Becoming a Teacher: A Case Study on Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction During the Education Practicum in a Normal University in China

Jingxin Cheng  
*University of Missouri-St. Louis*, jck37@umsystem.edu

Xiaodi Li  
*University of Missouri-St. Louis*, cl7v4@umsystem.edu

Ming Yi  
*University of Missouri-St. Louis*, my8nb@umsystem.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://irl.umsl.edu/dissertation](https://irl.umsl.edu/dissertation)

Part of the Curriculum and Instruction Commons, Higher Education Commons, and the Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons

Recommended Citation

Cheng, Jingxin; Li, Xiaodi; and Yi, Ming, "Becoming a Teacher: A Case Study on Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction During the Education Practicum in a Normal University in China" (2021). *Dissertations*. 1061.  
[https://irl.umsl.edu/dissertation/1061](https://irl.umsl.edu/dissertation/1061)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the UMSL Graduate Works at IRL @ UMSL. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of IRL @ UMSL. For more information, please contact marvinh@umsl.edu.
Becoming a Teacher: A Case Study on Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction During the Education Practicum in a Normal University in China

Jingxin Cheng
M.A. Educational Studies, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium, 2005
B.A. English, Shenyang Normal University, China, 2003

Xiaodi Li
M.A. Educational Studies, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium, 2005
B.A. English, Anshan Normal University, China, 2004

Ming Yi
M.A. Physical Education, Shenyang Normal University, China, 2018
B.S. Finance, Beijing City University, China, 2016

A Co-Authored Dissertation Submitted to The Graduate School at the University of Missouri-St. Louis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education with an emphasis in Educational Practice

August 2021

Dissertation Committee

Shea Kerkhoff, Ph.D.
Chairperson

Alina Slapac, Ed.D.

Laura M. Westhoff, Ph.D.
Abstract

Previous studies have presented a clear link between teachers’ professional identity construction and teacher effectiveness and have considered the teacher professional identity as a pivotal factor to teachers’ effectiveness, decision-making about their career, commitment to the profession, as well as engagement in professional development (Beijaard et al., 2004; Day et al., 2005; Lasky, 2005; H. Y. Wang, 2020). Positive experiences in terms of teacher professional identity construction during education practicum holds potential to promote student teachers’ professional commitment, specifically, their belief in the value of the teaching profession (Hong, 2010; M. R. Zhao, 2013). This case study examined teacher professional identity construction among student teachers of a normal university in China during their education practicum. Guided by a synthesized theoretical framework of three sociocultural theories for understanding teacher professional identity construction (Davies & Harre, 1990; Engeström, 2015; Lave & Wenger, 1991), this study focuses on two overarching research questions: 1. What is the status of the Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction during the education practicum?, and 2. How do the Chinese student teachers construct their teacher professional identity during the education practicum?

This case study adopted a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design (Creswell, 2012) to explore the process of Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction through examining their education practicum experiences. The participants were senior students who were completing 12-week education practicum at the assigned placement schools. The data included responses from 275 questionnaires, six focus group interview transcripts, and 51 student-generated education practicum reports.
The findings from this study showed that within the placement school context, student teachers constructed a high level of student teacher professional identity during education practicum. Student teachers constructed teacher professional identity by forming an understanding of the teaching profession, gaining teacher knowledge, interacting with people, and acting as role models and classroom managers. This study addresses the need of adjusting the ratio of theoretical curriculum and practicum curriculum in curriculum design, and providing opportunities in which student teachers can participate in classroom teaching and prepare to be a teacher.
Acknowledgements

As a team, we would first like to express gratitude to our dissertation committee: Dr. Shea Kerkhoff (Chairperson), Ph.D., Dr. Alina Slapac, Ed.D., and Dr. Laura Westhoff, Ph.D. for your feedback, patience, understanding as well as the learning, growth and reflective opportunities. Thank you for having confidence in us and pushing us towards in-depth study on student teacher professional identity construction. We would also like to acknowledge all the faculty members for bringing us all together to this program, and taking care of us during such a tough time of COVID-19.

Jingxin Cheng

I would like to thank my co-authors: Xiaodi Li and Ming Yi, for being an integral part of this dissertation. Thank you both for always being positive and sticking together on the team regardless of arguments and heavy workload of research and dissertation writing.

To my parents, I can never appreciate enough for bringing me to the world and always being supportive since then. I can always count on your immeasurable support and encouragement throughout the overseas study journeys, not only the one a decade ago, but also the very recent one from 2019. I’d like to dedicate this dissertation to you for your endless love for me.

To the colleagues of mine in China, for the constant support, kindness and best wishes to this overseas study journey. Many thanks to Dr. Runzhi Zhou, Ph.D., Sijia Yin and Fan Zhang for the great help with participant recruitment and data collection for this dissertation. And I would like to personally thank Jinping Wu, Shi Piao, Li Zhang and Ming Yang for helping with my life affairs that I was not able to cope with in person.
Special thanks to Dr. Deyong Hao, Ph.D., who actually presented the opportunity and started me on this journey and always gave me encouragement; Dr. Yuhong Wang, Ph.D, and Guiwu Cui who provided great support and always cared about my overseas study journey; Dr. Yixun Yan, Ph.D, with whom I was so glad to have a long talk, thank you for helping me make the right decision of studying in UMSL. To the following: Dr. Jun Zhang, Ph.D., Dr. Tianshu Zhao, Ph.D., Dr. Wei Lu, Ph.D., Lin Zhang, Jian Zhao, Jian Cheng, and everyone who has been supportive, great appreciation.

Xiaodi Li

First, I need to thank my co-authors, Jingxin Cheng and Ming Yi, we could not make this happen without your persistence, effort and understanding. In this journey, we support each other, grow together, and work together to achieve our goal. Yes! We make it!

I would also like to thank all the participants in this study. Though their names must remain anonymous, I would like to acknowledge their invaluable contributions to this study. They gave from their limited time and agreed to participate in lengthy online interviews, the questionnaire, and practicum report submission. Without them, this study would have no meaning or usefulness.

I am also indebted to Dr. Deyong Hao, Ph.D., Dr. Guohai Han, Ph.D., Dr. Runzhi Zhou, Ph.D. who provided the precious opportunity for me to study in UMSL. I would like to thank Dr. Yuhong Wang, Ph.D., Guiwu Cui, Pr. Qiong Wu, Dr. Haobo Zhou, Ph.D., and Dr. Weimin Tang who gave me continuous support and help on both an academic and personal level. A special thank also goes to Dr. Yixun Yan, Ph.D. for actually giving me the chance to start my Ed.D. journey and letting me know that I could be the best.
Finally, my heartfelt thanks go to my parents for their love and unequivocal support not only these three years, but for my entire life. Thank you to all my family members, relatives, colleagues and friends in the U.S. and China for their constant concern and support during my Ed.D. journey. I love you.

Ming Yi

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my mentor, Dr. Shea Kerkhoff, for guiding me in academics and generously inviting me as collaborator. I am honored to follow your footsteps. To my collaborators Xiaodi Li and Jingxin Cheng, thank you for your partnership and your friendship. Thanks to Dr. Laura Westhoff for caring for me and taking us to school trips. Thanks to Dr. Alina Slapc for inviting me to KDP and AERA. Thanks to Dr. William Kyle, Jr, Dr. Theresa Coble, Dr. Miriam Jorge, Dr. Ellen Meadows, and the rest of the cohort. We are connected for life through this journey.

I would also like to thank Dr. Deyong Hao, who made it possible for us to study in this program. Thanks to Dr. Runzhi Zhou, Dr. Jun Zhang, Dr. Wei Lu, and Dr. Anna Li, for opening the gate to research for me, and motivating me to always be better than myself.

I am also grateful to the scholarship received towards my Ed.D from the UMSL College of Education. Thanks to Dr. Susan Kashubeck-West, for granting me the opportunity to work as a Graduate Research Assistant. Thanks to Dr. Jennifer Bumble, Dr. Amber Candela, Dr. Mary Edwin, Dr. James Shuls, and Dr. Rebecca Rogers, who patiently worked together with me in this position. Thanks to Dr. Zandra de Araujo and Dr. Samuel Otten from MU, who kindly invited me to work in their research team. Thanks to Dr. Shawn Woodhouse, as the director of this program has given us numerous help.
Especially thanks to my parents, who supported me through this trip and gave me unconditional love. May we all thrive and be well.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Abstract**  
2  

**Acknowledgements**  
4  

**CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**  
13  
- Motivation and Rationale for the Study  
14  
- Teacher Education in China  
15  
- Education Practicum in China  
17  
- Problem Statement  
20  
- Purpose Statement and Research Questions  
21  
- Significance  
22  

**CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**  
24  
- Identity as a Socio-Cultural Construct  
24  
- Teacher Professional Identity  
26  
- Theoretical Framework Informing the Current Study  
31  
  - Activity Theory  
33  
  - Community of Practice  
38  
  - Positioning Theory  
40  
- Review of the Empirical Studies on Teacher Professional Identity Construction During Education Practicum  
44  
- Summary  
48  

**CHAPTER 3: METHODS**  
50  
- Case Study Context  
50  
- Research Design  
51  
- Gap in Previous Research  
55  
- Quantitative Approach  
55
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BECOMING A TEACHER</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrument Selection and Modification</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity and Reliability</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Approach</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group Interview Protocol Development</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Practicum Reports</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validity and Reliability</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Considerations</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND FINDINGS</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative Results</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Identity</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplinary Identity</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performed Identity</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situated Identity</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative Findings</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding of the Teaching Profession</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Knowledge</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of People</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Model and Classroom Manager</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion
Recommendations
Limitations
Areas for Future Research
Conclusion

REFERENCES

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Teacher Identity Inventory for EFL Teachers (Chinese Version)

Teacher Identity Inventory for EFL Teachers (Translated Version)

Appendix B: Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction Questionnaire (Translated Version)

Appendix C: The Expert Validity Questionnaire for Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction Questionnaire

Appendix D: Participant Recruitment Message (Questionnaire)

Appendix E: Focus Group Interview Protocol

Appendix F: Participant Recruitment Message (Focus group interviews and education practicum reports)

Appendix G: Excerpts of Themes and Supporting Data

Appendix H: Consent Forms
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Data Sources of This Study 54
Table 2 Relating the Definition of Student Teacher Professional Identity to the Four Dimensions 58
Table 3 Demographic Information of Questionnaire Participants 64
Table 4 Demographic Information of Focus Group Interviews Participants 68
Table 5 Rating of Career Identity 80
Table 6 Rating of Disciplinary Identity 81
Table 7 Rating of Performed Identity 83
Table 8 Rating of Situated Identity 84
Table 9 Description Words for What a Teacher Should Be 91
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 The Activity System 35

Figure 2 Percentage of Agreement of Each Dimension in Questionnaire 85
Chapter 1

Introduction

The impetus of this research on student teacher professional identity construction began with a statement “The education practicum gave me a real experience of how to be a teacher” from a teacher candidate, named Han (pseudonym). She was a senior student and just finished her 18-week education practicum. When being asked about her practicum in the seminar of sharing practicum experience, she said she felt she was truly a teacher when standing on the teacher podium and facing the students. Before the practicum, she was not confident with her classroom teaching, and also worried that students and mentors at the placement school may not accept her as a teacher. Actually, during the practicum, her mentors gave her a lot of helpful guidance on how to be a teacher, beyond what was emphasized in the university learning. She also obtained love and respect from the students. She described that when the practicum ended, both students and herself were all reluctant to say goodbye.

After the practicum, Han reflected that education practicum was an important step for her to be a teacher. Through the practicum, she obtained the real classroom teaching experience, her own students and the addressing of “teacher” for the first time. These experiences during the education practicum boosted her confidence in feeling more like a teacher than a student, which indicated a transition from a student to a teacher. Meanwhile, she mentioned the interaction with the community of the placement school gave her a specific experience of what the teaching profession can be and how to be a teacher, so as to bring up her confidence in teaching, which could not be obtained from university learning, but very helpful for her future career development.
Han’s story implied that education practicum is an important site for student teacher professional identity construction. In other words, student teachers obtained real experience of being a teacher in their education practicum, which may influence their identity transformation from a student to a teacher, and according to the previous research, the status of their professional identity construction will influence their teaching effectiveness and career choices as well (Rui, 2017; H. Zhao, 2014).

**Motivation and Rationale for the Study**

Our interests in studying student teacher professional identity construction arose for two purposes. First, as teacher educators in China, we are eager to understand how student teachers could develop professionally, especially how they construct their professional identities in the initial stage of the journey to becoming a teacher. In this study, we explored approaches to helping student teachers to work through identity transformation. The findings of the exploration provide insights for teacher educators in China to help student teachers navigate their identity development. As Carson (1991) stated, “As teacher educators, we must be prepared, at times, to set aside our own answer and solution to listen to the stories the student teachers tell about their journey to becoming a teacher” (p. 141). For these purposes, we chose to listen to students describe their experiences and perceptions of identity construction.

Secondly, we hope our research findings will bring enlightenment and contribution to China’s teacher education reform. One vital part of China’s teacher education reform is to focus on educational practice and promote the construction of future teachers’ professional identity (S. H. Xie, 2016; Q. Zhang, 2013). In direct response to this focus, the Ministry of Education of China (2011) stated that teacher education should strengthen the training of student teachers’ professional skills,
stimulate their interests in educational practice and help them establish the commitment to long-term and lifelong teaching. This study may provide useful insights for teacher educators and policymakers in determining effective teacher education programs for improving teacher candidates’ professional skills by helping them construct robust professional identities. Given the important role of the context in the development of student teacher professional identity, we will discuss the background of this research and the importance of studying student teacher professional identity construction within China in the following section.

**Teacher Education in China**

The term “normal university” refers to the higher education institutions that are in charge of prospective school teachers’ training and inservice teachers’ training, and are regulated and funded through a government authority, national or local (L. Xu, 2011; Zhou, 2020). Since the 1990s, the pattern of teacher education in China has been changing progressively with the government encouraging comprehensive universities to provide teacher education programs, and normal universities to transform into comprehensive and research-oriented universities (Lu, 2009). After a long period of exploration, teacher education in China has formed its own characteristics, in which “teachers are mainly cultivated by normal universities, and some high-level comprehensive universities that provide teacher education programs are involved in teacher training as well” (CPC Central Committee and the State Council, 2018, p. 5). In the past twenty years, according to the national policy, some normal universities have expanded to become comprehensive universities and offer courses beyond teacher education related fields, but the terminology of normal university is still preserved in the official names of such institutions (Jian et al., 2020). The teacher education programs in these normal universities provide students with
subject content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge. Taking a student of English language major as an example, over the four years of an undergraduate education, this student needs to learn English subject knowledge, cultural knowledge, teaching knowledge, and complete the education practicum.

However, in the pursuit of becoming a comprehensive university, some normal universities lost the essence of “normal” in terms of teacher education. Overly emphasizing the disciplinary topics at the expense of teacher knowledge of some normal universities directly affected the development of student teachers’ teaching ability (Y. C. Yuan, 2018). Additionally, in 2015, the implementation of the reform of the Teacher Qualification Certificate Examination provides graduates of comprehensive universities, who did not have the formal teacher training, the opportunity of being a teacher if they pass the exam. In other words, the teaching profession is no longer the exclusive occupation for teacher education graduates, any students who passed the Teacher Qualification Certificate Examination are qualified to apply for teacher positions, regardless of whether they are teacher education graduates or the non-teacher education graduates. It suggests that teacher education graduates would face, if not already, competition from the non-teacher education graduates in the career market (D. T. Xie, 2016).

According to Elbaze (1981), teacher knowledge plays an important role in guiding teacher’s work, which includes knowledge of subject matter; of classroom organization and instructional techniques; of the structuring of learning experiences and curriculum content; of students’ needs, abilities, and interests; of the social framework of the school and its surrounding community; and of their own strengths and shortcomings as teachers (p. 47).
Student teachers need the teacher knowledge to ensure their effectiveness of teaching (Shulman, 1986), so as to improve their competitiveness in the employment market.

British sociologist Basil Bernstein (as cited in Dickinson, 2012) addressed the relationship between teacher knowledge and teacher identities, and theorized a connection between social interactions and language in forming knowledge, ultimately providing a theory of how teacher identities are developed through interaction and discourse. Beck and Young (2005) furthered Bernstein’s argument about the relationship between knowledge and professional identity, stating that the professional identity depends to a large extent on the teacher’s relationship with knowledge and how knowledge is constructed. In carrying out teaching practices, teachers interact with others and obtain teacher knowledge, and in the process of acquiring teacher knowledge, their identities are also affected (Bernstein & Solomon, 1999). Additionally, D. T. Xie (2016), in his study on the cultivation of student teachers’ practical abilities, argued that student teachers’ lack of teacher knowledge and teaching ability may lead to a professional identity construction crisis. Cui and Zhang (2019) also argued that student teachers who have a strong teacher professional identity would have strong enthusiasm and motivation to be involved in education and become what the Ministry of Education of China calls “outstanding teachers with high professional quality” (2014, p.1) and also could be more competitive than non-teacher education graduates in the employment market by coming to the profession with a teacher identity already intact.

**Education Practicum in China**

In the process of becoming a teacher, especially in transforming the knowledge of teaching theory to teaching practice, education practicum is considered by education leaders to be a key step. Tin (2006) indicated that pre-service teachers
would develop teaching skills and competencies by involvement in professional activities, so as to “help them to develop the ability and willingness to continue their professional development in their future profession” (p. 261). Allsopp et al. (2006) pointed out that practicing teaching could build a bridge between theory and practice and student teachers are able to make concrete linkages between their course work and their practicum experiences.

Education practicum is a crucial part of teacher education programs in China, usually arranged in the seventh or eighth semester, lasts for one semester of about 16 to 18 weeks, and takes place at partnering schools mostly from preschool to secondary level. During the education practicum, student teachers interact with placement school in-service teachers, students and university-based mentors; apply subject matter knowledge and pedagogical knowledge in real teaching situations; and show their sense of association or disassociation with the teaching profession. Student teachers are usually assigned to observe, teach and complete administrative work. Student teachers, by the time they start their education practicum, may or may not have the Teacher Qualification Certificate because the Teacher Qualification Certificate Examination is held twice per year, and one can schedule when to take it.

In 2016, the Ministry of Education in China issued the *Guidelines on Strengthening the Education Practicum of Student Teachers*, aiming at solving problems in education practicum such as unclear objectives, insufficient contents, and weak guidance. This document outlines the overall plan and the requirements of education practicum from nine aspects from the Ministry of Education of China (2016), including:

- Clarifying the objectives and tasks of education practicum,
- Constructing an all-round education practicum system,
Innovating the forms of education practicum,
Organizing and carrying out standardized education practicum,
Implementing the ‘Double-Mentor System’ in education practicum,
Improving the evaluation system with multiple participation,
Building long-term and stable education practicum bases,
Establishing and improving the incentive mechanism for mentors, and
Ensuring funding for education practicum. (p. 1-4)

Meanwhile, a survey on professional identity of student teachers has shown that the traditional curriculum of systematic theoretical courses may prepare teacher education graduates in terms of subject content knowledge and pedagogical techniques, however, novice teachers were usually overwhelmed and stressed at the beginning of their career due to limited access to field experiences designed as practical courses while they were in normal universities (Zhu et al., 2019). Education practicum provides the student teachers the opportunity to figure out these gaps, to understand the relation between the teaching profession and “I”, and accordingly plan their own career development. Therefore, it is necessary to adjust the research perspective, go deep into the process of education practice, and explore the student teacher professional identity construction.

To summarize, in relation to the aim of the current study -- to understand student teachers’ professional identity construction during education practicum in China, we envision student teacher professional identity refers to being a teacher a) with regard to a student teacher’s perceived identity at that moment and the future, b) in relation to student teachers’ teacher knowledge for teaching practices in placement school, c) their performance in education practicum work, as well as d) positionality in connection to others including but not limited to students at placement schools,
placement school cultures, fellow student teachers, mentors and the larger teaching profession.

