Appreciative Collaborative Reflection to Catalyze Indonesian EFL Teachers' Identity Configuration in a Teacher Professional Education Program

Priyatno Ardi[1], Titik Lina Widyaningsih[2], Utami Widiati[3]

[1] *Universitas Sanata Dharma, Yogyakarta, Indonesia;*
Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang, Indonesia
E-mail: priyatnoardi@usd.ac.id
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9523-2060

[2] *Universitas Bhinneka PGRI, Tulungagung, Indonesia;*
Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang, Indonesia
E-mail: titiklina@gmail.com
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6846-7887

[3] *Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang, Indonesia*
E-mail: utami.widiati.fs@um.ac.id
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8603-4556

Abstract
Collaborative reflection helps teachers make meaning of their professional selves. For this reason, the infusion of appreciative inquiry into collaborative reflection can strengthen the formation of teacher identity. This case study aimed to investigate how appreciative collaborative reflection catalyzed the configuration of EFL teachers' professional identities during a three-month offline teacher professional education program in Indonesia. Three EFL teachers attending the professional education program and belonging to the same group during the reflection activities took part in the current study. During the activities, the three participants showed an interpersonal bond within the group. Data in the form of narratives were obtained through a semi-structured focus group discussion with the participants. A thematic analysis was conducted to discover the data's emerging themes regarding the affordance of the reflection in accelerating teachers' professional identity formation. The findings revealed that appreciative collaborative reflection catalyzed teachers' professional identity configuration through recollections of professional experiences, equal engagement and interconnectedness, and positivity. The data-led, personal, collaborative, and appreciative reflection fostered the cultivation of positive personal selves. It is necessary that identity-related reflections be incorporated into teacher professional development programs to help teachers cultivate and purify their professional calling.
Keywords: appreciative inquiry, collaborative reflection, teachers' identity, teacher professional education.

Групповая рефлексия, направленная на позитивные изменения в формировании идентичности учителя английского языка как иностранного и их отражение в программе профессионального развития педагога

Приятно Арди[1], Титик Лина Видьянингсих[2], Утами Видиати[3]

[1] *Университет Саната Дхарма, Джакарта, Индонезия;*
Университет Негери Маланг, Маланг, Индонезия
E-mail: priyatnoardi@usd.ac.id
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9523-2060

[2] *Университет Бхиннека ПГРИ, Тулунгагунг, Индонезия;*
Университет Негери Маланг, Маланг, Индонезия
E-mail: titiklina@gmail.com
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6846-7887

[3] *Университет Негери Маланг, Маланг, Индонезия*
E-mail: utami.widiati.fs@um.ac.id
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8603-4556

Аннотация
Данное исследование посвящено организации групповой рефлексии, направленной на позитивные изменения в формировании профессиональной идентичности учителей английского языка как иностранного, которые в течение пяти недель обучались по специальной программе для педагогических работников в Индонезии. В исследовании приняли участие три учителя английского языка как иностранного. Все они были участниками программы обучения педагогических работников и принадлежали к одной группе, в которой осуществлялась рефлексия. Данные в виде нарративов были получены от участников исследования в ходе работы фокус-группы. В результате анализа были выявлены темы для проведения рефлексии, способствующей формированию профессиональной идентичности учителей. Результаты исследования показали, что групповая рефлексия, основанная на обмене профессиональным опытом, на равной вовлеченности, взаимосвязи и доброжелательности, способствовала позитивным изменениям в формировании идентичности учителей. Основанная на анализе данных, индивидуальных и коллективных формах работы, направленная на позитивные изменения, рефлексия способствовала проявлению лучших качеств личности учителя. Внедрение в программу профессионального развития педагога рефлексий, ориентированных на идентичность, несомненно, будет способствовать формированию специалиста, действующего в соответствии с истинным призванием педагога.
Ключевые слова: групповая рефлексия, позитивный подход к изменениям, идентичность педагога, профессиональное обучение.

Introduction

In the Indonesian context, in-service English teachers have been required to obtain a teaching certificate through the Teacher Professional Education (*Pendidikan Profesi Guru* – PPG, henceforth), a three-month program organized by country-wide private and public teacher education institutions. The PPG program aims to equip teachers with social, personal, professional, and pedagogical competencies and eventually strives for teachers' growth mindset to explore and adaptively respond to this changing world (Novita, 2022).

Its contents include workshops on subject-specific pedagogy, peer-teaching, enrichment of subject matter and pedagogical knowledge, and teaching internship at a school.

