process that stimulates PSTs to form a coherent identity. The dialogue may direct the PSTs to either continue an identity or discontinue an identity to deal with a particular situation.

The discontinuity of identity occurs based on a particular incident (Pillen et al., 2013). Moreover, discontinuity is observed when tensions appear between multiple I-positions and when dilemmas concerning the environment a teacher is situated in, emerge (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). Taking PST8 into account, for instance, who previously linked her identity as a future TESOL teacher to "innovation and creativity" suffers from unwanted tensions yielded from the adult and dirty jokes shared by a student in the class. Thus, her earlier identity is challenged and observes a discontinuity. After reflecting on reflections of the critical insights shared by others and carrying out a dialogue based on these, she perceives her identity as "a guide" for imparting "the conscience of the students." She readjusts her I-position as "a guide" to avoid such an unwanted critical incident in the future and repair the mindset of the students. For an illustration, her dominant I-position linked to "innovation and creativity" negotiates with the demanding I-position as a TESOL teacher who should teach students about what things to be shared and/or discussed in public places

including the classroom and what not to be shared in such places and readjusts her I-position as "a guide."

It is obvious for PSTs to experience tensions between their perceived identity as teachers and the demanding identity that the context presents to them (Coldron & Smith, 1999). The tensions yield dialogues that contain arguments to redefine one's professional identity as a teacher. Basically, the process of teacher identity construction subsumes an identity as a teacher that a teacher wants to see in him or her and that others want him or her to be, and it involves arguments that redefine an identity that is socially acceptable and that has contextual relevance (Coldron & Smith, 1999). It is argued that beginning teachers' identities exist in volatile states of construction or reconstruction, reformation or erosion, addition, or expansion, and are determined by the experience gathered from diverse classroom events or incidents (Danielewicz, 2001). A large body of work also suggests that the beginning teachers experience a gradual transition from initially formed identities that are preoccupied with unrealistic fantasy to an awareness of reality and finally to a realistic perception resulting in professionalism (Bullough & Baughman, 1997; Huberman, 1989; Kagan, 1992). Besides, Hong (2010) asserts that the identity of teachers is continuously constructed and reconstructed through the way they internalize external factors, negotiate interactions, and externalize themselves to others. The construction or reconstruction, reformation or erosion, and addition or expansion of the PSTs' identity result from the deliberately performed negotiation process that enables them to maintain continuity in realigning and readjusting pieces of self together to establish a coherent self (Hong et al., 2017).

PSTs' identity may reify during a teacher education program, in which awareness of teacher identity could be instilled and sewn and then further shaped and reshaped during a teaching practicum (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Basically, in teaching practicum, previously conceived identities are tempered, challenged, and strengthened (Merseth et al., 2008). Furthermore, the PSTs encounter surrounding contexts that include "the nature of the educational institution, teacher colleagues, school administrators, their own students and the wider school community" which may tailor critical incidents that are significant in refining or reshaping their previously held identity as TESOL teachers (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, p. 186). To elaborate on it, the PSTs of the study express their perceived identity as future TESOL teachers before the GaaTT project. Since teaching practicum introduces them to diverse critical incidents, new awareness becomes inculcated in them which further reshapes their identity. Moreover, the dialogues among multiple I-positions are continued in light of the knowledge that they gain from reflecting on reflections of critical incidents, resulting in refining and/or readjusting their identities. The findings correspond to Sudtho and Singhasiri's (2017) study that confirms the contribution of critical incidents to forming actual and designated identities of the PSTs. Moreover, the formation of a language teacher identity driven by critical incidents from early learning experiences is evident in the literature (Kılıç et al., 2020). Besides, Jennifer and Mbato (2020) also confirm the conducive nature of critical events in building beliefs and motivation that constitute the identities of the teachers.

Conclusion

The current study examines the impact of the GaaTT project that involves PSTs in reflecting on reflections of critical incidents on conceptualizing their identity as TESOL teachers. It is found that before the project, they hold certain identities as future TESOL teachers. During teaching practicum, they experience multiple critical incidents, present individual reflections on these, receive others' reflections, reflect on these, and refine their prior stance concerning their identities as future TESOL teachers. Based on the insights gained through reflecting on reflections, they initiate dialogues to negotiate their prior identities with the demanding ones to deal with the classroom realities. Finally, they readjust their identities as TESOL teachers.

However, the PSTs warrant their identities as TESOL teachers in response to the open-ended questionnaire. The information about whether they maintain the reported identities in the classroom or not, which may derive from observing their classroom teaching, remains unaddressed in this study. Thus, we recommend further investigation through a longitudinal study that would instrumentalize classroom observations and semi-structured interviews to see whether PSTs (who join different schools as full-time TESOL teachers) maintain the reported identities. The findings of the current study can be a point of departure in this regard. Apart from the limitations and proposed study in the future, the current study has been instrumental to the existing scholarship in the relevant fields.

The paucity of empirical studies on identifying the elements that constitute the professional identity of the research is echoed hitherto in the studies (e.g., Hong, 2010). The current study demonstrates that critical events can be influential components in determining PSTs' identity as TESOL teachers. Unlike other relevant studies (e.g., Kılıç & Cinkara, 2020; Sudtho & Singhasiri, 2017), the researchers shed light on reflecting on reflections of critical incidents as a tool to gain more insights that contribute to conceptualizing PSTs' identity as TESOL teachers. This strategy is an additive to the dialogical approach suggested by Akkerman and Meijer (2011). To elaborate, the incorporation of reflecting on reflections of the incidents enables the PSTs to continue dialogues based on the knowledge obtained from self-reflections and reflections of others concerning critical incidents and to finetune, realign or readjust their identities as TESOL teachers. Reflecting on reflections is perceived as an essential component as it involves peers to assist an individual in "reflecting, exploring new ideas and possibilities, in framing their identity" which may lead to changes in teaching practices (Nguyen & Loughland, 2018, p. 82).

Moreover, the shortcomings associated with the supervision of teaching practicum have been voiced in the literature (Farrell, 2007). The GaaTT project reduces supervisors' burnout and enhances peer interactions. The initial briefing and directives of the supervisors implant the guidelines for the PSTs to perform the assigned activities independently. That is how the controversy that might engulf the supervisors and negatively affect the supervisees is abjured. Yet the supervisors monitor their activities in the Facebook group to ensure that everyone is

involved in sharing their reflections and critical insights. Therefore, the idea of the GaaTT project can be espoused to run a "less problematic" teaching practicum in any language teacher education program, regardless of the contextual diversities.

Furthermore, the demand for a comprehensive framework and the absence of productive pathways for yielding PSTs' professional identity is posed by the researchers (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Eren & Söylemez, 2017). The GaaTT project integrates teaching practicum, reflecting on reflections concerning critical incidents, and pre-service TESOL teachers' conceptualization of identities. This attempt contributes another lens to the current practices of teaching practicum, reflections, and construction of the PSTs' identity, which the teacher educators and supervisors can incorporate in practicum courses in any polities.

Declarations

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