**Problem Statement**

The analysis of the time series data of China Education Statistics Yearbook from 2009 to 2018 (C. J. Chen & Zhi, 2019), showed a big increase in the proportion of K-9 teachers with degrees of college level compared to 2009. Nationwide, 59.1% of primary school teachers and 86.2% of junior high school teachers were college graduates in 2018. To an extent, one can certainly find it good news given the figures were as small as 19.8% and 59.4% respectively in 2009. As researchers in the field of teacher education, we think it is necessary to point out that these data refer to K-9 teachers of two different education backgrounds but both have the Teacher Qualification Certificate: one group with a college degree of teacher education programs and the rest with a degree from comprehensive universities. In other words, only teachers with a college degree of teacher education programs have formally received training of teacher education prior to their employment, while teachers with a degree from comprehensive universities didn’t receive teacher education training prior to when they started as a teacher. Since 2015, the reform to the Teacher Qualification Certificate Examination has offered non-teacher education graduates the opportunity to enter the field of teaching profession. In other words, the teacher job market has been no longer exclusive for teacher education graduates, anyone who passed the Teacher Qualification Certificate Examination is qualified to apply for the teacher position. It is not difficult to see, with non-teacher education graduates joining the job market, that teacher education graduates are facing intensified competition from a larger body of competitors than before.
Teacher effectiveness, understood as “by studying the models of instruction that capture and define what it is that effective teachers know and do a set of behaviors that effective teachers incorporate into their daily professional practice” (Barry, 2010, p. 3), involves a deep understanding of “subject matter, learning theory and student differences, planning, classroom instructional strategies, knowing individual students, and assessment of student understanding and proficiency with learning outcomes” as well as “a teacher’s ability to reflect, collaborate with colleagues and continue ongoing professional development” (Barry, 2010, p. 4).

Previous studies have presented a clear link between teachers’ professional identity construction and teacher effectiveness (e.g., Day & Kington, 2008; Hong, 2010; Sachs, 2005; Q. Zhang, 2013) and have considered the teacher professional identity as a pivotal factor to teachers’ effectiveness, decision-making about their career, commitment to the profession, as well as engagement in professional development (Beijaard et al., 2004; Day et al., 2005; Lasky, 2005; H. Y. Wang, 2020). In addition, education practicum is the “capstone experience” for student teachers’ professional identity construction in the process of learning to teach (Gaudelli & Ousle, 2009, p. 931). Thus, a study on student teacher professional identity construction during education practicum could contribute to enhancing student teachers’ competitiveness in the job market.

**Purpose Statement and Research Questions**

The overarching goal of the current study is to explore the process of Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction through examining their education practicum experiences, for example, the teaching context at their teaching placement schools; their relationships with their mentor teachers, full time teachers and students at the placement schools; and their own beliefs about teaching. This study used a
mixed-methods approach (Creswell, 2012; DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2016) to make the process of Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction visible.

The research questions are:

1. What is the status of the Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction during the education practicum? (quan)

A. What contributes to or hinders their professional identity construction during the education practicum?

B. To what extent have the participants perceived/developed their teacher professional identity?

2. How do the Chinese student teachers construct their teacher professional identity during the education practicum? (QUAL)

A. How do the Chinese student teachers’ perceptions/experiences impact their construction of professional identity during the education practicum?

B. How do the Chinese student teachers perceive their professional identity evolved as they encountered the placement school context during the education practicum?

**Significance**

On a theoretical level, this research may help expand the existing literature on teacher identity in the sense that the findings may illuminate how Chinese student teachers construct and develop their professional identity during education practicum. Also, our study contributes to theories of teacher identity because it extends the concepts commonly used in researching teacher professional identity within the Chinese context. The teacher’s identity is important because it relates to enthusiasm (Xun, 2015) and effectiveness (H. Y. Wang, 2020) in teaching. Much Chinese literature on teacher identity focuses on teachers in the field, and needs more research
on preservice teacher experiences (Shi & Cheng, 2020). Our research will contribute to student teacher experiences as the population and phenomenon are being explored.

Teachers tend to feel under more pressure during the first few years of their teaching (Achinstein, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 1999). Managing those complicated classroom environments is seen as emotional labor and has an influence on career exodus (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009). A robust teacher identity could provide a foundation for a new teacher on which to build their career. Schutz and Zembylas also suggest that beginning teachers go through a process of “becoming” that emerges through social-historical transactions involving ongoing identity-related negotiations, conflicts, and exploration. Understanding how teachers’ identities develop within socio-historical contexts could provide some insight into setting beginning teachers up for success by entering the profession with a robust teacher identity already in place.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Through a student teacher’s (Han’s) experience of education practicum, we have posited teacher professional identity construction as a continuous process which is developing in multiple ways and a key factor to understand teachers’ career decision-making, commitment, and effectiveness. In addition, “from the Vygostkian perspective, the overall aim of a teacher education program is best conceived as the development of professional identity” (Van Huizen et al., 2005, p. 275), and the construction of a teacher’s professional identity is a focal process for student teachers in becoming a teacher (Alsup, 2006; Friesen & Besley, 2013). In this chapter, we will describe our framing of identity and teacher professional identity by connecting them to insights of relative theories and to the empirical research related to teacher professional identity. By reviewing ideas on identity and teacher professional identity, we hope to contribute to a clearer understanding of both, particularly in relation to the teacher professional identity construction of student teachers.

Identity as a Socio-Cultural Construct

In terms of the social nature of identity, research papers both in Chinese and English emphasize that identity is constructed and negotiated through social processes and under the influence of external contexts (Crafter & de Abreu, 2010; Dang, 2013; Day & Gu, 2007; Lantolf et al., 2015; Nguyen & Sheridan, 2016; Vågan, 2011). This means identities are the means individuals either relate to or distinguish from others and groups through their social relations with others and groups. Within the sociocultural perspective, identity construction is a social process; in other words, in interacting with others in social contexts, an individual’s identity can shift over time and vary depending on the context (Alsup, 2006). Identity is acting and interacting as
a certain “kind of person” or even several “different kinds” at once and over time (Gee, 2000, p. 99). In line with this, Holland and Lachicotte (2007) stated that identity is “an achievement of the person’s activity – but only within the contexts and events of social interaction” (p. 118), indicating that identity construction, as a process of negotiation and constant emerging and forming, is relational and influenced by many factors in people’s lives.

The idea that identities are constructed can be traced back to sociological literature during the middle of the 20th century (e.g., Goffman, 1959; Swann, 1987). This perception proposes an angle for what M. Clarke’s (2009) suggests that understanding people’s identities includes how they view themselves and how other people see them. In other words, identity construction is a process in which individuals negotiate with society at large regarding the meaning of their identity and is “a constant ongoing negotiation of how we relate to the world” (Pennycook, 2001, p. 149). Wenger (1998) argues identity as negotiated experience. This point of view indicates that identity construction is constitutive of negotiating the meanings of a person’s experience as a member in social communities, leading to the next feature of identity as interactional.

Identity is interactional with the context of the workplace, a key of identity change is the social context change (Todd, 2005), it affects the relation and interactions of people and the social context, resulting in a shift in identity. If we want to understand the shift in identity and its transformation, the direction of this transformation is likely to depend on the resources available for identity change, as well as the tensions individuals and groups encounter in practice. Individuals and groups reaffirm their action by sensing their relationship with the school context, and make adjustments accordingly to better assimilate into their social context.
The literature mentioned above showed that identity is not a fixed shape but multiple, dynamic, and performed by different scenarios and environments. Identity can be shown purposely, based on the situations one puts himself or herself in. Varghese et al. (2005) also argued that identity is socially, culturally, and politically constructed, showing that many factors influence identity construction in people’s social lives. And, Gee’s (2008) research on identity has revealed that identity is not fixed instead it is constantly constructed and performed through membership, context and discourse.

The perception that identity is relational indicates that “making and living our identities involves action and process, occurs in real-time and depends on our connections with others, on what we do and say, and how we feel about it” (Danielewicz, 2001, p. 35). Identity of any type is not constructed in a vacuum but is continually being negotiated and redefined depending on the relationship in focus (Shapiro, 2010). Individuals consistently position themselves among others and define themselves based on these perceived relations (Buber, 1970; Harre et al., 2009).

**Teacher Professional Identity**

Cherryholmes (1988) proposed the concept of teacher professional identity in the field of education and saw it as an organic combination of individual self and social self. Teacher professional identity as a term, similar to the notion of identity, has not been uniformly defined (Beijaard et al., 2004; Izadinia, 2013), regardless of which, teacher professional identity is not unchanged, fixed or unitary but multiplex and dynamic in nature and under constant construction (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard et al., 2000; J. Miller, 2009). In line with sociocultural theory concepts, J. Miller (2009) summarized that teacher professional identity “reveals several consistent themes, along with the overarching conceptualization that identity is
relational, interactional, constructed, and performed in context” (p. 175). Given the discussion on identity is rich with debate and diversity about its concept and definition, in order to understand the complexity of identity, we extend on these keywords of her brief analysis and integrate it with the current works of literature describing identity. In this section, we will review the proposed concepts and factors that contribute to teacher professional identity from the sociocultural perspectives and then will propose a working definition of student teacher professional identity.

**Constructed.** Teacher professional identity starts to construct while one gains the education for the teaching profession (Nyström, 2009; Tomer & Mishra, 2016). Norton (2006) stressed the dynamic of professional identity construction, in line with which we can see teachers constructed an understanding of their relationship to the teaching profession across time as well as understanding of possibilities for the future. In addition, in carrying out teachers’ work in placement school context, student teachers obtain the teacher knowledge, and in the process of acquiring the teacher knowledge, their teacher professional identity begins to be constructed (Bernstein & Solomon, 1999). In other words, teacher knowledge also forms part of the dynamic of teacher professional identity construction, that teacher knowledge is constructed through social interactions and impacts the construction of teacher professional identity. What’s more, Hsieh (2015) found the negotiation of practicum and personal experience as critical to teachers’ professional identity formation as well as their professional development opportunities, suggesting teacher professional identity establishment is an ongoing and developmental process.

**Interactional.** Beijaard et al. (2000) explained professional identity is formed and constructed through social interaction in the workplace. Richards (2017) asserts that teacher identity “is not fixed or static orientation since it is also shaped by the
social context, by those he or she interacts with, and the activities he or she is taking part in” (p. 141). Olsen’s (2008) view on teacher professional identity from the sociocultural perspective suggested viewing it as a product of influences on teachers and a process of interaction. Holding the same view, researchers agree that teacher professional identity is constructed through interactions with others in the teaching profession context (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Martel & Wang, 2014; Pentington, 2015). This means that one’s perception of oneself as a teacher may be different when interacting with children than when interacting with adults. Teacher professional identity is most optimally developed when teachers experience a sense of connectedness to other professional community members (Van Lankveld et al., 2017). Khalid (2015) concluded that teachers as members of communities learn from each other to improve their teaching practices, and teacher professional identity construction through this way is constructed throughout teachers’ professional life. Researchers see the construction of teacher professional identity as dynamic and not fixed or predetermined (e.g., Goodson & Cole, 1994; Volkmann & Anderson, 1998). That is, teacher professional identity is an ongoing dynamic interaction through which individuals enact roles in relationship to others and decide how to moderate their actions toward others and the environment (Beijaard et al., 2004).

**Performed.** Teacher professional identity is revealed in how teachers behave in their working lives (Wenger, 1998; Woods & Jeffrey, 2002). Goltz and Smith (2014) pointed out that teacher professional identity consists of teachers’ roles, values, responsibilities and moral standards to the practices accepted by the profession and concluded that the complexity of teacher professional identity lies in the process through which an individual’s sense of self within the teaching profession is developed, and with the difficulties growing out of balancing self-identity with
teacher professional identity. Day (2004) stated the subject teachers taught, their roles in school, and their relationships with their students are aspects of teachers’ professional identities, which agrees with Beijaard (2006) that teacher professional identity lies in how teachers identify themselves in terms of the jobs they do and their relationships (as discussed earlier). In becoming a teacher, student teachers in placement school context engage in teacher work and move from peripheral towards full participation in tasks of increasing accountability (Wenger, 1998), impacting their construct of teacher professional identity.

**Relational.** Teacher professional identity construction closely connects to social, cultural, historical and political contexts (Trent, 2013; Varghese et al., 2005) and is constructed through the meaning the person gives to symbols in society when interacting with the cultural and social contexts, and the individual internalized these meanings (Penuel & Wersch, 1995), this means individual and group factors are both involved in teacher professional identity construction. Varghese et al. (2005) suggested taking into consideration identity as “constituted by the practices in relation to a group and the process of individual identification or non identification with the group” (p. 39) when investigating teacher professional identity. Relating the idea of identity development to teacher professional identity development, Richards (2017) asserts teacher identity construction likewise is related to the workplace environment and interactions with others, such as students, fellow teachers and the professional teaching community (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Martel & Wang, 2014; Pentington, 2015). Also, Coldron and Smith (1999) proposed that “being a teacher is a matter of being seen as a teacher by himself or herself and by others; it is a matter of acquiring and then redefining an identity that is socially legitimated” (p. 712). In other words, one’s teacher professional identity construction starts with the achievement of
qualified teacher status and continues under the influence of the way that others, such as colleagues and students, respond to them. In line with this, Beijaard (2006) suggested that teacher professional identity lies in how teachers identify themselves in terms of how they see themselves in relation to others (e.g., students, fellow teachers and the professional teaching community). The construction of teacher professional identity depends on the relationships teachers are building within schools and consistently define themselves based on perceived relations.

**Operationalizing the Construct.** In line with the proposed concepts and factors contributing to teacher professional identity reviewed above, and given the research site and participants (placement schools and student teachers) of this case study, we see student teacher professional identity is constructed through interactions, performing teacher’s work, and in relation to the placement school context. We envision student teacher professional identity refers to being a teacher a) with regard to a student teacher’s perceived identity at that moment and the future, and b) in relation to student teachers’ teacher knowledge for teaching practices in placement school, c) their performance in education practicum work, as well as d) positionality in connection to others includes but not limited to students at placement schools, placement school cultures, fellow student teachers, mentors and the larger teaching profession.

Student teacher’s perceived identity is dynamic and transforming, and constantly changing in reaction to the school context through peer interaction, and interaction with other teachers. It also means they experience a period of transforming from a student to a teacher, although this transformation may or may not succeed (Spencer, 2018).
A student teacher continually acquires teacher knowledge (e.g., subject matter, classroom organization and instructional techniques, curriculum content, students’ needs, the social framework of the school and its surrounding community, and their own strengths and shortcomings as teachers) while carrying out the teaching practice through interaction in the placement school context. The degree of acquisition of teacher knowledge contributes to student teacher professional identity (Kong, 2018).

Meanwhile, when student teachers’ sense of self within the teaching profession is developed, they will develop their own theories of actions, moderate their actions towards their personal theories, and perform as a teacher, fulfill the teacherly values (e.g., to observe classes, to give classes to the students), and engage in the role of a teacher (Danielewicz, 2001).

Furthermore, while interacting with others in the context of education practicum, student teachers may self-position themselves, as well as be positioned by others with multiple identities which are all involved in constructing the teacher professional identity (Olivero, 2017).

**Theoretical Framework Informing the Current Study**

The previous section described the theories used to operationalize the construct of student teacher professional identity. The following section will describe the theories used to understand how the construct is shaped. Bearing in mind the helpfulness of combining theories to study teacher professional identity construction as proposed by researchers, such as M. Clarke (2008), Dang (2013) and He and Lin (2013), we intend to integrate three theories of identity into the current study as multiple theoretical frameworks to the current study serve as lenses for better understanding the construction of student teacher professional identity. As Varghese and colleagues (2005) state, “While in isolation each theory has its limitations, an
openness to multiple theoretical approaches allows a richer and more useful understanding of the processes and contexts of teacher identity” (p. 21). Taking into account the goal of the current research, which is to understand the construction of student teachers’ professional identity in the process of education practicum, which Gaudelli and Ousle (2009) see as the “capstone experience” (p. 931) in the process of learning to teach, we propose that activity theory suits this purpose. Meanwhile, concerning Wenger’s (1998) perspective on identity as social participation in a community of practice, we contend that student teacher professional identity construction is influenced by their participation in their own communities of practice, in this circumstance, the colleges of teacher education and the placement school contexts where they are trained and practice to teach. We also consider notions of identity being recognized as “a kind of person” (Gee, 2000, p. 99) as frameworks for investigating the professional identity construction of student teachers in the current study. We bring in a third theory of positioning to explore the process of how student teachers adopt their identities within discourses, because positioning emphasizes that social phenomena are to be considered to be generated in and through conversation and conversation-like activities (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999). Meanwhile, positioning theory is also “a way to uncover how individuals construct and enact identities during moment-to-moment interactions” (Vetter et al., 2013, p. 233). Thus, positioning theory can be a helpful tool for understanding student teacher professional identity construction through discourse.

China is a latecomer to teacher professional identity study and popularly adopted frameworks are the sociocultural theories, Korthagen’s onion model, pragmatic identity, critical discourse analysis and Zimmerman’s discourse identity yet only a few researches adopt frameworks of synthesized theories (Shi & Cheng, 2020).
The current study could contribute to enriching literature in terms of the framework of synthesized theories as well as introducing more available theory perspectives.

**Activity Theory**

Activity is referred as “mediating between the individual and the social dimensions of human development” (Tsui & Law, 2007, p. 1290), and it is based on “the concept of tools mediating between subjects and objects” (Fjeld et al., 2002, p. 153). Originated from Vygotskian cultural-historical psychology that proposed psychological tools mediated human action as a unit of analysis of a person’s higher cognitive processes (Vygotsky, 1978), activity theory sometimes is called Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Foot, 2001). Identity construction closely connects to social, cultural, historical and political contexts (Trent, 2013; Varghese et al., 2005).

Activity theory was further developed by Leont’ev (1981) and Luria (1974), who proposed activity system and the collective and social nature of it, suggested it must be understood accordingly, and they “expanded the unit of analysis from human action to activity system and their work has come to be known as Activity Theory” (Tsui & Law, 2007, p. 1291). According to Leont’ev (1978), activity is related to a motive, action links to a specific goal, and operation a structure connects to a specific condition, and “change in the goal of a task inevitably leads to a significant change in the structure of the psychological process which carry it out” (Luria, 1979, p. 172). In other words, motive influences the ways subjects carry out the activity within this framework. Worldwide, various disciplines and fields of practice adopt Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as a conceptual lens for research. Engeström (2015) further developed activity theory by proposing more components of an activity system, identifying its components as subject, object, rules, community, division of
labor, mediating artifacts/tools, and outcomes, which in our study could correspond to as following:

- **Subject**: student teachers
- **Object**: the student teachers’ goals and education practices
- **Rules**: The norms and regulations in China for becoming a teacher, and the rules of the placement school
- **Community**: The placement school culture, the values of its members and students of the placement school
- **Division of labor**: The role of mentors in both placement school and university, the role of education practicum programs, the role of administrators of both the placement school and the university, the role of other teachers at the placement school
- **Mediating artifacts**: The tools of the activity system, such as teaching and lesson plans, perceived class materials and textbooks, and university documents
- **Outcomes**: Student teachers professional identity construction manifests in career decision making, teacher effectiveness and commitment

For the current study, we will employ Engeström’s (2015) activity theory lens, through which we study student teacher professional identity construction under placement school-based education practicum context. We see placement school as an activity system, interrelated with the normal university-based learning-to-teach context as well as cultural-historical contexts of China as being a teacher. Under this framework, through activities, student teachers transformed internal thought processes and behaviors, and these activities are seen as a transformation into members of the teacher community. We see CHAT as a relevant theory to use in the current study as
it provides a lens to “an understanding of how multiple contexts in which an individual operates work together to transform internal thought processes and behaviors” (Saka et al., 2009, p. 1000). Student teachers have constructed an idea of the teaching profession informed by their previous university-based learning experiences and an image of a teacher they hope to become. Student teachers enter the placement school communities for their initial practice in a real school context, the location in which we anticipate they will experience identity reconstruction or deconstruction in terms of teacher professional identity.

According to the activity theory framework outlined above, placement school-based education practicum context, which we view as an activity system, can be represented by the well-known triangular model of an activity system as shown in Figure 1. This suggests a multitude of relations within the placement school-based education practicum activity system.