However, as the Indonesian government has predetermined the curriculum and modules of the PPG program (Loeneto et al., 2022), the learning activities in teacher education institutions might be procedural and technical. The process merely follows the given steps by the government and hardly cultivates teachers' more profound understanding of the essence and meaningfulness of being a teacher. In this regard, the teachers seem to be trapped in the routines determined by authorities as suggested by Farrell (2012). Sa et al. (2021) found that the explicit nurturing of teachers' soft skills had yet to be commonly practiced in the PPG program. The program's rigid curriculum, tasks, and activities left the teachers to acquire these skills independently without clear and systematic guidance. As such, the teacher education institutions rarely offered by-design activities that shaped and cultivated the essence and meaningfulness of being a teacher during the program. Therefore, reflective practices need to be incorporated into the PPG program to facilitate teachers' cultivation of professional identity. As Indonesian teachers generally have a more public serving identity and less professional teaching identity, adhering to the educational system (Bjork, 2005, 2013; Bjork & Raihani, 2018), the reflection should provide an ample personal and dialogic space for the teachers to reconstruct the meanings of their professional selves and to look at their past, present, and prospective experiences and endeavors. By doing so, they can purify their professional calling and eventually provide wholehearted service to their students and others.

Realizing the drawbacks of the PPG program in facilitating the formation of professional identities, a private teacher education institution in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, implemented an appreciative collaborative reflection in the program. The reflection integrated the nature of collaborative reflection and appreciative inquiry. As the institution embraced reflective pedagogy, daily systematic reflections, which covered the personal and collaborative nature of reflection (Mann & Walsh, 2017; Murray, 2010), were carried out as additional activities in the PPG program. The reflection was intended to help the teachers to configure their professional identities personally and socially negotiate them with other teachers through favorable provisions and values. Hence, the present study sought to answer a research question, namely "how does the appreciative collaborative reflection catalyze the construction of professional identities?"

Literature Review

Reflective Practice in Teacher Professional Development
Reflection has been widely acknowledged to play a critical role in teachers' personal, social, and professional development. Teachers involved in reflection can raise their awareness of teaching practice (Hung & Thuy, 2021), get a deeper understanding of their practice (Farrell, 2016), and transform themselves from technicians merely following an educational system to agentic teachers that are adaptive to the cultural, social, and political contexts of their teaching (Liu, 2015). When contemplating their professional experiences and actions within their teaching contexts, teachers might critically and closely examine the interplay between their beliefs and practices and also the discrepancies between them. Such data-based reflection activities can be a basis for deciding whether to modify and/or reinforce their beliefs and practices in the future (Baxter et al., 2021; Farrell, 2018; Mann & Walsh, 2017). Hence, the teaching-related decisions informed by their reflection enable teachers to grow professionally (Alemi & Tajeddin, 2020; Miller et al., 2021; Uştuk & De Costa, 2021).

Reflective practice in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) has been influenced by the concept of reflective practice in general education. The most widely

cited concept of reflection in education was articulated by Dewey (1933, p. 9), defining it as an "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it tends". Reflecting differs from thinking in that it is a complex and deliberate process that delves deeper into one's underlying beliefs and antecedents. As reflective practitioners, teachers dig more deeply into their professional practices and critically examine their underlying teaching philosophy, beliefs, and knowledge to improve their practices and make them personally meaningful (Farrell, 2015, 2018; Farrell & Macapinlac, 2021; Mann & Walsh, 2017). Since reflective practice stems from the tensions between teaching beliefs and practices, it strives to prevent teachers from being slaves to routines in which impulsive desires, habits, or external authorities navigate routine thinking and actions (Farrell, 2012). Amalia et al. (2020) found out that being reflective to past experiences in lesson planning would function as one of the many ways to improve teaching performance. Mann and Walsh (2017) also highlight the importance of teaching data as triggering and fostering reflection. The availability of data influences whether teachers directly reflect on their practices or delay their reflection after some time.