**Figure 1**

*The Activity System*

![Activity System Diagram](image)

*Note. This figure was cited from “Learning by expanding: An activity-theoretical approach to developmental research (2nd ed.),” by Y. Engeström, 2015, Cambridge University Press, p. 63. Copyright 2015 by Cambridge University Press.*
In China, education practicum as an important part of teacher education programs is expected to fulfill the goals of training for teachers who hold ideal of faith in teaching, moral sentiments, professional knowledge and heart of benevolence (Ministry of Education, 2016), we view education practicum as activities designed for achieving this particular goals, and adopt activity theory as a framework to study student teachers’ learning to teach during education practicum for the implications for their teacher professional identity construction. The Figure 1 triangle indicates an activity system representing a placement school-based education practicum context. Within this activity system, student teachers (subject) use mediating tools at their hands to achieve their goals, in the process student teachers may confront a series of imposed tensions as a result of contradictions between vision and reality, theories and teaching practices, teaching design and placement school extant practice, and socio-cultural expectations. As Engeström (2001) stated “contradictions are historically accumulating structural tensions…generate disturbances and conflicts” (p. 137), activity theory is based on “the concept of tools mediating between subjects and objects” (Fjeld et al., 2002, p. 153). In other words, how available the tools (resources) are and how well the student teachers use the tools in coping with the contradictions, that is the provided access and the ways student teachers “relate to other people, and the responsibilities, attitudes, and behaviors they adopt as well as the knowledge they use” (Beijaard et al., 2004, p. 125). And in the process, in relation to professional identity construction, student teachers may lose their intention to teach or transcend through actions that developed their identity, which in turn promotes their commitment (Feryok & Askaribigdeli, 2019). That is in the current study, we suggest the contradictions mentioned above are a source of identity incoherence.
Education practicum of teacher education programs in China is for student teachers to transfer university-based learning (theories and teaching skills) into practice and reflection in a relatively controlled context (placement school) and under supervision of both university and placement. These first teaching experiences influence student teachers’ construction and reconstruction of professional identity and beliefs (Iaochite & Costa Filho, 2016; Woolfolk & Spero, 2005). Nyström (2009) pointed out that “professional development (construction) involves social expectations of a profession as well as individuals’ presentation of themselves in a certain profession” (p. 2), and expectations of teacher professional identity are “embedded in social and cultural practices enacted in multiple micro-level interactions, with which personal goals and motivations intersect” (Schutz et al., 2018, p. 39). In other words, what “teacher” means is not exactly the same across countries and cultures. Cultural-historical expectations of teachers in China are reflected in the word “师” (pronounced as shi, means teacher). In China, teaching is seen as a noble profession and highly suitable for women. Ever since Confucius, the professional role teachers are expected to play is to act as a source of guidance and wisdom, model to students and to promote social harmony, and hold the highest authority in the classroom. (J. S. Xu, 2016). As a product of the times, the image of a teacher reflects the historical and cultural characteristics. This indicates that the image of a teacher not only has a unique meaning of the times, but also inherits traces of the past times. And to date in China, the ascribed roles and expectations of teachers are understood as spirits of dignity, perseverance, morality, non-utilitarian and dedication (L. Yuan, 2016). Therefore, student teachers start their teacher journey at a placement school with social expectations (social norms and public opinions) and their own cultural recognitions. In the process of learning the role position and norm,
developing attitude and behavior in placement school context, student teachers, to varying degrees, construct or deconstruct their professional identity (Dong, 2008).

What’s more, given an activity is a goal-directed interaction of a subject with an object through using tools. We can see these tools are exteriorized forms of student teachers’ mental processes shown in constructs. Therefore, activity theory is a useful lens for the current case study for it provides a perspective to understand and analyze a phenomenon, find patterns and make inferences across interactions within a specific sociocultural context (Fjeld et al., 2002).

**Community of Practice**

In their research, Lave and Wenger (1991) advocated that most of the learning for practitioners occurs in social interactions, and the central theme that Lave and Wenger presents is that the communications between beginners and authorities is the process by which beginners create a professional identity. Lave and Wenger used the example of how postmen, butchers, and waiters learned their skills at the worksite where these abilities were expended. Much of the learning happened during non-formal interactions, where experts related to each other and shared remarks about their practice, and where beginners discussed cooperatively with authorities. Through this procedure, issues in the professional practice were recognized and answers were established. The unofficial communications at last developed into the place for beginners to develop custom and produce new ways to solve recurring difficulties. In China, novice teachers also learn from experienced teachers through exchanging concerns and thoughts about work related problems with experienced teachers that happens unofficially during coffee break, lunch time in the teacher offices.

Wenger (1998) argued that identity is “a way of speaking about the change that learning brings about in who we are and a way of creating personal histories
about becoming within the context of our communities” (Correa et al., 2014, p. 449). Therefore, within the community of practice, learning happens in a process of interaction and collaboration with others through activities situated in communities. What’s more, drawing on community of practice theory, an individual may experience tensions or conflicts in value and expectation differences between communities as a result of transition, leading an individual to a restructure of the boundaries between professional, personal, and private spheres of identity (Tomer & Mishra, 2016).

The connections between Lave and Wenger’s perspective and the preparation schema of studying in the work are clear. The analyses discussed are similar to those faced by participants in a learning community, including the struggle to transition from beginner to specialist. In the book of Wenger’s (1998), community of practice is defined as individuals in the same discipline cultivating their abilities by working together with specialists and being put in gradually bigger responsibilities. The trip from being a beginner to being a professional is taken in a community of practice, in which beginners are given chances to acquire by participating in modest responsibilities. Those who ultimately acquired the abilities become professionals and consequently adopt the duty of guiding other novices. In this context, community of practice can be viewed as a structure for individuals to attain and develop presented abilities before inventing first-hand methods to solve a problem.

Wenger (2000) says that “identity is a lived experience of belonging” (p. 239). In this way, identity is formed in engagement and interactions to make meanings. A robust identity involves common knowledge and learning through which the identity of the beginners can develop. As Wenger (2000) argues, identity combines ability and knowledge to the process of cognition. The gain of knowledge stands for a large part
of identity formation. For example, wearing a uniform can enable student teachers to build meaning and actively engage in communication with others (Gilardi & Lozza, 2009).

Growth in self-assurance is an essential influence in the student teachers’ career progress and student teachers in their early career can gain this increase in confidence from engaging in community practice (Gilardi & Lozza, 2009). Through solid community connections and profound associations with each other, which strengthens the student teachers’ consciousness of identity, the student teachers’ previous and upcoming identity unify into the “experience of the present” (Wenger, 2000, p. 241).

Rogers and Babinski (2002) discussed the importance of new teachers communicating with other new teachers in their research on professional development activities for elementary school teachers. They asserted that other beginning teachers serve an important role in the professional development of their fellow teachers. This communication could, in fact, be a form of a community of practice, which could lead to critical analysis and identity growth. Forming a community of practice is relevant to the student teachers developing a professional identity, for example, education programs can be one community that nurtures discipline identity (Kerkhoff et al., 2020), where new teachers can talk with each other about the tension and frustration of the profession and create an identity space for him or herself.

**Positioning Theory**

Language could be regarded as an important factor in teacher professional identity, since some scholars proposed that identity can be narrated (Arvaja, 2016; Prabjandee, 2019). Through language, individuals’ descriptions of themselves, their practices in which they are involved and their discourses they apply will provide a
map of the process of identification of the person (Salinas & Ayala, 2018). Varghese et al. (2005) argued that a comprehensive analysis of identity construction should address both “identity-in-practice” and “identity-in discourse” (p. 32), which identity-in-practice refers to the enactment of identity through specific practices and the identity-in-discourse addresses that identities are discursively constituted, mainly through language. Discourse clarifies which objects and concepts are important and which positions or roles are available to the participants or may be adopted in practice, as well as the possibility of the actions they will take and the relationship with other participants they will process (Evans et al., 2006). Situated within the umbrella of poststructuralist theory, Weedon (1997) pointed out that identity construction “occurs through the identification by the individual with particular subject positions within discourses” (p. 108). Haniford (2010) argued that individuals take part in various communities of practice, different identities are formed and enacted through learning the actions and discourses manifesting membership in different situations.

By emphasizing “social construction of identities and the world through discourse” (Kayi-Aydar, 2015, p. 95), more researchers have applied positioning theory in their studies, which is a helpful way to understand and reveal one’s multiple identities as shaped by the discourses in which he or she are engaged (e.g. Harré & Van Langenhove, 1999; Kayi-Aydar, 2015; Mosvold & Bjuland, 2016; Trent, 2012). Kayi-Aydar’s (2015) study explored narrative positioning and agency in teachers of ELLs (English language learners). The analysis of data showed that while being in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms, pre-service teachers took up various, even conflicting identities, which also shaped multifaceted agency. The researcher also suggested that narrative positioning analysis provides a rich source for identity
work (Kayi-Aydar, 2015). Under the implication of Kayi-Aydar’s study, Mosvold and Bjuland (2016) applied a synthesized theory of identity as identifying narratives and positioning theory to explore how pre-service mathematics teachers position themselves, as well as how they are positioned by their mentors in mentoring conversation. Trent (2012) draws on insight from discourse theory to examine eight native English teachers’ self-positioning and positioning by other stakeholders in schools. Positioning happens within the discursive process “whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines” (Davies & Harré, 1990, p.48). Meanwhile, within discourses, there could be reflexive positioning and interactive positioning (Davies & Harré, 1990), which means that within discourses, an individual positions oneself and at the same time is positioned by others as well.

In this study we draw on reflexive positioning in our analysis since we are trying to understand how language is used in student teachers’ identity enactment, especially, how student teachers position themselves while interacting with others in their teaching practicum. For instance, when interacting with mentors or teachers of placement schools, student teachers may position themselves as learners; while interacting with students, student teachers may position themselves as teachers or friends. Meanwhile, Davies and Harré (1999) argued that both textual and lived narratives are the sources for individuals of learning being a particular non-contradictory person. Gee (2011) also pointed out that individuals often use discourse including written discourse to build one’s own identity and attribute a certain identity to others as well. The written discourses in this study refer to education practicum reports, which includes teaching plan, reflective journals, and practicum summary etc., recording and reflecting the transitional stage between students and teachers.
Through writing practicum reports, student teachers experienced discursive practice of text-building skills which not only helps them reflect the outside reality, but also helps them construct that reality (Haniford, 2010). As Hanniford (2010) puts it, “The multiple positioning involved in constructing a teacher identity is evident in these written plans” (p. 988); as such, we applied positioning theory in this study on text analyzing.

In summary, activity theory acknowledges the interplay of various components within a context that have influences on becoming a teacher. Student teachers mainly learn to teach in university-based and placement school-based contexts, across which they may inevitably experience tensions, or even contradictions. These contradictions and tensions could provide key insights into professional identity construction for student teachers. According to Saka et al. (2009), the CHAT framework is “sensitive to contradictions in the broader activity system that can be sources of difficulty but also catalysts to change and refine the broader system. These contradictions are understood to be historically accumulating structural tensions within and between activity systems” (p. 1001). What’s more, as Wenger (2000) argues, “identity is a lived experience of belonging” (p. 239). In this way identity is formed in engagement and interactions to make meanings. A strong identity involves shared experiences and histories of learning through which the identity of the newcomer tends to include. Increases in confidence are an important factor in the students’ professional development, and students in their early career gain this increase in confidence from engaging in community practice (Gilardi & Lozza, 2009). Through strong social relationships and deep connections with others, who reinforce the students’ sense of identity, the students’ past and future identity merge into the “experience of the present” (Wenger, 2000, p. 241). In this way the
students’ identity can continue to transform as they move into the placement schools with others from their community of practice. In addition, under the umbrella of social constructivism, positioning theory not only stresses social situatedness of self, but also emphasizes individual-collective interface and individual variance throughout any social groups (McVee, 2011). Therefore, some scholars proposed that positioning can be compatible with sociocultural perspectives (Holland et al., 1998; McVee, 2011; Vågan, 2011). Harré and Moghaddam asserted that positioning theory can add to the work of earlier theorists and fill a gap present in Vygotsky’s work (McVee, 2011). In general, applying synthesized theoretical framework in the current study helped us “appreciate how students navigate through and develop understandings of themselves in different educational contexts” (Vågan, 2011, p. 45).

**Review of the Empirical Studies on Teacher Professional Identity Construction During Education Practicum**

Education practicum has been recognized as a key component of teacher education, a crucial step for the student teachers to realize the transition from learners to teachers, and an important path to form teachers’ professional identity (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; J. Chen & Hu, 2019; Lawson et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2019; H. Zhao, 2014). Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) argued, during teaching practicum learning to teach is not only a process of acquiring professional skills, but also the process of forming teacher professional identity. Trent (2010b) also argued that “the teaching practicum should be viewed not solely in terms of the transfer of knowledge and skills into teaching careers, but as a crucial period of teacher identity construction” (p. 1). Field and Latta (2001) proposed that although college has provided student teachers with practical opportunities to develop their professional knowledge, they are often to acquire practical expertise in their own fields. For student teachers, education
practicum is the beginning of the teaching profession and the period of identity transformation from a student to a teacher (H. Zhao, 2014). Education practicum is considered to be the first and perhaps the crucial stage in the construction of student teacher professional identity (Correa et al., 2014; Field & Latta, 2001; Trent, 2010b; Q. Zhang et al., 2018). Bullough (1997) ascertained that an “understanding of student teachers’ views on learning and teaching and themselves as teachers is of vital importance for teacher educators as it is the foundation for meaning-making and decision-making” (p. 21). Therefore, education practicum, as a site for students to transfer and furtherly acquire knowledge and skills into teaching careers is also an important segment for teacher professional identity construction.

Deng et al. (2018) used emotion and dilemmas as the lens to reveal student teacher’s professional identity construction amid education practicum. Collecting data from interviews to six student teachers in China, Deng et al. followed through the five stages of the student teachers’ education practicum, beginning, immediately after the beginning, the middle of education practicum, toward the end and after education practicum. Through the in-depth analysis, they concluded that student teachers at different periods of teaching practicum would encounter several dilemmas, such as, ethical dilemmas, political dilemmas and pedagogical dilemmas, and their emotions are dynamic and evolving during teaching practicum. From the results of the study, it can be concluded that student teachers’ professional identity construction is an ongoing and contextual process, intertwined with their feelings and interpretations of these experiences as they solve dilemmas for themselves.

Trent (2010a) applied theory of identity-in-practice and identity-in-discourse to explore the process of pre-service teacher professional identity shaped by the experience of teaching practicum. By analyzing the data, Trent argued that being in
the world of teaching, pre-service teachers would confront some conflicts including the opposite requirements of the “two masters” (education institution and placement school), and the relationship with the full time teachers in the placement school and their own beliefs in teaching. Trent (2010b) applied Wenger’s (1998) description of identity construction in terms of three modes of belonging (engagement, imagination, and alignment) to reveal and interpret the relations and changes between placement school and pre-service teachers’ identity construction, and their belief towards teaching and identity construction in the world of teaching. The findings indicate that during the teaching practicum pre-service teachers will process different identities, among these identities, some are taken on, some are rejected, and some are resisted. The relation between these identities is characterized as antagonism, which may have a crucial influence on pre-service teachers’ identity transition.

In Mosvold and Bjuland’s (2016) study, identity is regarded as a dynamic and discursive process that relies upon the individuals’ positioning in reflective narratives. Through the two mathematics pre-service teachers’ reflective narratives about their experience in practice, the researchers examined how the pre-service teachers positioned themselves and how they were positioned by a mentor teacher. These reflective narratives also help researchers better understand the development of mathematics teacher identity. Therefore, researchers suggested more attention on reflexive and interactive positioning, which is helpful to the development of narrative identification research in math teacher education, should be paid.

Within Chinese contexts, student teachers’ professional identity construction has also been investigated, albeit rarely. L. J. Wang et al. (2016) used mixed methods to analyze the changes in student teachers’ identity before and after education practicum. The study showed that there were significant differences in the cognitive
The dimension, emotional dimension and behavioral tendency of student teachers’ identity before and after the internship, and compared with the previous stage of the practicum, student teachers have a better understanding and perception on teachers’ identity after the practicum. The author figured out that the form (independent-arranged or university-arranged), content and the areas (urban or rural) of teaching practicum would produce these changes on student teachers’ identity. Similar to L. J. Wang et al.’s (2016) study, J. Chen and Hu’s (2019) study was also focused on exploring the changes of pre-service English teachers’ professional identity before and after the education practicum. Results showed that student teachers’ professional competency, interaction with the pupils, relationship with placement schools and mentors, and curriculums of teacher education affected their professional identity construction.

S. H. Xie and Xiong (2014) used a case study to explore the identity transformation among professional identity, contextual identity and personal identity. According to the data analysis of the student teacher’s identity construction, the relationships among these three identities were concluded as four types: these three identities are relatively balanced; one of them is predominant; two of them are predominant; and these three are in conflict. The student teachers’ identity attribution is related to their self-efficacy, motivation, cognition and school environment (S. H. Xie & Xiong, 2014). The authors indicated that the lack of preparation in professional knowledge, belief, emotion and attitude became the biggest obstacle for student teachers on professional identity construction during education practicum.

Y. R. Zhang and Chen (2014) conducted a study exploring how student teachers’ perceptions of knowledge and identity affected their knowledge transformation and identity acquisition. The research revealed that knowledge and
identity were interactive in learning to teach. The student teachers’ perceptions about
the core of a teacher’s knowledge affected their understanding of their identity, and
vice versa. The implications for teacher education are that equal attention should be
given to disciplinary knowledge and educational knowledge.

These studies are closely connected to the present dissertation study, which
also investigates student teacher professional identity development in the context of
education practicum. From these studies, we acknowledge that student teacher
professional identity construction during the practicum is a continuum and dynamic
process, in which many factors will be involved in influencing their professional
identity construction, such as, relationship with placement school community,
practicum context, practicum works, student teacher’s teacher knowledge and self
attitude. Though most of the studies above are exploring the factors that impact the
student teachers’ professional identity, there are few empirical studies on how student
teachers construct their teacher professional identity.

Summary

The review of theoretical frameworks and empirical research in this chapter
offers comprehensive theoretical and research perspectives on why teacher
professional identity research may be important to improving the teacher education
programs and why we, as teacher educators, engaged in this field of research. It is
evident from research on teacher professional identity that knowing how student
teachers’ professional identity were constructed during practicum can be helpful in
understanding the construction process of student teachers’ professional identity, and
factors that constructed/deconstructed student teachers’ professional identity.

Furtherly, integrating three theoretical frameworks provides a framework to help
guide data collection, and analysis of the data pertaining to how participating student teachers construct/deconstruct their professional identity.
Chapter 3
Methods

This case study aimed at understanding the construction of teacher professional identity among student teachers at Shenzhou Normal University (the pseudonym we used throughout the rest of this dissertation) in China during their education practicum at placement schools. To be specific, we explored the construction of these student teachers’ professional identity as they learn and practice to teach in placement school-based education practicum contexts in relation to placement school students, teacher mentors (at university and placement schools) as well as others (e.g., principals, peers, parents).

According to Yin (2018), case study is a research method and an empirical inquiry that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in depth and within its real-world context” (p. 45). In this study, the phenomenon of teacher identity construction cannot be separated from the case of student teachers during practicum, as that is the point of investigation. Case study provided certain insight into some of the differences of the ways in which student teachers construct or deconstruct their teacher professional identity during their education practicum. In accordance with the purpose of the current study, sample selection involved recruiting participants from Shenzhou Normal University.

Case Study Context

The educational practicum is part of the curriculum in the undergraduate teacher education program in China, arranged in the seventh or eighth semester, lasting 16 weeks at placement schools of K-12. The educational practicum of Shenzhou Normal University investigated in this case study was arranged in the seventh semester, and shrunk to 12 weeks due to the havoc of Covid-19 worldwide.
Student teachers were required to finish 12-week education practicum at the assigned placement schools, complete education practicum report writing and hand it in to mentors of Shenzhou Normal University after their education practicum.

The researchers are familiar with the case study context. Two researchers are senior lecturers of Shenzhou Normal University, and have been working at this normal university for more than ten years. One researcher has graduated from a teacher education program of Shenzhou Normal University and had educational practicum experiences. These experiences have deepened researchers’ understanding of the context of this study. To reduce the possible power dynamic, the researchers made it clear at the participants’ recruitment phase that the student teachers are entirely voluntary and could withdraw from the study at any time. Their withdrawal would not affect their grades of any kind.

**Research Design**

We adopted a mixed-method design in this case study. Creswell and Plano Clark (2017) created a definition for mixed methods that evolved from their reviewing mixed methods articles as well as the approaches that researchers used of both quantitative and qualitative methods in their research studies. They concluded a definition of mixed methods research that incorporate various methods, processes, and philosophies:

In mixed methods, the researcher collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data rigorously in response to research questions and hypotheses, integrates (or mixes or combines) the two forms of data and their results, organizes these procedures into specific research designs that provide the logic and procedures for conducting the study, and frames these procedures within theory and philosophy. (p. 78-79)
We chose mixed methods that combine quantitative and qualitative (quan<QUAL) to investigate this case study of what student teachers’ professional identity is and how student teachers construct a teacher professional identity. Quantitative methods answer what questions, and qualitative methods answer how questions (Yin, 2018).

This study answered two overarching research questions with four subquestions. The research questions for this study were:

1. What is the status of the Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction during the education practicum? (quan)
   A. What contributes to or hinders their professional identity construction during the education practicum?
   B. To what extent have the participants perceived/developed their teacher professional identity?

2. How do the Chinese student teachers construct their teacher professional identity during the education practicum? (QUAL)
   A. How do the Chinese student teachers’ perceptions/experiences impact their construction of professional identity during the education practicum?
   B. How do the Chinese student teachers perceive their professional identity evolved as they encountered the placement school context during the education practicum?

As the research questions show above, we selected a mixed-method approach because this type of research design is well-matched for answering “what” and “how” questions (Creswell, 2012), and the approach “has complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses” (Johnson & Turner, 2003, p. 299) and provides validity evidence by adopting explanatory sequential mixed methods approach (quan<QUAL) to increase the integrity of findings. In explanatory sequential mixed methods design,
the quantitative approach comes first in the study and then a qualitative component follows in the research (Creswell, 2012).

Additionally, we chose mixed methods because the rationale for this approach is that “the quantitative data and results provide a general picture of the research problem; more analysis, specifically through qualitative data collection, is needed to refine, extend, or explain the general picture” (Creswell, 2012, p. 542) and that the combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods provides a more comprehensive understanding of the research problems (Kerkhoff, 2017). The timeline as well as number of participants are listed in Table 1.
Table 1

**Data Sources of This Study**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Sources</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Timetable</th>
<th>Related to Research Questions</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>Right after the education practicum (EP)</td>
<td>1. What is the status of the Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction during the education practicum? (quan)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A. What contributes to or hinders their professional identity construction during the education practicum?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B. To what extent have the participants perceived/developed their teacher professional identity?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus-group interview</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>One month after the EP and after the questionnaire survey</td>
<td>2. How do the Chinese student teachers construct their teacher professional identity during the education practicum? (QUAL)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A. How do the Chinese student teachers’ perceptions/experiences impact their construction of professional identity during the education practicum?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B. How do the Chinese student teachers perceive their professional identity evolved as they encountered the placement school context during the education practicum?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education practicum report</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>One month after the EP and after the questionnaire survey</td>
<td></td>
<td>Qualitative analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gap in Previous Research

What’s more, in China, existing literature on studies of student teacher professional identity construction adopt both qualitative and quantitative methods, but approaches are predominantly qualitative (Shi & Cheng, 2020). Shi and Cheng’s (2020) review of research on teacher professional identity since 2010 shows that the proportion of research on student teachers is as small as 7.8%, but also only 18.3% of the research adopts a mixed-methods approach. This study was designed to address a gap in the field in terms of research subjects and adopted methods. In this section, we will explain the qualitative and quantitative procedures utilized to understand the construction of student teacher professional identity during educational practicum at placement schools.

Quantitative Approach

The quantitative approach of the study aimed to understand the status of Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction during the education practicum. The following section describes the instrument selection and modification, sampling, and the procedures for implementation of the quantitative approach.

Instrument Selection and Modification

Selection. In the phase of quantitative data collection, we conducted an electronic survey at the end of the education practicum. We located Xun et al.’s (2014) questionnaire “Teacher Identity Inventory for EFL Teacher” (see Appendix A) and applied it in this study for two reasons.

First, Xun et al.’s questionnaire has fine reliability and validity. This instrument contains accepted scales of measurement (Creswell, 2012), which applied a rating scale of five Likert-scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” to explore teacher professional identity development. It also had excellent reliability
according to a test of Cronbach alpha (α = .920) and validity (KMO = .828) (Xun et al., 2014).

Second, the four aspects of our definition of student teacher professional identity are compatible with the four dimensions of Xun et al.’s questionnaire that are a) career identity mainly reflects teachers’ recognition of professional values and sense of belonging, b) major identity involves teachers’ understanding of the subject they are teaching and self-evaluation of professional proficiency, c) personal identity focuses on teachers’ self-estimate of commitment and professional behavior tendency, and d) situated identity examines the impact of school environment on teachers’ professional identity, as seen in Table 2.

**Modification.** We did the following modification to make the instrument appropriately fit the requirement of our study. First, Xun et al.’s questionnaire was designed for the in-service English teachers, and we re-worded the expressions of the items to fit the respondents of our study who are student teachers across majors. Secondly, we changed the time frame of all the items to be specific to the education practicum, because we envision education practicum as a site for student teacher professional identity construction, and particularly knowing how student teachers position themselves, and how their professional identities are formed amid the practicum are the critical research angles of our study. Therefore, we added the time phrase of “during the education practicum” to all the items. Thirdly, we slightly adjusted the number of the items. One item of Xun et al.’s questionnaire was “Senior high school English teaching has the characteristics of its own in terms of the subject”, which the wording may lead to ambiguity. This item focused on the attributes of the English subject, which is not aligned with our definition of student teacher professional identity. So, we removed this item and kept the remaining 33
items in our questionnaire. Finally, we replaced two dimension terms that are major identity and personal identity of Xun et al.’s questionnaire with disciplinary identity and performed identity, because we proposed that the two terms in Xun et al.’s questionnaire did not sufficiently explain and reflect the meaning of the dimensions. The modified instrument and the English translated version are listed in Appendix B.

Therefore, in the current study, based on the definition of student teacher professional identity, we proposed to explore the first research question “What is the status of the Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction during the education practicum?” through the lens of four dimensions, which are:

i) career identity to explore student teachers’ understanding of professional values and sense of belongings, which relates to our definition of student teacher professional identity a) with regard to a student teacher’s perceived identity at that moment and the future;

ii) disciplinary identity to examine student teachers’ cognition and understanding of the subject they are teaching and self-evaluation of their teaching ability, which connected to our definition of student teacher professional identity is b) in relation to student teachers’ teacher knowledge for teaching practices in placement school;

iii) performed identity to explore the student teacher’s commitment to the teaching profession and behavioral tendency while taking the role of a teacher and completing the teaching work, which related to the definition of student teacher professional identity is c) their performance in education practicum work; and

iv) situated identity to investigate the influence of the community of the placement school on student teacher professional identity development, which linked with the definition of student teacher professional identity is d) the positionality in
connection to others includes but not limited to students at placement schools, placement school cultures, fellow student teachers, mentors and the larger teaching profession.

Our definition of student teacher professional identity relating to the four dimensions of the modified questionnaire and Xun et al.’s questionnaire are listed in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Relating the Definition of Student Teacher Professional Identity to the Four Dimensions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. with regard to a student teacher’s perceived identity at that moment and the future</td>
<td>Career identity</td>
<td>Career identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. in relation to student teachers’ teacher knowledge for teaching practices in placement school</td>
<td>Disciplinary identity</td>
<td>Major identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. student teachers’ performance in education practicum work</td>
<td>Performed identity</td>
<td>Personal identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. positionality in connection to others includes but not limited to students at placement schools, placement school cultures, fellow student teachers, mentors and the larger teaching profession.</td>
<td>Situated identity</td>
<td>Situated identity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Validity and Reliability

Validity means the measuring ability of the tool to measure the subject, the study mainly used content validity and construct validity (Morais & Ogden, 2011). Content validity refers to the connection between the questions and the coverage of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was audited using an Expert Validity Questionnaire to collect scoring by several experts within the psychology and teacher education areas. The expert review was used to evaluate whether each of the items could be used in the four dimensions (Y. Xie, 2012). The items were sent out to twelve experts by email to determine their relevance and quality. All of the experts thought the items had a good logical connection with student teacher professional identity construction and therefore had a good content validity. The exact forms are presented as Appendix C. Only items that scored 80 or above were considered valid.

The remaining items were divided into four dimensions. Career identity is to understand student teachers’ recognition of professional values and sense of belongings, it includes items 3, 4, 8, 11, 12, and 31. Disciplinary identity is to examine student teachers’ cognition and understanding of the subject they are teaching and self-evaluation of their teaching ability, it includes items 6, 13, 14, 15, 26, 28, 29, 30 and 32. Performed identity to explore the student teacher’s commitment to the teaching profession and behavioral tendency while taking the role of a teacher and completing the teaching work, it includes items 1, 2, 7, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21. Situated identity is to investigate the influence of the community of the placement school on student teacher professional identity development, it includes items 5, 16, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27 and 33.

According to Creswell (2012), researchers could seek to establish validity based on the response process, which means researchers could interview individuals
who completed the questionnaire to report what they experienced or were thinking. K. Miller et al. (2014) also proposed that cognitive interview served as a valid check for survey questions by capturing the respondent’s experience and perceptions while answering the questions. Thus, after modifying the items of the instrument, we conducted a cognitive interview to examine whether the individual items are clear, and whether the overall instrument made sense to the participants (Willis, 2015).

The cognitive interview was conducted with the sample of convenience (n = 5) of the target population who are from the majors of English and Chinese, and just completed education practicum. After they finished the online survey, we interviewed them in a focus group. The co-authors all participated in the interview, one was in charge of hosting the interview and asking questions, the other two were in charge of taking notes. The techniques of think-aloud and verbal probing were applied in the cognitive interview (Willis, 2005), and the questions included:

- Could you please use your own words to repeat the items?
- How do you understand this term?
- What does the term mean to you?
- How did you get that answer?
- How sure are you with that answer? Why?
- Was this easy or hard to answer?
- How hard was this to answer?

At the end of the interviews, we asked the participants to give us suggestions on how to make the items clearer and more relevant to student teachers. Based on the participants’ comments and advice, we modified some terms of the items to make them clear and appropriate to the target population. For instance, one of the items stated, “I have a good ability in student management. The participants
proposed that the term “student management” is inappropriate and ambiguous, and they suggested “classroom management” is a more fitting term for this item. As a result, there was a 33-item proposed scale for student teacher professional identity construction during education practicum with six items for career identity, with nine items for disciplinary identity, with ten items for performed identity, and eight for situated identity.

The reliability of the questionnaire was examined by repeating the questionnaire with the same group of participants. The inner reliability was also looked into, the Cronbach $\alpha$ is measured from 0.00 to 1.00, with higher the number, the questionnaire is more reliable. The results for this questionnaire was .902, which is higher than .9, indicating a good inner reliability for the questionnaire (Murphy & Davidshofer, 1988, p. 89).

**Sample**

Purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 2009) in looking for a teacher college and its student teachers, who were enrolled in education programs and would participate in education practicum in placement schools by the time of the study was conducted as a site and the sample for this case study. Shenzhou Normal University in China and senior year student teachers were chosen as the site and participants for this case study because of the representativeness in large school size, comprehensive range of majors, and high popularity in China, which fits the profile of being “information rich” (Patton, 2002, p. 242) for the current case study that aimed to understand the construction of teacher professional identity among Chinese student teachers during their education practicum at placement schools and provided insights into other similar cases. Criteria for inclusion as participants of this research were (a) senior year undergraduate enrolled in Shenzhou Normal University, (b) participated in
the education practicum and (c) have full-time enrolled and finished all courses that were provided in the past six semesters. Disciplines included Biology, Chemistry, Chinese, English, Physics, Social and political science, and Physical education schools. Placement schools were located in both urban areas and suburban areas.

Dillman et al. (2014) has shown that request for participation coming from a credible source works the best in recruiting participants for a study. Participants for the quantitative approach were recruited through the dean of Graduate School. Graduate School of Shenzhou Normal University coordinates education training for student teachers in Shenzhou Normal University. The fact that people have become accustomed to completing various daily activities online, and the three researchers were in the United States and target research objects were in China led to conducting the survey online for the case study. Through the introduction of the dean of Graduate School, we sent recruitment message to all student teachers, who were enrolled in education programs and would participate in education practicum in placement schools by the time of the case study was delivered, via email and mobile apps (e.g., OICQ, WeChat).

The term “tailored” (Dillman et al., 2014, p. 16) is to describe how to modify a solicitation approach to fit the population group to which a researcher wants to gain participation for a study. Recruitment protocol for the quantitative approach included three attempts (Phillips et al., 2016; Willis et al., 2013) adopting the tailored design method (Dillman et al., 2014). Research showed that in communication of all forms, members of the general public are typically more likely to read and respond to communication attempts that are personalized (Dillman et al., 2014). In this way, recommendations on strategies to personalize the contact were followed. Recruitment of participants took place in three attempts: (a) personalized Wechat announcement,
(b) personalized email with link to the questionnaire, and (c) personalized follow-up reminder Wechat messages and emails (Phillips et al., 2016; Willis et al., 2013). In the first attempt through Wechat announcement, we sent a recruitment letter describing the purpose of the study, explaining how it would benefit teacher education, the voluntary and flexibility of withdrawal, non-impact to grades and privacy protection to the participation. Exact recruitment messages are presented as Appendix D. In the second attempt through email, we notified each participant of the link they could use to take the questionnaire on Wenjuanxing, a commonly used web survey platform in China. We sent follow-up reminder wechat messages and emails after 10 days and again after 17 days, as the third attempt to increase the response rate to the questionnaire. The survey remained open for participants for three and a half weeks with New Year break from school occurring during that time. Meanwhile, we would like to point out that there is a gender imbalance, with a higher ratio of female students in normal universities in China (Lan & Xiong, 2018; R. Z. Xu, 2014; M. Yang & Zhao, 2017). Thus, the ratio of participants of the case study also presented with a higher ratio of female student teachers. See Table 3 for the demographic information of questionnaire participants.
Table 3

*Demographic Information of Questionnaire Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Information</th>
<th>Number of Candidate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching Subject</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data Analysis*

After the questionnaire was conducted, the quantitative data retrieved from 275 questionnaires was analyzed using the computational tool software -- IBM SPSS version 23, to understand student teachers’ perceptions on teacher professional identity construction throughout the education practicum. The analysis of quantitative data was conducted through the four dimensions, which are career identity, disciplinary identity, performed identity, and situated identity. Descriptive statistics of results were presented in charts, tables as well as verbal forms in chapter 4, including Mean and Standard Deviation, to report the status of the Chinese student teachers’
professional identity. The results drawn from the analysis of quantitative data contributed to building understanding of student teacher’s professional identity construction during education practicum.

**Qualitative Approach**

In an explanatory sequential mixed methods research design, the qualitative data helps explain or elaborate the quantitative results. Qualitative inquiry permits researchers to get access to the participants’ views, voices and stories of their experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 2000) during the education practicum at the placement schools, as well as the evidence of the status and factors that influenced their teacher professional identity construction.

**Focus Group Interview Protocol Development**

We adopted the semi-structured interview to conduct the focus group interviews aimed to shed light on research question two. A semi-structured interview is commonly used as a qualitative approach, which not only offers the structure for the interview protocol, but also provides the participants with flexibility and opportunities to elaborate on the points of each question and fully express themselves, thereby deepening the conversation for new ideas to be brought up during the interview base on interviewees’ response (Longhurst, 2010). In addition, semi-structured interview allows interviewers more space to follow-up for clarification on answers, meanwhile, the interviewees normally feel less stress during the interview (Smith, 2019).

With research questions in hand, we first listed guiding topics that we could ask participants about to understand student teachers’ perspectives on the student teacher professional identity construction. The guiding topics in the focus-groups were (a) self-perceptions as teachers before and after the education practicum in the
school where they work, (b) relationship with community of placement schools and mentors, (c) perceptions on influence of one’s own teacher knowledge on professional identity construction, and (d) beliefs and commitment to teaching profession. We then wrote interview questions to cover each topic. Please see Appendix E for the list of interview questions, which were designed to avoid yes and no questions but to capture a wide range of perspectives on the student teacher professional identity construction during education practicum. Next, we took the interview protocol and tested it out through conducting a one-hour cognitive interviewing (Willis, 1994) with five student teachers (Willis, 2005) from Shenzhou Normal University who were doing education practicum at placement schools. We recruited these student teachers as they meet our sampling criteria for participants, and we believed the feedback from them could ensure that the interview questions made sense to participants. And from their response we ascertained that their understanding of the questions are what we meant in the question expressions, but two student teachers also pointed out their discomfort, and the other three then agreed, with some words like evaluate and position as they could bring tensions. We revised the word choices in question expressions as well as terminologies to minimize both misinterpretation and the uncertainty that may occur in the process of focus group interviews.

**Education Practicum Reports**

Haniford (2010) argued that “written pedagogical plans reflect assumptions about students and discursively create positions for them, making available certain identities and ways of participating” (p. 988). Therefore, we collected the education practicum report to triangulate the data of questionnaires and focus group interviews to increase validity and reliability of this case study (Lerseth, 2013). The education practicum report is required by Shenzhou Normal University, and every student
teacher should submit this report in electronic form after the education practicum. The writing prompts of the reports include their achievements in practicing teacher’s work at placement schools, reflections on their performance during the practicum, and efforts they plan to make in terms of teaching profession. The length of the education report should be no less than 1500 words. The mentors of Shenzhou Normal University graded the reports and the score of the report accounts for 30% of the total education practicum score.

**Participants**

For the second part of this case study, we did focus group interviews and collected student teachers’ education practicum reports for the purpose of data triangulation. The focus group interviews and student teachers’ education practicum reports provided student teachers’ voices that were important to capture, because we stand by the concept of learner-centered education (Schiro, 2013) to empower student teachers in learning to teach. Since the construct under research is student teacher professional identity construction during education practicum at placement schools, we take the voices of student teachers as powerful and needed for this study.

We sent focus group interviews and education practicum reports recruitment messages to all 275 student teachers who participated in the quantitative phase. We recruited participants through sending a recruitment letter in Wechat group and contacted them via a personal email to finalize their participation. See Appendix F for recruitment letters to student teachers.

There were 51 student teachers who agreed and all were recruited for their education practicum reports, 13 of whom were recruited to the focus group interviews. Participants of education practicum reports were collected, including nine male and 42 female across disciplines of Biology, Chemistry, Chinese, English,
Physics, Social and Political Science, and Physical Education, 16 of them did education practicum in primary schools, 21 of them did education practicum in junior high schools, 14 of them did education practicum in senior high schools, and 22 of them did education practicum in placement schools located in urban area, while 29 of them did education practicum in placement schools located in suburban area. In order to garner diverse and credible perspectives, we purposefully selected 13 participants from the student teachers who agreed to participate in our focus group interviews to provide information to develop detailed understanding of student teacher professional identity construction. We purposefully selected the participants for maximum variation in demographics to include different genders of student teachers and a variety of placement schools, grade levels (elementary, junior high, and senior high), and content areas in the different areas of the Province. Participants of focus group interviews are described in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*Demographic Information of Focus Group Interviews Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Placement School (Levels)</th>
<th>Placement School (Locations)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Junior High</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Social and Political Science</td>
<td>Junior High</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Senior High</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Junior High</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Data Collection

Data from student teachers’ focus group interview transcripts and practicum reports were collected separately.

**Focus groups.** Since we aimed to explore the trajectory of student teacher’s professional identity construction, the factors impacting their construction, the difficulties encountered in the construction, and student teachers’ coping methods, the focus-group interview was designed to refine or elaborate questionnaire findings of the first phase through an in-depth qualitative exploration (Creswell, 2012). In a focus group interview, as Kvale (2005) suggested, the group members can support,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th></th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Junior High</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Senior High</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 7</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Junior High</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 9</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 10</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Social and Political Science</td>
<td>Senior High</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 11</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Junior High</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 12</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Social and Political Science</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 13</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Junior High</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
supplement, stimulate and discipline each other during the interview, and answers given in a group can illustrate common experience and emotions. Therefore, focus group interviews helped us receive detailed, thorough information simultaneously from several interviewees (Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010). Creswell (2012) states that “a focus group interview is the process of collecting data through interviews with a group of people, typically four to six” (p. 218), so we divided 13 participants into three groups, two groups with four participants and one group with five participants.

We conducted two rounds of focus group interviews with the same participants via VooV Meeting, an app for online conferences. All the interviews were recorded with the permission of all participants and transcribed verbatim. Each group each time lasted about one and a half hours. The three co-authors each took turns as the moderator with the other two as the note takers in each interview. The second round interview was the follow-up one to verify the emergent assertions and to dig deep about “what was going on” with student teacher professional identity development during the practicum (Creswell, 2012). In addition, the second focus group interview could help to reduce the biases from the data of the education practicum report, as students may create the reports for a grade and only highlight the positive aspects. The focus group is a space where students could talk without the pressure of a grade.