Types of Reflection

Based on the temporal dimensions of reflection, Schön (1983, 1987) differentiates between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action, which occurs during practice, constitutes "a reflective conversation in which the practitioner is listening to the situations' backtalk" (Farrell, 2012, p. 13). Since this reflection focuses on gaining new perspectives while teaching, teachers must possess a high consciousness to change their actions during practice (Mulryan-Kyne, 2021). Reflection-on-action, in contrast, takes place after action and involves retrospective thinking on past practices. The reflection on past practices encourages teachers to identify factors influencing their practice and solve the problems encountered in the following actions. In light of the two types of reflection, Van Manen (1991) offers the notion of reflection-for-action, which refers to the reflection for future actions. This reflection is to anticipate problems that might occur in future teaching. The anticipation is based on teachers' reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. As teachers continuously carry out the three kinds of reflection, reflective practice becomes an integral part of their life, which involves not only intellectual, cognitive, and metacognitive aspects but also social, political, moral, and spiritual dimensions of the teachers (Farrell, 2015, 2016). Viewing the teacher as a whole person with a multidimensional self, Farrell (2018) ignites the idea of reflection-as-action as a more holistic approach to reflective practice. Overall, all types of reflection can be manifested in solitary practices and/or collaborative, dialogic endeavors (Mann & Walsh, 2017).

The Infusion of Appreciative Inquiry into Collaborative Reflection in Teachers' Identity Formation

As reflection can be collaboratively carried out (Mann & Walsh, 2017; Murray, 2010), collaborative reflection encourages teachers to make meanings of themselves, socially negotiate them with others, and shape the formation of their identity, including their concepts and imaginations as teachers (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2010; Buchanan, 2015; Flores, 2020; Gutiérrez et al., 2019; Körkkö, 2021; Richards, 2023). The collaborative reflection is drawn from the socio-cultural perspectives, which highlight the role of interactions in identity construction within the community of practice (Johnson & Golombek, 2020; Sang, 2022). With the help of their peers or mentors in collaborative reflection, teachers can see themselves and their practice from different angles and

construct collective meaning (Mann & Walsh, 2017; Turhan & Kirkgöz, 2021). Since the reflective practice has shifted from fixing the broken to attaining the potential, appreciative atmospheres tend to emerge in collaborative reflection (Gregersen & Mercer, 2022). Without a doubt, the presence of other teachers within the community of practice who positively appreciate and value their presence and meaning-making process during the reflection strengthens teachers' constructed identity. Such appreciative inquiry, which focuses on strengths and positive aspects and highlights collaboration and participation, helps teachers envision the future (Bergmark & Kostenius, 2018; Gregersen & Mercer, 2022; Hammond, 2013; He, 2013; Lessard-Clouston, 2020). Appreciative inquiry hence focuses on helping teachers grow, flourish and value the best practices that have been done (MacIntyre, 2021).

As appreciative inquiry aims to support positive potentials and successes to transform teachers professionally, the members in collaborative reflection are encouraged to provide positive feedback. The positive feedback casts light on the development of a teacher and can be used for future professional development. Furthermore, reaffirming teachers' positive strengths in collaborative reflection can enhance their confidence, efficacy, and self-concept (Gregersen & Mercer, 2022). In this regard, a supportive atmosphere created in the group instigates a culture of trust, acceptance, and respect, which fosters and empowers the development of teachers' identity and agentic selves. As a result, teachers' making sense of their professional selves is positively accepted and acknowledged by others.

Even though collaborative reflections have been reported to foster teachers' professional identity in previous studies (e.g., Gutiérrez et al., 2019; Turhan & Kirkgöz, 2021), studies on collaborative reflection adopting appreciative inquiry are still rare. Incorporating appreciative inquiry into collaborative reflection to pre-service TESOL teachers during the teaching practicum in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Gregersen and Mercer (2022) have found that the pre-service teachers' identity is empowered since they felt accepted, respected, and supported. In addition, the appreciative feedback from their peers and mentor is perceived as a resource that helps them grow as teachers and human beings. Indeed, an appreciative inquiry-based collaborative reflection empowers teachers' professional identity construction as their identities are positively acknowledged and valued in the community of practice. As Gregersen and Mercer (2022) call for further studies on appreciative inquiry and collaborative reflection from different contexts, this study seeks to investigate the appreciative collaborative reflection during the in-service teacher certification program in Indonesia.