While we were conducting focus group interviews, making sure that each participant talks was a crucial issue. In response to this issue, before the interviews, we told the participants there were no right or wrong answers. They did not need to agree with the other participants’ viewpoints. Agreement and disagreement were all welcomed in the interview, and participants were encouraged to talk more about the reasons for agreement or disagreement during the interviews. Second, after posing the
questions, we gave participants time to think about their responses or share additional ideas. Third, if a few participants have not responded to the interview questions, the moderator used the words, such as, “I haven’t heard from a few of you yet. Is there anyone who hasn’t said anything who would like to share?”, to encourage participants to talk rather than calling out their names who have not talked (Learning for Action, n.d.).

Additionally, as teacher educators, we all have the awareness of the issue of power dynamics between researchers and participants, though we were not serving as teachers at the time of collecting data. To reduce the concern of the participants, we told them that they were entirely voluntary, and they could withdraw from the study at any time without affecting their grades and their relationship with their teachers and us.

**Education practicum reports.** We collected participants’ education practicum reports one month after the education practicum. Participants attached their education practicum reports in emails and sent to us. The collection of education practicum reports from participants lasted for a week. When collecting the education practicum reports, we told the participants to feel free to remove their own names and the names of the placements in the reports, and if any names were to be mentioned for reporting the research findings, it would only be pseudonyms.

We also let the participants know that their privacy was well protected in related to education practicum reports once we received. We would save their reports in a mobile HDD and set up passwords which only the three co-authors of this dissertation know. And the analysis of their reports would be conducted offline. We assured the participants that the education practicum reports were for the research purpose only, and would not have any effects on their grades of any kind.


Data Analysis

The data included six interview transcripts -- three transcripts are first-round interviews and three transcripts are second-round follow-up interviews of Chinese student teachers -- and 51 education practicum reports. The purpose of this analysis was to determine the themes using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Focus group interviews were conducted and transcribed in Chinese, and collected education practicum reports were also in Chinese. The three co-authors analyzed the qualitative data in Chinese, so was the approach of member checking. The themes and excerpts were translated and reported in English. Concerning the reliability of translations, as native speakers of Chinese, we invited native speakers of English to proofread the translated themes and excerpts to achieve the best equivalence in two languages.

We practiced intercoder agreement and member checking (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017) in order to secure credibility of the qualitative results. Firstly, we carefully read the entire transcript documents and education practicum reports and highlighted key quotes and created memos reflexing our coding process in a Google document file. Secondly, we independently coded the identical qualitative data, to be specific, three out of six focus group interview transcripts and 25 out of 51 education practicum reports. Next, the three coders compared and discussed our codes and notes to see the extent to which independent coders agree on the coding of the content (Lavrakas, 2012). Rather than focused on getting to a standard coefficient, our focus was on a practical improvement of the coding quality, for which we addressed and edited the codes that did not match in terms of definition and word choices to achieve agreement. After coming to consensus about codes, we continued coding the rest of the data.

In qualitative research, researchers need to decide whether the themes only
include the text itself, or also the interviewee’s deeper meaning or the tones and tunes of the interviewee’s narratives (Patton, 1990). Our thematic analysis only included the text itself in this research. In this research, themes are understood as the subject and main idea, it could be a sentence or a word, based on the research question and interview answers.

The main themes that emerged from the data of focus group interviews and education practicum reports are the understanding of the teaching profession, teacher knowledge, influence of people, role model and classroom manager, and challenges. Appendix G lists the themes as well as the supporting data excerpts.

**Validity and Reliability**

Alternative terms, such as trustworthiness, authenticity, validity and reliability, are used by various researchers to describe measures taken for the rigor of research over the years. Lincoln and Guba (1985) use the term trustworthiness or authenticity in qualitative research to describe measures taken for the rigor that applied for validity and reliability in qualitative research. We, in this case study, adopt validity and reliability for the purpose as other mixed methods researchers often do (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2016). To increase validity and reliability, we followed qualitative inquiry approaches during the whole process of study, including member checking, triangulation and disconfirming evidence reporting (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). When we completed the analysis, we conducted the member checking approach via Wechat with all participants. Emerged themes along with explanations were returned to all participants by emails to check for accuracy and their resonance. We sent summaries of the findings and working definitions back to all participants in the study and asked if the findings accurately reflected their experiences. More than 75% of participants replied, and agreement on the qualitative results was achieved.
Participants responded in Chinese with positive comments, we translated in English, such as “This is what I meant”, “Yes, you got it all correct” and “This is the reflection of my opinions, and I’m glad to know that other student teachers share my ideas/experiences”. And we did not get any negative response in accuracy. Triangulation was complemented by drawing from more than one participant’s statements to build evidence for the findings. In addition, we committed to an in-depth description of the data and, if any, reporting disconfirming evidence to “confirm the accuracy of the data analysis” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017, p. 633).

Defined as “the stance or positioning of the researcher in relation to the social and political context of the study—the community, the organization or the participant group” (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014, p. 627), positionality has influence in every step of the research process. In other words, our background may shape biases to the interpretation of the data that we collected from both the qualitative and quantitative phase. Creswell and Plano Clark (2017) believe that “research (and its interpretations) can never be separated from the researcher’s reflexivity” (p. 630). To minimize biases, we combed and analyzed interview transcripts and education practicum reports word by word, adopted intercoder agreement strategy (Miles et al., 2014) and peer-coding sessions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017) to increase reliability of the case study. We also kept an audit trail for the translation of data to ensure the reliability by inviting native speakers of English for proofreading.

**Ethical Considerations**

It has been advocated by quite a few researchers that ethical considerations are indispensable aspects of doing research (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 2009; Neuman, 2011). “Individuals who participate in a study have certain
“rights” (Creswell, 2012, p. 23), that is, ethical concerns relate to protection of participants’ privacy as well as other rights. Participants may not be fully aware of research ethics, however, we as researchers must attend to ethical concerns in the whole process of our research (Creswell, 2012).

Ensuring validity and reliability in qualitative research involves conducting the research in an ethical manner (Merriam, 2009). Even in the spirit of only using collected data to “fairly represent what I hear and see as a researcher” (Lichtman, 2013, p. 55), researcher’s personal views in terms of age, ethnicity, and gender as well other attributes can influence and affect how the data are perceived and interpreted in research. Thus, a variety of procedures should be adopted, such as triangulation, participants’ evaluation on pattern descriptions, cross-examination of the same data by different analysts and counter-interpretations in order to minimize the bias. In addition, when doing qualitative research, we also considered it within a moral frame in terms of care and kindness. This could manifest in the careful and rigorous research design and data collection instruments as well as the protection of data.

In order to abide by research ethics, we followed IRB protocol to protect the rights and privacy of the participants. No direct identifiers were used in the questionnaires or in the focus group interview transcripts. We did CITI training and received IRB approval from our own institution, the University of Missouri-St. Louis, before collecting data. Throughout our research, we made every effort to abide by ethical standards. In initial contact with the student teachers for participant recruitment, we explained our research purposes and protocol to the supervisors of student teacher education practicum and all potential participants. Furthermore, pseudonyms were given for the university and participants to protect confidentiality of the participants. We kept the data confidential by ways of setting passwords and
disconnecting internet access. We also addressed the participants’ ethical concerns in the aspects of data analysis and reporting, that is, only to report aggregated results of the questionnaire in any published scientific study. And information about participants’ participation in the interviews and questionnaire or withdrawal from participation would not influence their grades of any kind at school was included in the recruitment message. All participants were informed about the study and signed consent forms (see Appendix H).

**Summary**

This case study used a sequential explanatory mixed methods design. The explanatory design has many advantages. First, it is seen as the most straightforward of the mixed methods designs because many researchers find this design manageable to conduct as they collect only one type of data at a time. Also, the written report uses a quantitative section followed by a qualitative section, and provides a clear delineation for readers (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). What’s more, the rationale for mixed methods design lies in one data collection form that supplies strengths to offset the weaknesses of the other form, and that a more complete understanding of research problems results from collecting both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2012). The case study began with a quantitative phase during which data were collected from student teachers in Shenzhen Normal University who were conducting education practicum at placement schools to investigate the perceived student teacher professional identity and followed up with a qualitative phase to understand the perceived construction of student teacher professional identity. Cognitive interviews and Cronbach’s alpha were conducted to evaluate validity and reliability. The tailored questionnaire and focus group interview questions were valid and reliable to
investigate and understand student teacher professional identity construction during education practicum at placement schools.
Chapter 4
Results and Findings

This case study aimed to understand student teacher professional identity construction among student teachers during their education practicum at placement schools. Guided by the synthesized theoretical framework for understanding student teacher professional identity construction (e.g., Davies & Harré, 1990; Engeström, 2015; Lave & Wenger, 1991), our study focused on two overarching research questions: 1. What is the status of the Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction during the education practicum?, and 2. How do the Chinese student teachers construct their teacher professional identity during the education practicum?

Study participants were recruited from student teachers of Shenzhou Normal University in China who were in their seventh semester and doing education practicum at placement schools. The data examined for purposes of this study consisted of 275 questionnaires, six focus group interview transcripts and 51 education practicum reports. Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, and the thematic analysis method was used to extract themes from the qualitative data obtained. Analysis led to the answers to the research questions in our study.

Quantitative Results

Data generated from the questionnaire include the percentages for each item along the five-point scale of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and strongly agree. The data will be reported by dimensions of career identity, disciplinary identity, performed identity, and situated identity to provide answers to research question one. We changed the scales in words to numbers 1-5, with “1” as strongly disagree, “5” as strongly agree when input data in SPSS version 23. The mean of each
item is calculated by dividing the sum of the points of this item by the number of responses.

**Career Identity**

The dimension of career identity encompasses six items to measure the level of the participants’ understanding of the teaching profession and to what extent they perceived themselves to belong to the teacher community (see Table 5). The results showed that among the six items, participants had the highest agreement with item 11 “I think the teaching profession is very important in advocating individual development” \((M=4.564, SD=0.585)\) and the lowest agreement on item 8 “I care about what others think of the teacher community” \((M=4.211, SD=0.744)\), showing that in the understanding of the teaching profession, the importance of the role of the teaching profession on individual development is primarily emphasized by the participants. Meanwhile, the participants also had a high agreement with item 12 \((M=4.542, SD=0.580)\), which emphasizes professional value of student-centered education and the cultivation of student’s learning ability, indicating that participants advocated for teaching students how to learn rather than simply imparting knowledge. Additionally, in terms of a sense of belonging to the teacher community, the data of item 4 \((M=4.516, SD=0.641)\) showed that participants had a high agreement on pleasant feelings when seeing and hearing the words in praise of the teacher. Furthermore, the dimension of career identity \((M=4.461, SD=0.564)\) received the highest agreement from participants among the four dimensions, reflecting that student teachers’ understanding of the teaching profession and their sense of belonging to the teacher community are in the primary position of professional identity construction during the education practicum.
Table 5

Rating of Career Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Statements for Response</th>
<th>Student Responses by Category (N = 275)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. When introducing myself, I am glad to mention that I am a teacher to others outside of the placement schools during education practicum</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. It gives me great pleasure to see or hear words praising the profession of teachers.</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I care about what others think of the teacher community.</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I think the teaching profession is very important in advocating individual development.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I recognize the concept of student center and attach importance to the cultivation of students’ ability and learning strategies.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. I think a teacher's work is important to the growth and development of students.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disciplinary Identity

There are nine items under the dimension of disciplinary identity (see Table 6), which examine student teachers’ cognition and understanding of the subjects they are teaching and self-evaluation of their teaching ability. The data showed that among these items participants have the highest agreement on item 6 “I care about and respect students in my overall teaching career” \( M=4.560, \text{SD}=0.615 \) and item 15 “I think teaching strategies are very important to students’ learning” \( M=4.560, \text{SD}=0.491 \), showing that when practicing the role of a teacher, most of the participants possessed the teaching philosophy that is placing their students in the priority. Meanwhile, item 26 \( M=4.262, \text{SD}=0.713 \) received the lowest agreement from participants on their self-evaluation of the ability to help students have good
performance on standardized tests. In addition, participants also have high agreements on item 13 ($M=4.495$, $SD=0.641$) about the importance of background knowledge in learning and item 14 ($M=4.491$, $SD=0.606$) about that learning is the process of knowledge construction. In general, within the dimension of disciplinary identity, data showed that the teaching philosophy a student teacher proposed and the level of disciplinary knowledge a student teacher possessed can impact his or her professional identity construction.

**Table 6**

*Rating of Disciplinary Identity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Statements for Response</th>
<th>Student Responses by Category (N = 275)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I care about and respect students in my overall teaching career.</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I think the background knowledge is important to learn a major well.</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I think learning is a process of knowledge construction.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I think teaching strategies are very important to students’ learning.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I think I’m able to make my students at placement school do well in the standardized tests during education practicum.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I think I can only learn my major well in an interactive environment.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. I can perform accurate classroom demonstrations in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I have good communication skills.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. During the education practicum, the teacher knowledge I possessed could support me to complete the teaching.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Performed Identity

The participants indicated a high level of performed identity. See Table 7 rating of performed identity. The item with the lowest agreement level in this dimension is 2 “I have good ability in classroom management during education practicum every day,” and the item participants had the highest agreement with is 1 “I can finish the teaching work seriously during education practicum every day” ($M=4.527$, $SD=0.196$). Participants showed lack of confidence in classroom management and expressed willingness to achieve the goals of educational practicum when they can. The participants also showed high agreement on the two items on relationship with others, 9 “I take the initiative to create harmonious relationships with my colleagues in placement school during education practicum” ($M=4.364$, $SD=0.650$) and 10 “I can keep a good relationship with my students in placement during education practicum” ($M=4.495$, $SD=0.606$). The participants were willing to participate in activities and make friends with others in practicum school. The participants also showed high agreement of the question on considering students, 17 “In teaching, I give full consideration to the students’ learning styles” ($M=4.284$, $SD=0.709$). Most participants expressed willingness to adjust their curriculum and teaching style to better accommodate students’ learning level and style.
### Table 7

**Rating of Performed Identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Statements for Response</th>
<th>Student Responses by Category (N = 275)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I can finish the teaching work seriously during education practicum every day.</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>36.73</td>
<td>59.64</td>
<td>4.527</td>
<td>0.696</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I have good ability in classroom management during education practicum every day.</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>10.55</td>
<td>47.64</td>
<td>38.18</td>
<td>4.189</td>
<td>0.820</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I design teaching activities according to the characteristics of placement school students during education practicum.</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>46.18</td>
<td>49.61</td>
<td>4.382</td>
<td>0.681</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I take the initiative to create harmonious relationships with my colleagues in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>48.73</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>4.364</td>
<td>0.650</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I can keep a good relationship with my students in placement during education practicum.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>41.82</td>
<td>51.48</td>
<td>4.495</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. In teaching, I give full consideration to the students’ learning styles.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>10.55</td>
<td>46.91</td>
<td>41.45</td>
<td>4.284</td>
<td>0.709</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I take the initiative in teaching works in placement school during education practicum</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>44.36</td>
<td>49.09</td>
<td>4.415</td>
<td>0.653</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. I'm passionate about my teacher's work in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>43.27</td>
<td>50.18</td>
<td>4.425</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I feel happy when I put myself into a teacher's work in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>45.09</td>
<td>49.82</td>
<td>4.425</td>
<td>0.665</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. I feel strong and energetic at work in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>45.09</td>
<td>49.45</td>
<td>4.418</td>
<td>0.675</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Situated Identity**

The participants indicated a high level of situated identity. See Table 8. The item participants showed lowest agreement in this dimension is 5 “I can have an equal dialogue with the faculty and staff in placement school during education practicum” ($M=4.156, SD=0.872$), which indicates that there is still hierarchy and distance between student teachers and school teachers. Participants showed the highest
agreement on item 27 “I support the current education reform”. Educational reform is part of the teacher’s work at Chinese k-12 schools, and discussing and practicing educational reform policies have made participants feel more involved. The participants also showed high agreement on the other question of educational policy (Item 16, $M=4.32$, $SD=0.749$), and most participants showed strong confidence in educational policies. The participants showed high agreement on the question on changing exam-oriented teaching (Item 33, $M=4.269$, $SD=0.74$). Most participants showed confidence in a future change in Chinese classrooms, going from exam-oriented teaching into student-centered learning.

**Table 8**

*Rating of Situated Identity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questionnaire Statements for Response</th>
<th>Student Responses by Category (N = 275)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I can have an equal dialogue with the faculty and staff in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I think the education policy is helpful to improve my professionalism.</td>
<td>0.734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. When encountering difficulties, I can go for help from placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. The placement school really cares about my welfare during education practicum.</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. The placement school is proud of my contribution to the work during education practicum.</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. The placement school is in an effort to build up atmosphere to make me comfortable at work during education practicum.</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. I support the current education reform.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. I think the current social trend is leading to a change in exam-oriented teaching.</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
By looking at the high agreement of each dimension shown in Figure 2, we were able to analyze a high level of student teacher professional identity construction among participants during education practicum, which marked a successful identity transformation from a student to a teacher. And the findings from qualitative data as follows reported the understanding of student teachers’ views on learning and teaching and themselves as teachers.

**Figure 2**

*Percentage of Agreement of Each Dimension in Questionnaire*

![Graph showing percentage of agreement for each dimension.](image)

*Note. N = 275.*

**Qualitative Findings**

Through qualitative data analysis, we generated themes to answer the research question two. Five major themes emerged as the data was reviewed and coded according to the thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Clarke & Braun, 2017) by three separate coders, who are the co-authors of this dissertation. Each of the
themes is described in detail with supporting data excerpts expressed in the following section.

**Understanding of the Teaching Profession**

Teacher professional identity is an ongoing dynamic interaction through which individuals learn the roles of others around themselves and how to moderate their actions toward others and the environment (Beijaard et al., 2004). That is, professional identity construction is deeply involved with a person’s understanding of the profession, and how he or she will enact the role as a professional. The data under this theme indicated student teachers’ understanding on what a teacher should be, and how they will moderate their actions and act the role as a teacher along with their perceptions towards the teaching profession during the education practicum and for the future professional development.

When talking about the understanding of the role of a teacher for the development of an individual and the society, student teacher 2 stated the following during the focus group interview:

Teaching profession is different from other professions. Teachers shape and guide students to be the talents in all professions. For the society, the qualities that a teacher possesses could influence an individual’s development, so as to influence the social climate and social pattern. In this reply, the participant expressed her thoughts about the importance of the teaching profession for an individual and social development, indicating that the quality that a teacher possesses plays an important role in the individual and social development.
Student teacher 13 and student teacher 7 expressed similar perspectives on the role of teaching profession for an individual and social development in the focus group interviews. Student teacher 13 reflected:

Being a teacher is a life-long construction. As a teacher, we should possess the quality consistent with the title of teacher. Only when we show our qualities as a teacher in appearance, speech and behavior, knowledge and so on, can we win our students’ love and respect.

The main ideas of her reply could be concluded that being a teacher should possess certain qualities and act as a professional. And student teacher 7 stated:

A teacher could influence a student’s entire life. A teacher plays an exemplary role that students will follow. So, to be a good teacher, we should possess certain qualities such as profound knowledge, caring and loving their students, and so on.

These excerpts revealed that when student teachers are talking about their understanding of the role of the teaching profession for an individual and social development, the common thread was what a teacher should be and what qualities a teacher should possess will influence an individual and social development.

Meanwhile, participants shared detailed information about the quality a teacher should have when discussing the question of what an ideal teacher is to them and supporting reasons for the responses during the focus group interviews. Student teacher 8 shared her perception with us:

My ideal teacher should be a teacher who is knowledgeable in teaching. I did not like to learn math when I was in high school, so my math scores were not very good. Then I met a math teacher, who was really
knowledgeable on how to teach. He could explain the very complicated knowledge that I could not understand clearly, and when I met a math problem, my teacher would always encourage me, he said, if you couldn’t know how to solve the problem, then no one could. Under his influence, I gradually liked learning mathematics.

From her response, we could acknowledge that when the student teacher was talking about an ideal teacher for her, she crystallized to the quality that a teacher should possess, which is knowledgeable in teaching. In other words, for this student teacher, what a teacher should be is equivalent to what qualities a teacher should possess based on her experience as a student. Student teacher 6 interacted with student teacher 8, responding in the focus group interview:

I have the same experience with you. My image of an ideal teacher was formed around high school. At that time, a teacher with profound knowledge was very attractive to me, so I hope I could be that kind of teacher one day.

When discussing an ideal teacher for them, both student teacher 6 and student teacher 8 mentioned the quality that a teacher should possess, which is profound knowledge. Meanwhile, their responses provided another piece of information that their perspectives on what a teacher should be was influenced by their previous educational experience. Student teacher 5 also drew her previous educational experience to answer this question:

The teaching profession has a great influence on students. For me, an ideal teacher should be strict with students, as well as caring and loving students. Because the English teacher in my junior high school was the kind of teacher I mentioned. Though she was strict with our study, she also cared for us. For instance, she always reminded us to keep warm
when the weather was getting cold. And I want to be a teacher like her in the future, and this teacher played a very important role in guiding my teaching profession and forming my personal character.

From the stories of three participants above, we could conclude that student teachers’ previous educational experiences and the teachers they encountered provided them with a notion of what a teacher should be. Table 9 listed the description words for what a teacher should be that were excerpted from the participants.

As discussed above, before entering into the placement school, participants learned the role of a teacher from their previous educational research. The data also showed that after entering the placement school, the participants learned what a teacher should be from current practicum experience as well. In focus group interview, student teacher 12 shared:

I have a deeper understanding of the teaching profession after the education practicum. Before the practicum, I thought that a knowledgeable teacher could only accurately teach knowledge and correctly answer questions raised by students. During the practicum, my mentor asked me if I read some books while preparing the class. I said, I didn’t. Then she told me that giving students a drop of water, we need to prepare a vast ocean. At that time, I realized that teachers need to have profound knowledge in order to have a good class.

This excerpt indicated that dialogue with her mentor teacher brought the participant a further understanding on what a teacher should be. That is, while interacting with the mentor of the placement school, the participants constantly obtained the information from her mentor about what a teacher should be. The information may give the student teacher a brand new idea or strengthen her
previous thoughts on her understanding of the teaching profession. Student teacher 1 also addressed that he learned the knowledge about the role of a teacher from the experience of practicum:

From elementary school to high school, I liked the teacher who was amiable and could get along well with students. However, from the practicum, I learned that teachers should not be too friendly to students. For example, if students make mistakes, such a friendly relationship will make it hard for teachers to build up rules with students. Therefore, I think teachers should not be too friendly to students, and they should maintain the authority of class.

The excerpts above showed that the experience of education practicum strengthened their previous understanding of the teaching profession, or new ideas or feelings emerged toward the teaching profession. Table 9 listed the description words of participants’ understanding of the teaching profession based on their previous educational experience and the experience of education practicum.
### Table 9

*Description Words for What a Teacher Should Be*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learn from Previous Educational Experience</th>
<th>Learn from Education Practicum (New Ideas or Feelings)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsible</td>
<td>Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable</td>
<td>Patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skillful in teaching</td>
<td>Affable and respectable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Skillful in classroom management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Skillful in communication and collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strict</td>
<td>Inquiring mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affable</td>
<td>Reflective thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humorous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide guidance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal treatment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard working</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passionate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, as we proposed previously, professional identity formation should be an ongoing and developmental process through which individuals learn the role of others, of themselves, and moderate their actions towards others and environment.

Notable remarks shared by participants in focus group interviews and practicum reports showing that the knowledge of the role of a teacher they learned during the practicum enlightened their professional identity development on what type of teacher they want to be in the future. The followings are two excerpts from the participants’ education practicum reports, student teacher 23 reflected:

During the education practicum, I really felt my transformation from a student to a teacher. Teaching is a noble profession, as well as a hard-
working profession. But all the hardships will be disappeared in the addressing of “teacher” by students. In the future, I will give all my love to students and become a guide of their lives. I will work harder in the future to arm myself with knowledge and become a qualified teacher.

Student teacher 23’s experience told us she did learn the knowledge of what a teacher should be from the experience of education practicum, which also influenced her performance as a professional in the career development. And student teacher 5 shared in the practicum report, stating:

I perceived myself as a new teacher in the placement school, so it is very important for me to learn from others modestly. First, I need to learn how to give a good lesson from the outstanding teachers. Second, I need to act the role of a good teacher, because great learning makes a teacher, moral integrity makes a model. So, I need to observe more, ask more, learn more, practice more, reflect more, and improve my teaching skill, so as to lay a solid foundation for my future teaching, and become a qualified teacher.

To summarize, the data under the theme of understanding the teaching profession indicated that when acting the role of a teacher, student teachers built up connection to their understanding of the teaching profession, which was learned from their previous educational experience, as well as the current education practicum experience. Meanwhile, student teachers moderate their actions to align with the role of a teacher they learned at the moment of teaching, as well as prepare themselves to be a prospective teacher whom they think a teacher should be.
Teacher Knowledge

The focus group interview transcripts and education practicum reports showed that teacher knowledge has significant influence on student teacher professional identity construction. Participants reported that their perceived sense of being a teacher during education practicum at placement schools is related to the level of acquired knowledge in subject matter, classroom management techniques, instructional techniques, curriculum content, knowing students’ needs, and their own strengths and shortcomings as a teacher. And a stronger sense of being a teacher is perceived with the increase in teacher knowledge that is acquired under the context of placement schools. In the words of focus group interview participants to interview questions, such as What do you think you’d need to improve to complete the teacher’s job? How does the experience of educational practicum affect your career choices as a teacher? as well as on occasions of exchanging talks among themselves during the interview, participants shared their thoughts in the focus group interview as the following excerpts share:

I have taken the course of study of K-9 English textbooks in the sixth semester. I’m familiar with the textbooks and have practiced design of lesson plans with the textbooks. I know, in theory, what to teach to the class. And after spending the first week doing class observations, joining team meetings of the in-service teachers, exchanging ideas with my mentors about the textbook and teaching plans, I felt I’m better prepared and more confident when teaching the class.

Student teacher 1 increased the knowledge of curriculum content through the activities of observation, interactions with in-service teachers and mentors under
placement school context. And strengthened her identity as a teacher when acquired the knowledge.

Student teacher 4 stated:

Although we’ve studied many cases in the textbook from the course of classroom management and watched quite a few videos at class, I’ve never practiced in a real situation before I came to the placement school. And I panicked when I was first on my own, monitoring an afternoon self-study class of fifth grade students. They were chatting to each other, and some students just wouldn’t listen to me when I was telling them to be quiet. I didn’t know what to do by then, and it was frustrating. Seeing how my mentor did, and talking to the students after class about their misbehavior and let them know I was serious and meant what I said as their teacher, afternoon self-study classes went just fine under my supervision. I felt so good.

Classroom managing was difficult for student teacher 4 at the beginning, but through interacting with mentors and placement school students under placement school context, she became more comfortable in the classroom management. And developed more of a real sense of being a teacher than they did when they were at the normal university.

Student teacher 7 agreed with a participant when discussing the importance of instructional techniques for them to do the teacher’s works at placement schools, and added:

I agree. I also found the course of instructional techniques helpful with me teaching English reading class at the placement school. I made it to my first class. But, I felt much better at my second class a week later because I observed my mentor’s classes, discussed with her about my first class, we
went over the process of my first class, made clear of my own strengths and shortcomings. I was more confident because I knew what I would do.

Student teacher 7 developed a better sense of being a teacher than they did earlier before with an increase of knowledge of classroom management techniques and knowing their own strengths and shortcomings through interacting with mentors and reflective activities under placement school context.

Student teacher 11 replied:

It’s very important to understand your students. I mean, I felt as if I was lost on my first day at the placement school. When my mentor introduced me to the class, I felt I was a stranger to them, and they were the same to me. I thought I had it all planned, you know, like how to teach the class, how to talk to them, but when I saw them, I felt like things may be different, what I prepared may not be what they want. I ended up revising my lesson plan after I had graded their homework and tests. And I found out these teenagers are more adult-ish than I anticipate after spending officer hours with them. I know better how to be their teacher, and this made me happy.

Student teacher 11 constructed a higher level of status of teacher professional identity after spending time with placement school students than they did when they first arrived. Activities and interactions under the placement school context had positive influences on student teacher professional identity construction.

Almost all participants felt that knowledge in subject matter, classroom management techniques, instructional techniques and their own strengths and shortcomings were important to the performing teaching profession. And the higher level of the knowledge the higher level of their perceived teacher professional identity. In addition, quite a few participants consent to that knowledge in curriculum
content and knowing students’ needs played an important role for them in carrying out teacher work at the placement schools. And with the advancement of these knowledge during education practicum, they felt more at home in performing teaching at placement schools.

In addition, content of education practicum reports also revealed teacher knowledge has significant influence on student teacher professional identity construction. Participants’ thoughts in the education practicum reports are shared in the following excerpts.

Student teacher 3 wrote in her education practicum:

I felt anxious at the beginning of the educational practicum. It was like, theoretically, I knew how to teach, had it all planned but unexpectations were the real case in the classroom. But when I’m acquiring field experiences in the field through activities, such as, I observed my mentor, I was with students and I self-reflect, I know better. I felt that I have completed the transition from a student to a teacher.

Student teacher 3, in his education practicum report, formed a sense of being a teacher as acquiring teacher knowledge through activities in the placement school activity system. This was a turning point that made her feel be part of the teacher community as opposed to a student.

Student teacher 17 mentioned in his education practicum report:

I adopted the game teaching method along with multimedia facilities in the classroom when I taught the class, because I saw it worked very well when other in-service teachers did it with their classes. And I decided to be innovative after the teachers’ meeting. It went well in my class, pupils liked the relay-game I designed for them. I got their attention and they stayed with
me the whole class. I was proud when I successfully engaged my students in
the class activities and achieved the teaching objectives of this class. I think I
can be a good teacher.

With an increase of knowledge of instructional techniques under placement school
context, student teacher 17 gained successful teaching experiences. This shaped his
teacher professional identity and solidified his teaching profession intention.

Student teacher 21 in her education practicum report wrote:

I taught PE class to grade 8, it didn’t go well, they were not quite engaged. It
was an awkward scene, and it was my first class, I had this feeling that I may
not be cut out for this. But I felt much better only after talking to them that
they had already had aerobics class, and many of them were interested in Taiji
and they thought I must be a strict teacher because I never smiled during the
class. It’s important to know the curriculum content well and more important,
to know the students well, their interests, their needs. And smile.

Student teacher 21 stressed that advancing knowledge of curriculum content and the
students in the class are important elements for doing a teacher’s work well. And with
an increase of this knowledge, she constructed a higher status of teacher professional
identity.

Student teacher 34 wrote in her education practicum report:

I obviously enjoyed myself much more at the placement school by the end of
the education practicum compared to the earlier days. Because by then I knew
better in interpreting textbooks and students, adjusting ways of teaching
accordingly, and knowing what I’m good at and what I need to improve as a
teacher. These made me feel like a teacher. Education practicum is an
indispensable and valuable process for me.
With the advancing of teacher knowledge under placement school context, student teacher 34 were gaining better experiences of education practicum, and allowed him to reflect positively on his teacher professional identity.

Consistent with findings revealed from the focus group interview transcripts, education practicum reports indicated that teacher knowledge was strongly related to how well student teachers constructed their professional identity during education practicum at placement schools. What’s more, advancement in teacher knowledge through education practicum activities had a positive influence in student teacher professional identity construction.

*Influence of People*

The findings of this study showed that people’s influence is important for student teacher identity. Nearly all the student teachers talked about how interacting with people influenced how they look at themselves and the way they treat others. Student teachers report that teacher identity construction happens through interaction. Influencing people include teachers in the field, other student teachers, and students from their class. A student teacher who completes his practicum in a rural middle school talks about how he minds his way of talking to students to build his figure as a teacher. In the student teacher’s opinion, authority is part of the figure of teachers, although he would want to have a close relationship with students, he would lose authority due to this relationship. Student teacher 7 said in the focus group interview:

> At first I try to be their friend, but eventually we lose distance and I can not build my teacher figure, and I worry about it and change my way to talk to students so I can look like a teacher. Once I was napping on the desk in my office, and some students banged on my door and ran away. I was determined to build a relationship with students as a teacher after that.
In many cases, student teachers believed building teacher figures was very important and tried very hard to maintain it so that they could better manage their classroom and maintain self-esteem, and in-depth, lead to the development of their teaching abilities. Student teachers perceive teacher identity construction is enacted through peer interaction. Interaction is shown to be important for professional identity construct in previous research (Çapan & Bedir, 2019). Peer interaction also happens when student teachers interact with the school context, student teacher 7 stated in the focus group interview:

My friend and I will discuss what we did at the placement school, and it really helps. I will compare what we did at school, and who is more like a teacher. I think that my relationship with my students is more like a teacher and a friend. I am very serious in class, and they all respect me and treat me as a teacher. Then after class, I think I am more kind. For them, I think I am their big friend, and then they are closer to me, and they will talk to me to discuss some things, such as entertainment, news, and novels I have read recently. I try my best to keep a feeling of exchanging a little bit from each other, not to allow myself to have a sense of distance from them.

One student teacher felt she had much to improve on regarding classroom management. As far as the relationship status between teachers and students, she thought that being young, and she was just a student not long ago was an advantage for her because she had close relationships with students and could make equal conversation. She believed that students will be more likely to accept her teaching when they look up to her and can dialogue with her equally. But there is also a disadvantage for her, as she could not manage the students easily like the experienced teachers. Student teacher 5 shared in a focus group interview that:
And when we may also have teaching opportunities, in the course of the lectures, of course, we must have that kind of teacher’s demeanor, that is to say, what should be done is when the students are being loud, you must be loud, and need to be strict with them.

The student teacher continued her thought with how she wishes to have more control in classrooms, because she believes that in order to improve teaching performance, she needs to have order in the classroom. In interviews and practicum reports, classroom management has brought some pressure on student teachers. They wish to find a balance between maintaining a good relationship with students, and having ways to maintain order in the classroom. This stress to managing classrooms has affected student teachers’ way of interacting with students.

For exchanging with the school mentors, almost all student teachers admire and respect their mentor from their placement school. The mentor teachers have given them support on teaching and other practicum works. When asked, “Which events or which teachers impressed you during your education practicum?” One student said, “I feel a lot of common ground with my mentor at practicum school. How he teaches me a lot about what to do in the school, and how it changes my view of being a teacher.” Interaction with mentor teachers had a positive effect on their sense of belonging and happiness. Student teacher 3 shared in focus group interview:

We have also had a kind of teacher skill training before, and another kind of professional skill training. The teachers of our education and development institute will also give us lessons about the process of writing lesson plans that tell us how to write lesson plans, and then I think this process of preparing lessons is very important, because the writing of a lesson plan can control the process of our overall classroom.
Constantly, student teachers from several disciplines recognized the value of the knowledge and skills learnt in normal university, claiming the curriculum was well used in classrooms.

**Role Model and Classroom Manager**

The common works involved in educational practicum for student teachers other than teaching are acting as role models and performing classroom management (Xie, 2016). The fulfillment of these tasks and activities contributed to student teacher professional identity, these activities gave student teachers confirmation, established their worthiness, and recognized student teachers’ role as a teacher in the placement schools. The degree of interacting with students through these activities also contributed to student teacher professional identity. When being asked the qualifications of teachers, one student teacher said: “Apart from the disciplinary knowledge, student teachers are also expected to be a good role model, and influence students with their own behavior.” Student teachers noted looking up to their school teachers when they were kids, and when they go into a school classroom themself, they expect themself to be looked up to, and expect themselves to be a good influence to their students. Student teachers also mentioned that in a larger cultural background, being a role model is seen as foundational to being a teacher. Student teacher 11 shared in her education practicum report:

> My placement school is a rural school, and a lot of students come from low-income families. They often ask me about what it is like to be in college. So I think I need to be a model figure to the students, and maybe one day they will go to college too.

Multiple data sources also reflect that assessment also plays an important role in the everyday practice of placement schools and has made student teachers change their
practice for this need. A few student teachers noted they perceived helping students in assessments a need from their placement school, but they felt not having enough support for accommodating this need. Student teacher 4 described in focus group interview:

I don’t think I have enough knowledge to help the students to perform well in their assessments. School directors are also worried that it may have an impact on students’ assessment grades. I was assigned the role to grade assessment papers. I grade papers for three days a week, students have assessments weekly, and these assessments play an important role in their schooling experience.

Multiple data confirmed that the kind of teacher’s work as a role model had an influence on student teacher’s identity construction. This also confirmed the research on teaching experiences by Elmore and Wong (2010). One student teacher perceived that it’s her job to supervise students to behave in the classroom, and when she can not achieve this goal, she feels ill-equipped and inadequate. This reflects that student teachers have accepted the supervising role as an important part of teaching practicum, and will adjust their involvement in the practicum based on this role. Student teacher 1 stated in her education practicum report that:

Then for me, I lack the practical knowledge in this area, and I am not very good at supervising students. So in the face of this situation, sometimes I really don’t know how to deal with it. And for the insubordinate students, the best thing in my mind is to do a good job of what a teacher should do, and not to worry more about it. But for the students in the previous class, because they are very obedient and well-behaved, then I think I will try my best to do more on academics for them.
Student teachers also showed a preference in class teaching, multiple data including interview transcripts and practicum reports indicated that student teachers prefer to actually teach a class and did not get enough chances to do so. According to the practicum reports, some placement schools still lack support on student teacher’s teaching and learning, student teachers reported that they did not get enough teaching hours. The most commonly reported parts of education practicum work are homework grading; classroom management; making teaching plans and classroom teaching. Student teachers adapted their identity to meet the needs of the placement school and their students.

**Challenges**

The data points that came from this theme were primarily through focus group interviews. In each of the focus groups, participants mentioned the challenges they encountered when being asked the factors that affected their commitment to the education practicum. They mainly shared that they experienced the balancing competing priorities between practicing teacher’s work and preparing for the Unified National Graduate Entrance Examination (UNGEE), and obstacles imposed by mentors. The following excerpts showed how student teachers’ professional identity developed through the challenges. Student teacher 6 shared her experience on this topic:

> The main factor that influenced my commitment to the practicum is UNGEE. Because both of these two activities happened in the fall semester of the fourth-year college. Preparing for UNGEE requires a lot of time, energy and readings, while the practicum assignments are relatively heavy at the beginning. When I completed my day of practicum and returned to the library, there was little time left for study and I really felt exhausted. Even though I
really want to learn some knowledge from the practicum to improve my teaching ability, I can only prepare for the exam by compressing some practicum time, such as observing a few classes. And when my mentor knew the situation I am in, she gave me fewer tasks, which I really appreciated.

The researcher followed up a question asking, “What would you do if your mentor asked you to complete your internship conventionally, instead of taking care of your difficult situation?” Student teacher 6 answered:

I think I may do what my mentors asked me to do, but I may not like it and feel stressed, because these two things must have a priority, and I put more focus on the exam. So, if the mentor asked me to observe every class and correct students’ homework all the time, I think I would complain about it in my heart.

The excerpts showed that when practicing the teacher’s work at placement schools, the student teacher faced the challenges of balancing the priorities between practicum work and UNGEE, which influenced her dedication to the practicum and opportunities of performing the role of a teacher. For student teachers, practicing the teacher’s work is an important approach to fulfil their teacherly values (eg., to observe classes, to have classes for the students), as well as a crucial mediating tool to construct their professional identity. Therefore, the challenge of managing the competing priorities between practicing the teacher’s work and preparing UNGEE is one of the factors that influence student teacher professional identity construction.

Meanwhile, student teachers reported that they encountered the obstacles imposed by mentors, which influenced their commitment to the practicum as well. Two examples from the student teacher’s excerpts are listed, student teacher 11 shared:
My mentor seems to be reluctant to let me observe her class, because she assigned me a lot of paper and homework correction tasks every day, which takes up most of my practicum time. I planned to observe as many classes as I can, and hoped I could learn some knowledge of teaching from my mentor. Actually, I had few opportunities for classroom observation, because I spent so much time grading the papers. And in the second week of the practicum, my mentor asked me if our university has a rigid requirement for the number of the class observations. She suggested that there is no need to observe so much class if there is no requirement. This made me feel that she is reluctant to have me in her class.

The student teacher’s reflection showed that the mentor’s attitude towards practicum brought out the obstacles for the student teacher in practicing their teacher’s work, which affected their achievement of practicum goals and opportunities of fulfilling their teaching job. Then, student teacher 12 followed up student teacher 11’s response and reflected:

Yes, in fact, this happened to me, too. Usually, there is a seat for student teachers to observe the class in the classroom. One day I went into the classroom seeing that the seat was occupied with lots of books and paperwork. I understand that my mentor is giving me a hint that she may be uncomfortable and reluctant with my classroom observation. I was hoping to learn knowledge of teaching and classroom management from my mentor from observing her classes, but I ended up only observing her class three times. Few opportunities of learning from my mentor made me stressed while giving class to the placement school students, because I wish I knew more when I was on the teaching podium. I guess the reason that my mentor
rejected me to observe her classes might be because she thought I was an outsider in her class, she will extraordinarily pay attention to her words when doing the classroom management. But, for me, the lack of class observation actually affected me to achieve my learning goal for the practicum.

The excerpts showed that before entering the practicum, the student teachers have set their own goals for their completion of the practicum work. During the practicum, they may encounter the obstacles imposed by mentors, such as, assigning them a lot of grading work instead of letting them observe the classes, and putting books on the student teacher’s seat to give the student teachers a hint that they may be reluctant to have them in their classes. These obstacles imposed by mentors challenged student teachers’ learning goals for the practicum, affected their commitment to the practicum work, so as to influenced their professional identity construction.

In the activity system (Engeström, 2015) of the placement school context, student teachers’ goals (objects) could influence them (subjects) from constructing teacher professional identity. Student teacher professional identity construction manifested in their commitment to the education practicum, which is under the influence of the challenges they encountered at the placement schools.
Chapter 5

Discussion and Recommendations

This case study examined student teacher professional identity construction among student teachers from Shenzhou Normal University during their education practicum in placement schools (K-12) through the socio-cultural lens of three theories for investigating teacher professional identity (e.g., Engeström, 2015; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Varghese et al., 2005).

Our study adopted a mixed-method design, consisting of both quantitative and qualitative phases. Participants consisted of 275 student teachers during the quantitative phase, among whom were 51 student teachers in total who also participated in the qualitative phase. All participants were recruited from a large group of student teachers who were in their seventh semester of undergraduate teacher education programs at Shenzhou Normal University. The data examined for purposes of this study consisted of 275 questionnaires, six focus group interview transcripts and 51 education practicum reports. All data were analyzed accordingly to shed light on the two overarching research questions in the case study.

An examination of the quantitative data obtained indicates participants have constructed a high level of the student teacher professional identity in terms of career identity, disciplinary identity, performed identity, and situated identity. An analysis of the qualitative data revealed five major themes: understanding of the teaching profession, teacher knowledge, influence of people, role model and classroom management and challenges. Analyses of these themes highlight the various contributors to these student teachers’ professional identity construction.
Discussion

The results and findings presented in chapter four in reference to the research questions indicate that student teachers did construct teacher professional identity during their education practicum at placement schools. The revealed themes from the qualitative data echoed the status of student teacher professional identity construction drawn from the quantitative data analysis. The better understanding of the teaching profession, teacher knowledge, influence of people, role model and classroom manager, the higher status of student teacher professional identity construction.

The following section discusses how the results and findings from this case study relate and support the theoretical frameworks and previous research.

**Understanding of the Teaching Profession.** As the quantitative results showed, the dimension of career identity received the highest agreement from participants among the four dimensions, and the data from the qualitative part explained that student teachers’ career identity formation is influenced by their previous educational experience as well as their practicum experience, which impacted student teachers’ enacting a teacher role during the teaching practice. That is, student teachers’ previous educational experience has left impressions of what a teacher should be, and they have begun the process of identity formation before entering into the placement school community. Through the social relationship and deep connections with others, who reinforce the student teachers’ sense of professional identity, student teachers constantly moderate their actions towards others based on their environment and align themselves with the teacher role they perceived within the placement community (Beijaard et al., 2004; Wenger, 2000). The research findings within this theme are aligned with Flores and Day’s (2006) study’s result showing that previous educational experiences of student teachers, school-
based learning to teach and placement school-based education practicum, and context of teaching influence the construction of their teacher professional identity. Therefore, professional identity appears to be a dynamic process and along a continuum, which is constantly shaping and reshaping through social-interactions and reflections. Meanwhile, as the findings indicated in this study, there were many factors that contributed or hindered student teacher professional identity development during the practicum. These factors are not isolated events that occur independent of each other, but merged to help or hinder a student teacher’s professional identity construction.

**Teacher Knowledge.** The construction of student teacher professional identity is cultural-historical, socially interacted and reflexive, in other words, qualitative data revealed that interaction, practice, and context are related to the construction of student teacher professional identity. Qualitative and quantitative results echoed that student teachers’ perceived sense of being a teacher during education practicum at placement schools is related to the practice and the continuously acquired knowledge in subject matter, classroom management techniques, instructional techniques, curriculum content, knowing students’ needs, and their own strengths and shortcomings as a teacher. And a sense of being a teacher was increased with the increasing teacher knowledge acquired while doing education practicum at placement schools. In the activity system (Engeström, 2015) of the placement school context, student teachers continuously gained new teacher knowledge while practicing acquired teacher knowledge through activities. Through activities, student teachers transformed internal thought processes and behaviors, and these activities are seen as at the center of transformation into members of the teacher community. Student teacher professional identity construction closely connects to social, cultural, historical and political contexts (Trent, 2013; Varghese et al. 2005).
Influence of People. The survey results made attributions to the theme of influence of people in the following aspects. In our questionnaire, participants responded with high agreement in both questions related to the relationship with others (items 9 and 10), demonstrating the importance of people’s influence in student teachers’ practicum. When sending student teachers to practicum schools in a cohort, it forms a working community, shields them from outside pressures and helps them to learn knowledge better (Wenger, 1991). Student teachers named each other as important emotional and sensemaking supports, both during and after the practicum experience, corroborating the findings of Sciaky (2015). Previous research showed that practice community members have the potential to remain a knowledge source for each other (Cheng & Yi, 2021), it is worth considering sending student teachers in cohorts to educational practicum in the future. When first in a practicum program, student teachers in our study reported being intimidated by a number of reality shocks, and after confirming with their peers that they are experiencing the same situation, they were relieved from this stress. This finding confirms the quantitative data on how their bond with others helped them from the beginning and benefited them as a source of information.

Every interaction between a practicum student and a practicum mentor is unique, because it varies based on the teaching style and personality of mentors and students. Both tensions and support were reported, not all the participants reported that they had the opportunity to be in charge of a classroom or teaching a class independently, but those who did have these experiences reported that having a supporting and flexible mentor helped with their confidence and constructing their teacher identity. Another influencing factor is the communication level of student teachers and mentors. The trip from being a beginner to being a professional is taken
in the notion of authentic bordering absorbing (Wenger, 1998) in which beginners are given chances to acquire by participating in modest responsibilities. Student teachers stated that by learning from teachers in the field, they advanced their professional identity.

**Role Model and Classroom Manager.** Many participants reported classroom management as a difficulty for them, and they felt unprepared for it because this part of practicum is accommodating different needs in different classrooms. Based on the reports of participants, not all of the classrooms require a lot of effort on classroom management, but in the ones that do, this becomes an issue when student teachers are struggling to address their role and responsibilities in the classroom. Students are human, and their responses to classroom teaching can vary by days, schools, groups, and social context. These kinds of situations examine student teachers’ ability to adapt and adjust their teaching style. Most participants reported that they feel stressed and intimidated at the beginning of educational practicum, and their construction of the teacher identity process helped these student teachers address this issue. Data indicates that student teachers constructed their professional identity through fulfilling these mentoring activities that Wenger talked about through interactions with teachers in the field.

**Recommendations**

This case study found that student teachers construct their teacher professional identity in a continuous process under placement school contexts and were influenced in multiple ways. Teacher education programs need to provide the student teachers more opportunities to connect the theoretical curriculum and the field teaching situations to aid them in continuing the process of constructing teacher professional
identity in workplaces (schools). Accordingly, there are three recommendations for teacher preparation programs:

1. Adjust the ratio of theoretical curriculum and practicum curriculum in curriculum design.

   Theoretical curriculum starts in semester one and continues throughout semesters six and seven, as the semester of doing education practicum may vary among normal universities’ undergraduate teacher education programs. Theoretical curriculum intends to prepare student teachers with the knowledge in subject matter and curriculum content, and techniques in classroom management, instruction, and knowing students’ needs. Teacher education programs spend ample time in theory teaching, but very limited access to activities such as, class observation, workshops, and demonstrations. Student teachers usually engage in teacher’s works as soon as they arrive at the placement schools, increasing ratios of activities such as, class observations, workshops, and demonstrations in theoretical curriculum would better prepare them and significantly ease them from being overwhelmed when they start education practicum.

2. Provide opportunities in which student teachers can participate in classroom teaching and prepare to be a teacher

   With the current fixed and exam-oriented curriculum, it is hard for student teachers to practice their teaching skills. Placement schools should take the responsibility as a teacher promotion facilitator, to think for the student teachers and give them more opportunities to teach in the classroom which they currently did not provide. Although the curriculum in practicum school is mandated and fixed, they should still try to provide opportunities in which student teachers can participate in classroom teaching and prepare to be a teacher. Placement schools
should help their teacher candidates find balance in challenges and supports, and time to explore the teaching profession. Although practicum school teachers may be reluctant to let student teachers interfere with their class or give up control in their classroom, the authors believe that teacher practicum plays a central role in teacher preparation programs, and it's important for student teachers to have the chance to prepare themselves to develop into independent teachers.

3. Reschedule the time of education practicum to provide student teachers teaching practice with reduced conflicts and pressure.

The data revealed that some student teachers faced the challenges of managing the two activities of education practicum and preparing for UNGEE, which could influence their commitment to education practicum. Rescheduling the time of education practicum to avoid the conflict with UNGEE may lower their pressure and allow them to dedicate themselves to practicum. Allowing student teachers to practice without experiencing challenges should provide them with the opportunity to fulfil their own teacherly values, which could foster commitment to the teaching profession, so as to help them construct their professional identity.

Limitations

This case study was designed to provide quantitative and qualitative information about the status of Chinese student teacher professional identity construction during the education practicum as well as factors that affect their professional identity construction during this time. The study results are limited to the particular population of student teachers and have a limitation in regard to the case study itself.

There is a gender imbalance of participants in this case study, that is, a higher ratio of female participants than the ratio of male participants. And it is the
demographic nature of Shenzhou Normal University, as well as in normal universities in China (Lan & Xiong, 2018; R. Z. Xu, 2014; M. Yang & Zhao, 2017). To address the concern of the gender imbalance, we purposefully selected the participants for maximum variation in demographics to include different gender of student teachers along with approaches such as, a variety of placement schools, grade levels and content areas.

Another limitation of this case study may lie in that a single case study is hard to be generalized to a wider population. What we expect is to shed some light on to expand and generalize theories rather than extrapolating probabilities (Yin, 2018) and the research design of this study can be replicated in similar contexts with the aim to help with advancement of teacher effectiveness as well as teacher education training program to show what is generalizable across multiple contexts.

In addition, the research site of this study is a normal university in China and participants were all Chinese, all types of data were collected in Chinese and later translated into English by the three researchers of this case study. The three researchers are non-native English speakers, and translations from Chinese to English may affect the meaning and the message being conveyed due to the language differences. We invited the English native speakers to help with proofreading on the translated excerpts to achieve the best equivalence in two different languages. Therefore, we believe our translations are able to represent participants’ statements.

Areas for Future Research

Despite the limitations described in the previous section, this study points to important areas for potential research in teacher candidates’ professional development.
First, more longitudinal studies are needed to better understand the teacher candidates’ professional identity development. This study focused on only one semester of a four-year normal university teacher education program. If we truly want to understand how professional identity evolves and develops in teacher candidates, we should conduct a long-term study to investigate their professional identity construction over several years throughout their teacher education program and beyond. Further research may capture teacher candidates’ trajectories of being a teacher from entering the teacher education programs to their completion and into their careers. Longitudinal studies could show us the multiple ways that a teacher candidate enacts, negotiates and constructs their professional identity and which factors to be the most beneficial in their professional identity construction.

Second, further studies may apply different research methodologies, such as, ethnographic method with a long-term study to comprehensively understand the socio-cultural contexts and development of teacher candidates’ professional identity within a particular setting. For example, research findings showed that student teachers’ professional identity was shaped when they were involved in teaching activities, but due to the pandemic, the current study relied on the online questionnaire and online focus group interviews. Further studies could use long-term classroom observations and video recordings of student teaching, which could be helpful in providing rich data on how teacher candidates perform in each teaching context. Inviting participants to analyze and interpret their video recording could be an area for future research, in which they could reflect on their positionality when reviewing their teaching performance.
Conclusion

Research studies show that the construction of a teacher’s professional identity is a focal process for student teachers in becoming a teacher (Alsup, 2006; Friesen & Besley, 2013). In terms of the social nature of identity, research papers both in Chinese and English emphasize that identity is constructed and negotiated through social processes and under the influence of external contexts (Crafter & de Abreu, 2010; Dang, 2013; Day & Gu, 2007; Lantolf et al., 2015; Nguyen & Sheridan, 2016; Lantolf et al., 2015; Vagan, 2011). This case study found that within the placement school context, student teachers constructed teacher professional identity, with the characteristics of dynamic, relational, and influenced, in the process of performing a teacher’s work based on the perceived and ongoing acquired teacher knowledge as well as understanding of the teaching profession through interacting with others.

The use of case study could provide certain insight into some of the similarities in the ways in which student teachers construct or deconstruct their teacher professional identity during their education practicum. The findings of this study enriched knowledge in the field of student teacher professional identity construction.
References


https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(00)00023-8


https://doi.org/10.1080/0142569995443


https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa


BECOMING A TEACHER


https://doi.org/10.17263/jlls.631539


https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CJFQ&dbname=CJFDLUAST2019&filename=YJJS201919006&uid=WEEvREcwSIJHSlDa1FhcEFLUmVicEFwYWZ2TEhUOG9xY3VSRlQiUmRpVT0=$9A4hF_YAu0V5obgVAqNKPCYcEjKensW4IQMovwHtwkF4VYoHbKxJw11!&v=MDYyMjFyQ1VSN3FmWWVSbkZpemxWTDNQUENmQmZiRzRIOWpOcG85RllvUjhlWDFMdXhZUzdEaDFUM3FUcldNMUY=


doi: 10.1080/10749030802707895


https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5914.1990.tb00174.x


language development. In B. van Patten & J. Williams (Eds.), *Theories in second language acquisition* (pp. 207-226). Routledge. doi: 10.2167/le128.0

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.06.003


Learning for Action. (n.d.). *Preparing to conduct an interview or focus group.*
Retrieved September 8, 2020, from http://learningforaction.com/preparing-to-conduct-an-interview-or-focus-group


Lerseth, K. A. (2013). *Identity development among pre-service teacher candidates* (p. 4250857) [Doctor of Philosophy, Iowa State University, Digital Repository].
https://doi.org/10.31274/etd-180810-3333


Lu, N., J. (2009). Huaizhi xingjiao—Dui zhongguo dalu jiaoshi peiyangzhong yixie wenti de tansuo. [Hosting teacher education -- An exploration of issues in teacher preparation in the Chinese mainland]. *Journal of Northeast Normal University (Philosophy and Social Sciences), 2*, 163–170. https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CJFQ&dbname=CJFD2009&filename=DBSS200902032&uid=WEEvREcwSJJHSldSdmVqMDh6aS9uMTF4ak55a0dDeDB3VklOMTRQc0wyQT0=$9A4hF_YAuvQ5obgVAqNKPCYcEjKensW4IQMovwHtwkF4VYPoHbKxJw!!&v=MjEyODhiK1J2RmlqZ1c3ekJJUy9ZZmJHNEh0ak1yWTiHWm9SOGVYMUx1eFlTN0RoMVQzcVRyV00xRnJDVVI3cWY=


http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A10/s7011/201604/t20160407_237042.html


Nguyen, H. T. M., & Sheridan, L. (2016). Identity formation of LBOTE preservice teachers during the practicum: A case study in Australia in an urban high


Rui, X. P. (2017). Wo shi shui: shixijiaoshi de shenfenrentong wenti [Who I am: The identity of a trainee teacher]. *Education Reference. 2017*(3). 54-59. https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CJFQ&dbname=CJFDL&filename=SZTY201703008&uid=WEEvREcwSlJHSldRa1FhcEFLUmViNWl6MkdhcVJVK0VqeDkrYTJKUUFTMD0=$9A4hF_YAuvQ5obgVAqNKPCYcEjKensW4IQMovwHtwkF4VYPoHbKxJw!!&v=MDY4NTNJOUZiSVI4ZVgxTHV4WVM3RGgxVDNxVHJXTTFGckNVUjdxZlIPVnZGeS9rVkw3TE5qZmZkN0c0SDliTXI=


ured-interviews


BECOMING A TEACHER


http://org.sagepub.com.libraryproxy.griffith.edu.au/content/7/2/225.full.pdf+html


https://kns.cnki.net/kcms/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CDFD&dbname=CDFDLAST2017&filename=1016109746.nh&v=FwctQW4ROm1JX2oegxbelBchr4NVfFxqaPpDola4kAzKbe5Z5ip%25mmd2BIOJZR9F7e6PA

Contemporary Teacher Education, 7(4), 16-20.
Doi:10.16222/j.cnki.cte.2014.04.003

Social Sciences Academic Press.

Teachers’ Journal, 6, 33-35.
https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CJFQ&dbname=CJFDLAST2018&filename=ZGJT201611009&uid=WEEvREcwS1JHSlRa1FhcEFLUmVicEFwYWZ2TEhuOG9xY3VSRIQ1UmRpVT0=$9A4hF_YAuvQ5obgVAqNKPCYeCjKensW4IQMovwHtwkF4VYPoHbKxJw!!&v=MjkzNTNvO
UZiWVI4ZVgxTHV4WVM3RGgxVDNxVHJXTTFGckNVUjdxZlllUm5Ga
XpuVzd6S1B5ckJlckc0SDlmTnI=


https://kns.cnki.net/kcms/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CJFD&dbname=CJFD2013&filename=JYYJ201306010&v=F214zIOhSPgsKb6IoJ%25mmd2FcwiRpsK4iuLzYd%25mmd2FkTFwHcNmnqpDyYW%25mmd2BI4eTHi90cUhVui


https://DOI:10.19618/j.cnki.issn2096-319x.2020.02.006


https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbcode=CJFQ&dbname=CJFDLAST2019&filename=JYLL201901009&v=MzIwODFyQ1VSN3FmWU9WdkZ5L2dWNy9BTHpUSFlyRzRIOWpNcm85RmJZUjhWDFMdXhZUzdEaDFUM3FUcldNMUY= 
## Appendix A

### Part I Teacher Identity Inventory for EFL Teachers (Xun et al., 2014)

### Chinese Version

外语教师身份认同量表

请您认真阅读每句话的意思，然后根据该句话与您自己的实际情况相符合的程度，在相应的数字上划“✓”。

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>序号</th>
<th>项目内容</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>我能够认真完成英语教学工作。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>我有较好的管理学生的能力。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>在做自我介绍的时候，很高兴提到我是一名英语教师。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>当看到或听到颂扬教师职业的话语时，我感到很欣慰。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>我能与单位展开平等对话。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>真心喜欢学生，关心、尊重学生。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>我根据中学生的性格特点设计教学活动。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>我在乎别人如何看待英语教师群体。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>我积极主动创造和谐的同事关系。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>中学英语教师职业对促进学生个体发展十分重要。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>我能够与学生保持良好的关系。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>教师的工作对促进学生成长与发展很重要。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>学生是教学主体，重视对学生能力和学习方法的培养。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>想要学好英语就要了解英语国家的文化。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>英语学习是知识构建的过程。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>教学方法对学生的英语学习十分重要。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>外语教学改革有助于提高我的专业水平。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>教学中，我充分考虑中学生的学习风格。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>我积极主动地承担教学任务。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>我对工作富有热情。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>投入工作时，我感到很快乐。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>工作时我感到自己很强大而充满活力。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>我有困难时，学校组织上会帮助我。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>学校真地关心我的福利待遇。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>学校以我在工作上的贡献而骄傲。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>学校尽可能地使我的工作有趣味。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>我关心学生能否在考试中取得高分。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>我支持中学英语教学改革。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>我认为只有在交际环境中才能学好英语。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>中学英语教学具有本学科的特点。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>我能够提供正确的语言示范。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>我拥有较强的英语交际能力</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>课堂上，我能够持续流利地使用英语。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>改变以考试为中心的英语教学是大势所趋。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part II Teacher Identity Inventory for EFL Teachers (Xun et al., 2014)

Translated Version

Please read each sentence carefully, and then mark “✓” on the corresponding number according to the degree to which the sentence corresponds to your own actual situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I can finish the English teaching work seriously.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I have good ability in classroom management.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>When introducing myself, I am glad to mention that I am an English teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>It gives me great pleasure to see or hear words praising the profession of teachers.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I can have an equal dialogue with the faculty and staff in my school.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I sincerely like my students, care about and respect them.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I design teaching activities according to the characteristics of senior high school students.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I care about what others think of the English teacher community.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I take the initiative to create harmonious relationships with my colleagues.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I think the teaching profession is very important to promote the individual development of students.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I can keep a good relationship with my students.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I think a teacher’s work is important to the growth and development of students.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I think students are the main body of teaching, and focus on the cultivation of students’ ability and learning methods.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The knowledge of cultures of English speaking countries are important to English language learning.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>English learning is a process of knowledge construction.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Teaching methods are very important to students’ English language learning.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>The reform of English teaching is helpful to improve my professional ability.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>In teaching, I give full consideration to the senior high school students’ learning styles.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I take the initiative in teaching duties.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I’m passionate about my work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I feel happy when I am at work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>I feel confident and energetic at work.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>When encountering difficulties, I can go for help from my school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>The school really cares about my welfare.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>My school is proud of my contribution to the school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>My school is in an effort to create a comfortable working environment for teachers and staff.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>I care about my students’ performance in standard tests.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>I support the reform of senior high school English teaching.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>I think one can learn English well under a communicative environment.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>I think senior high school English teaching has the characteristics of its own in terms of the subject.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>I can offer proper language use in English Class.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>I have good communication skills in English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>I have high English language proficiency and can teach in English to the class.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>I think the current social trend is leading to a change in exam-oriented teaching.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Part I Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction Questionnaire (Modified Instrument)

Chinese Version

您好！感谢您在百忙之中抽出时间来参加本次调查！本问卷旨在调查实习期间教师身份的构建情况，以完善教师教育项目，更好地为学生和教师服务，最终改善教师状况。您的回答对我们的改进很重要。本次调查以匿名方式收集信息，所有数据和信息将被秘密处理，仅供研究使用。请根据您的实际状况和真实想法填写问卷。谢谢您的合作。

1. 性别
   A. 男
   B. 女
   C. 其他

2. 您的专业
   A. 中文
   B. 数学
   C. 英语
   D. 物理
   E. 其他 ————

3. 您所在的实习学校是
   A. 小学
   B. 中学
   C. 高中
   D. 其他———

4. 您多久去实习学校一次
   A. 几乎不去
   B. 一周一到两次
   C. 一周三到四次
   D. 一周五次以上
5. 如果您可以自己选择实习学校，您的优先考虑是
   A. 地理位置
   B. 学校类型（如：小学、中学）
   C. 和朋友一起
   D. 其他——

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>非常不同意</th>
<th>不同意</th>
<th>既不同意也不反对</th>
<th>同意</th>
<th>非常同意</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，我能够认真完成教学工作。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，我具有较好的管理学生的能力。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>在实习学校之外做自我介绍时，很高兴提到我是一名教师。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>我很高兴看到或听到赞美教师职业的话语。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，我能与实习单位展开平等对话。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>在整个教学经历中，我真心关心和尊重学生。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，我能够根据实习学校学生的特点计教学活动。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>我在乎他人对教师群体的看法。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，我能够主动地与实习学校的教职员工建立融洽的同事关系。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，我能够与学生保持良好的关系。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>我认为教师工作对促进学生的成长与发展很重要。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>我认同“学生是教学主体”的理念，并重视对学生能力和学习方法的培养。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>我认为了解学科背景知识，对本专业的学习及教学很重要。</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>我认为学科知识学习是一个知识建构的过程。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>我认为教学策略对学生的学习效果很重要。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>我认为现行的教育政策有助于提高我的专业素养。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>在教学中，我能够充分考虑学生的学习风格。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，我积极参与实习学校的教学工作。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，我对实习学校的工作富有热情。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，全身心投入到实习工作时，我感到很快乐。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，在完成实习学校工作时，我感到自己很强大而又充满活力。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间遇到困难时，我可以向学校寻求帮助。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>实习学校非常关心我在实习期间的各项状况。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>实习学校认可我在教育实习期间对学校的工作贡献。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，实习学校致力于建立使我感到舒适的工作环境。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，我认为通过我的教学，能够帮助学生提高告示成绩。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>我支持学科教学教学改革。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>我认为只有在互动的环境中才能学好学科知识。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，我能够准确地进行课堂演示。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>我有良好的沟通和交际能力。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>我认为教师职业在促进学生个体方面发展非常重要。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>在教育实习期间，我所具备的学科知识能够支持我完成课堂教学。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>我认为，改变以考试为中心的学科教学是大势所趋。</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part II Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction Questionnaire
(Modified Instrument)

English Version

Hello! Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in this survey! This questionnaire is used to investigate the construction of teacher professional identity during the education practicum, with the purpose of improving teacher education projects, so as to better serve students and teachers, and finally to improve the situation of teachers. Your answer is of great importance to our improvement. This survey collects information anonymously, and all data and information will be treated confidentially for research use only. Please fill in the questionnaire according to your actual situation and thoughts. Thank you for your cooperation.

I. Basic Information Survey

1. Gender
A. Male   B. Female   C. Other

2. What’s your major
A. Chinese   B. Math   C. English
   D. Physics   E. Other______(please specify)

3. What level of education do you internship in
A. Elementary   B. Middle school
   C. High School D. Other ______(please specify)

4. How often do you go to this internship
A. seldom   B. 1-2 times a week
   C. 3-4 times a week   D. more than 5 times a week

5. If you are allowed to choose a placement school, rank order your priority of choosing: ____________________
BECOMING A TEACHER

A. location  B. academic level
C. go with a friend  D. other______(please specify)

II. Teacher identity program

Thank you for your continued support of the investigation! This part is the survey questions related to teacher identity, please fill in according to the degree of agreement. “1” is “SD (Strongly Disagree)”, “2” is “D (Disagree)”, “3” is “N (Neutral)”, “4” is “A (Agree)” and “5” is “SA (Strongly Agree)”. Please use “○” to mark your choice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I can finish the teaching work seriously during education practicum every day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have good ability in classroom management during education practicum every day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When introducing myself, I am glad to mention that I am a teacher to others outside of the placement schools during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It gives me great pleasure to see or hear words praising the profession of teachers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I can have an equal dialogue with the faculty and staff in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I care about and respect students in my overall teaching career.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I design teaching activities according to the characteristics of placement school students during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I care about what others think of the teacher community.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I take the initiative to create harmonious relationships with my colleagues in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I can keep a good relationship with my students in placement during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I think the teaching profession is very important in advocating individual development.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I recognize the concept of student center, and attach importance to the cultivation of students’ ability and learning strategies.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I think the background knowledge is important to learn a major well.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I think learning is a process of knowledge construction.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>I think teaching strategies are very important to students’ learning.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I think the education policy is helpful to improve my professionalism.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>In teaching, I give full consideration to the students’ learning styles.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>I take the initiative in teaching works in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>I’m passionate about my teacher's work in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>I feel happy when I put myself into teacher’s work in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>I feel strong and energetic at work in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>When encountering difficulties, I can go for help from placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>The placement school really cares about my welfare during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>The placement school is proud of my contribution to the work during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>The placement school is in an effort to build up atmosphere to make me comfortable at work during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>I think I’m able to make my students at placement school do well in the standardized tests during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>I support the current education reform.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>I think I can only learn my major well in an interactive environment.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>I can perform accurate classroom demonstrations in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>I have good communication skills.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>I think a teacher's work is important to the growth and development of students.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>During the education practicum, the</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
teacher knowledge I possessed could support me to complete the teaching.

| 33 | I think the current social trend is leading to a change in exam-oriented teaching. |

Thank you for your cooperation. We wish you and your family good health and a happy life!
Appendix C

The Expert Validity Questionnaire for Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction Questionnaire

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in the expert review of this questionnaire. This expert validity questionnaire is part of a research project at the University of Missouri, St Louis studying student teacher identity construction, aiming to investigate the richness, rationality and consistent of the content of Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction Questionnaire. In this validity questionnaire, you will be provided with the dimension table, the interpretation of dimensions, and corresponding questions. Please score the contents of the questionnaire using your professional expertise. Please note:

First of all, student teacher professional identity refers to: being a teacher a) with regard to a student teacher’s perceived identity at that moment and the future, b) in relation to student teachers’ teacher knowledge for teaching practices in placement school, c) their performance in education practicum work, as well as d) positionality in connection to others includes but not limited to students at placement schools, placement school cultures, fellow student teachers, mentors and the larger teaching profession.

Secondly, the interpretation of dimensions:

i) career identity is to understand student teachers’ recognition of professional values and sense of belongings,

ii) disciplinary identity is to examine student teachers’ cognition and understanding of the subject they are teaching and self-evaluation of their teaching ability,

iii) performed identity to explore the student teacher’s commitment to the
teaching profession and behavioral tendency while taking the role of a teacher and completing the teaching work,

iv) situated identity is to investigate the influence of the community of the placement school on student teacher professional identity development.

The expert validity questionnaire scored 170 points in total. Among them, the first part is the dimension score, a total of 33 items, each item 5 points, a total of 165 points. The second part is the overall score, with a maximum of 5 points.

1. Dimension scoring

(I) Grading basis

As the Questionnaire on student teacher professional identity construction is a survey for student teachers, in order to facilitate the comprehension of the subjects, each question was designed according to the student teachers’ status and what they can know. Therefore, there is a certain ambiguity in the use of language.

Each dimension is scored according to the following principles. One point will be scored for each item, and the full score is 5 points:

1. The interpretation of dimensions is correct and does not exceed the scope of the questionnaire.
2. The content of each question in the dimension belongs to the content of the dimension.
3. The content of each question in the dimension is not beyond the content of this dimension.
4. The content of each question in the dimension is independent of each other without crossover.
5. The sum of the contents of all the questions in the dimension covers all the contents in the dimension.
(II) Student Teacher Professional Identity Construction Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Identity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>When introducing myself, I am glad to mention that I am a teacher to others outside of the placement schools during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>It gives me great pleasure to see or hear words praising the profession of teachers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>I care about what others think of the teacher community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>I think the teaching profession is very important in advocating individual development.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>I recognize the concept of student center, and attach importance to the cultivation of students’ ability and learning strategies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>I think a teacher's work is important to the growth and development of students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please rate this dimension here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disciplinary</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>I care about and respect students in my overall teaching career.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>I think the background knowledge is important to learn a major well.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>I think learning is a process of knowledge construction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>I think teaching strategies are very important to students’ learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>I think I’m able to make my students at placement school do well in the standardized tests during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>I think I can only learn my major well in an interactive environment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
<td>I can perform accurate classroom demonstrations in placement school during education practicum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>I have good communication skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>During the education practicum, the teacher knowledge I possessed could support me to complete the teaching.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please rate this dimension here
### Performed Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>I can finish the teaching work seriously during education practicum every day.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>I have good ability in classroom management during education practicum every day.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>I design teaching activities according to the characteristics of placement school students during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>I take the initiative to create harmonious relationships with my colleagues in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>I can keep a good relationship with my students in placement during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>In teaching, I give full consideration to the students’ learning styles.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>I take the initiative in teaching works in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>I'm passionate about my teacher's work in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>I feel happy when I put myself into teacher's work in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>I feel strong and energetic at work in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Situated Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>I can have an equal dialogue with the faculty and staff in placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>I think the education policy is helpful to improve my professionalism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
<td>When encountering difficulties, I can go for help from placement school during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>The placement school really cares about my welfare during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>The placement school is proud of my contribution to the work during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>The placement school is in an effort to build up atmosphere to make me comfortable at work during education practicum.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>I support the current education reform.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>I think the current social trend is leading to a change in exam-oriented teaching.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please rate this dimension here
2. The overall score of the questionnaire

For the overall content of the questionnaire, please follow the following principles. For each item, you will get 1 point, and the full score is 5 points.

1. Appropriate use of words

2. Dimensions are properly divided without crossing, omission or exceedance.

3. Correct interpretation of dimensions without ambiguity or ambiguity.

4. The number of questions is set appropriately, without too many or too few questions.

5. The questions meet the requirements of dimension without repetition, omission or exceedance of content.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please score the questionnaire as a whole here</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D

Participant Recruitment Message

(Questionnaire)

Dear all student teachers:

Thank you for letting us join your Wechat group. We are Jingxin Cheng, Xiaodi Li and Ming Yi, and we are currently doctoral candidates at University of Missouri St. Louis, the USA. This message is to invite you to participate in our research study about student teacher professional identity construction during education practicum. The purpose of this research is to study the construction of teacher professional identity during the education practicum, with the purpose of improving teacher education projects, so as to better serve students and teachers, and finally to improve the situation of teachers.

If you decide to participate in this study, we’d like to remind you that you must be at least 18 years of age to participate and you are going to participate in the education practicum starting in November 2020. The study will take approximately three months during which you will be asked to complete one questionnaire, approximately taking up 50 minutes. Please notice that we have pledged to keep your data confidential and only to report pseudonyms in any published scientific study. There are no known risks associated with this research.

Please notice that participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from participation at any time. And your participation in the questionnaire or your withdrawal from participation will not influence your grades of any kind at school. If you have any questions you may contact the researchers:

jck37@umsystem.edu  Jingxin Cheng
my8nb@umsystem.edu  Ming Yi
Thank you

Sincerely
Appendix E

Focus Group Interview Protocol

Participants will be broken into three groups (4-6 participants per group) in terms of placement school level (primary schools and junior high schools) and location of placement schools where student teachers would do their education practicum.

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to participate in this interview! This interview is used to investigate the construction of teacher professional identity during the education practicum, with the purpose of improving teacher education projects, so as to better serve students and teachers, and finally to improve the situation of teachers. Your answer is of great importance to our research. Data and information collected from the responses will be audio recorded from this interview and will be treated confidentially for research use only. Please answer the interview questions according to your actual situation and real ideas, and you’re welcome to share more thoughts besides the interview questions. Thank you for your cooperation. Participation in this focus group is voluntary and not part of your responsibilities as a classroom teacher or as a participant in the professional development session. You may choose to stop the group discussion at any time. Would you mind if I audio recorded the focus group? It will help me to stay focused on our conversation, and it will ensure that I have an accurate record of what we discussed. At any point, if you would like me to turn off the audio recorder, just let me know. Any personal identifiers will be removed during transcription. Are you ready to begin?
Interview questions of first round focus group interview

1. How do you understand the role of the teaching profession for the development of an individual and a society?

2. What is an ideal teacher for you?

3. What do you think is needed to complete the teacher's job?

4. How well do you think of your education practicum at placement school?

5. How does the coursework from Normal University prepare you for the education practicum work?

6. How do you like the care and support from your Normal University and the placement school?

7. What do you think of your relationship with your mentors from Normal University and placement school? Why?

8. How well have you sensed your belonging to the placement school during your educational practicum?

9. What do you think of your relationship with students at the placement school?

10. How well do you think your students will evaluate you?

11. Which events or which teachers impressed you during your education practicum? In what ways?

12. What do you think you’d need to improve in order to complete the teacher’s job?

13. What are the changes in an ideal teacher to you?

14. What do you see yourself at the placement school (such as, a teacher or a student)? Why?

15. Reconstruct your day for me from the time you wake up to the time you go to bed at the placement school.
Interview questions of second round focus group interview

1. How did you form the perceived idea on an ideal teacher?
2. What changed your idea of an ideal teacher?
3. What are the changes in “needed to complete the teacher's job”? Why?
4. Would you please give some examples of how the coursework from Normal University prepared you for the education practicum work?
5. What factors have affected your investment in educational practicum?
6. What kind of assistance do you presume that you will need from the Normal University and practice schools for your educational practice? Have these presuppositions changed during the educational practicum?
7. What is “sense of belonging” to you? During the educational practicum, what events or experiences made you feel belonging?
8. Please share some stories about you getting along with students at the placement schools?
9. What suggestions do you have on the teacher education curriculum design? such as, courses, educational practicum? Why would you suggest so?
10. How does the experience of educational practicum affect your career choices as a teacher? In what ways?
Appendix F

Participant Recruitment Message

(Focus group interviews and education practicum reports)

Dear all student teachers:

Thank you for letting us join your Wechat group. We are Jingxin Cheng, Xiaodi Li, and Ming Yi, and we are currently doctoral candidates at University of Missouri St. Louis, the USA. This message is to invite you to participate in our research study about student teacher professional identity construction during education practicum. The purpose of this research is to study the construction of teacher professional identity during the education practicum, with the purpose of improving teacher education projects, so as to better serve students and teachers, and finally to improve the situation of teachers.

If you decide to participate in this study, we’d like to remind you that you must be at least 18 years of age to participate and you are going to participate in the education practicum starting in December 2020. The study will take approximately three months during which you will be asked to participate in two focus group interviews online (one in December, the other in January), approximately taking up 1 hour and 30 minutes to 2 hours respectively. We will also collect your education practicum reports by the end of the education practicum. Please notice that we have pledged to keep your data confidential and only to report pseudonyms in any published scientific study. There are no known risks associated with this research.

Please notice that participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from participation at any time. And your participation in the interviews and the education practicum report or your withdrawal from participation will not
influence your grades of any kind at school. If you have any questions you may contact the researchers:

jck37@umsystem.edu  Jingxin Cheng
yiming.cn@gmail.com  Ming Yi
cl7v4@mail.umsl.edu  Xiaodi Li

Thank you

Sincerely
## Appendix G

### Excerpts of Themes and Supporting Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Supporting Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student-Centered Learning</td>
<td>Stated that the teacher should be a guide and facilitator, allowing students to explore and discover knowledge on their own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Learning</td>
<td>Reported that the teacher should encourage students to work together and share ideas, fostering a sense of community and mutual respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiated Instruction</td>
<td>Emphasized the importance of tailoring instruction to meet the diverse needs of students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Classroom Management</td>
<td>Described strategies for managing classroom behavior, such as using positive reinforcement and setting clear expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social-Emotional Development</td>
<td>Highlighted the role of the teacher in supporting students' emotional well-being.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time Management</td>
<td>Strategies for prioritizing tasks and balancing work and personal life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Environment</td>
<td>Tips for creating a positive and engaging learning space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
<td>Techniques for increasing student motivation and participation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Excerpts from the Literature

*Example Excerpt*

> "The teacher should facilitate learning by posing questions that encourage critical thinking and inquiry. This approach allows students to construct their own knowledge and take ownership of their learning process."
Appendix H

Consent Forms

Division of College of Education
One University Blvd.
St. Louis, Missouri 63121-4499
E-mail: jck37@marystudents.edu
yin4@mail.umail.edu
d7v4@mail.umail.edu

Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities

BECOMING A TEACHER: A CASE STUDY ON STUDENT TEACHER PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION DURING THE EDUCATION PRACTICUM IN CHINA

Participant ___________________________ HSC Approval Number ___________________________

Principal Investigator Jingxin Cheng, Ming Yi, Xiaodi Li PI’s Phone Number 13998345829

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Jingxin Cheng, Ming Yi and Xiaodi Li, doctoral candidates at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The purpose of this research is to investigate the process of Chinese student teachers’ professional identity construction through examining their education practicum experiences.

2. a) Your participation will involve

   The study will take approximately three months. If you agree to participate in this research, you will be asked to complete two questionnaires, which will take approximately ten minutes to complete each. If you volunteer to the one to two online interviews, you may be personally contacted at a later date.

   Approximately 300 participants may be involved in this research.

   b) The amount of time involved in your participation will be 20 minutes for questionnaires and 1 to 2 hours for focus group interviews.

3. There are no anticipated risks associated with this research.

4. There are no direct benefits for you participating in this study. However, your participation will contribute to the knowledge about student teacher professional identity construction and may help with perfecting teacher education program design.

5. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in this research study or to withdraw your consent at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or to withdraw.

6. We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation that may result from this study. In rare instances, a researcher’s study must undergo an audit or program evaluation by an oversight agency (such as the Office for Human Research Protection). That agency would be required to maintain the confidentiality of your data.

A CASE STUDY ON STUDENT TEACHER PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION  Page 1 of 2
7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the investigator, Jingxin Cheng 1998345829; Ming Yi 17840263584; Xiaodi Li 13940566137.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I consent to my participation in the research described above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Participant’s Printed Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of Investigator or Designee</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Investigator/Designee Printed Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>