Method

Design

To investigate how the appreciative collaborative reflection fosters the configuration of EFL teachers' professional identities, the researchers employed a qualitative case study. A case study examines a bounded system consisting of a person or entity and its social context (Hood, 2009). In TESOL, an entity may refer to a group of language teachers or learners. In this study, the entity is a group of three EFL teachers experiencing the appreciative collaborative reflection. As the implementation of the reflection in this study was unique in the Indonesian context, it was also considered a case (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Context and Participants

Twenty-eight in-service EFL teachers enrolled in a three-month offline PPG program at a private university in Indonesia participated in the appreciative collaborative

reflection. They were junior and senior high school English teachers whose teaching experiences ranged from five to fifteen years. Among the teachers, seventeen were public service teachers, and eleven were private teachers. All the participants were placed by the Indonesian government to participate in the PPG program organized by the university. To shape teachers' professional, pedagogical, social, and personal competencies, the PPG program in the university offered a number of activities, one of which was reflection. The reflective activities were guided, and the teachers stayed in the same groups during the program (see Table 3 for details).

The first author observed that one group outperformed an interpersonal bond among the members during the appreciative collaborative reflection and the members wrote thorough reflective accounts. For that reason, this study focused on the case group to provide an in-depth and detailed analysis. The group members were Nadia, Rene, and Sangha (Pseudonyms). Even though the three participants had not known one another prior to the PPG program, they built trust among themselves in the reflective activities. Table 1 provided the participants' detailed demographic information, which included gender, age, school level, working status, teaching experience, and academic degree.

Table 1. *Participants' Demography*

Participant	Gender	Age	School Level	Working Status	Teaching Experience	Academic Degree
Nadia	Female	34 years	Senior High School	Civil servant teacher	10 years	B. Ed
Rene	Female	36 years	Senior High School	Civil servant teacher	12 years	B. Ed
Sangha	Male	30 years	Junior High School	Private teacher	6 years	B. Ed

Data Collection

Daily systematic reflections were carried out during the PPG program to help the participants to purify their calling as teachers, contemplate their professional experiences, and configure their professional identity. A reflection module was designed for five-week use by integrating appreciative inquiry and collaborative reflection (see Suharjanto, 2019). It had different weekly topics that guided the participants to make meaning of themselves, as in Table 2. Its topics encourage the teachers to construct their professional identities as EFL teachers by making meaning of their past, present, and future selves.

Table 2. *Topics of the Reflection*

Week	Topic
1	Understanding, accepting, and being thankful for myself
2	Teacher personality in myself
3	Learning as a vocation of life
4	Teaching as a mission
5	Generosity of a teacher

As the coordinator of the university's English teacher professional certification program, the first author was trained in guiding the reflective activities during the program. As the participants were not accustomed to doing reflection, training on how to contemplate their professional practices was conducted before the implementation of

reflection. The training also included the clarity of what reflection is and exercises for reflecting on experiences.

Since an hour-appreciative collaborative reflection activity was integrated daily into the PPG program, the first author led the reflection process by explaining the procedures, keeping time, and highlighting the important points. There were three stages for conducting the daily reflective activities, as in Table 3.

Table 3. *Procedures of the Daily Reflection*

Stage	Time Allotment	Activities
First stage: Personal reflection	30 minutes	Colleting and contemplating positive professional experiences as guided by the module
Second stage: A three-round conversation	15 minutes	Working in a group of three, remaining the same during the program Sharing the reflection within the group. Listening to the speaker attentively without making any response
	5 minutes	Articulating what was inspiring, touching, or essential regarding the others' reflections Giving positive and appreciative comments
	minutes	Expressing feelings or intentions that would be done in the future Constructing joint meaning
Third stage: Sharing	minutes	Summarizing the results of their reflections in one to two sentences Sharing them with the class

At the end of the week, each participant wrote the whole week's reflection into a single personal reflective narrative. The reflective account was shared with the peers within the group and eventually submitted to the facilitator to be given comments. The weekly pieces of reflective narrative accounts were then compiled into a single complete reflective narrative with an interesting title representing the content.

Video-recorded focus group discussion (FGD) was carried out with the three participants at the end of the PPG program to get an in-depth understanding of their identity trajectories in the appreciative collaborative reflection through their stories. The FGD was used in this study since the interaction among participants could yield the best information (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The first author led the one-hour discussion, which focused on the implementation of appreciative collaborative reflection and its impacts on their meaning-making and understanding of themselves as EFL teachers. Semi-structured questions were employed to make the conversations more informal and fluid. The questions addressed areas including their meaning-making of professional selves in the reflection, tensions they experienced during the meaning making, interactions in the collaborative reflection, and their professional identity configuration in the reflection. The use of Indonesian made them clearly understand the probing questions and express their views on the appreciate collaborative reflection. Since the first author had built a greater rapport and personal connections with the participants during the program, the participants conveniently articulated their stories related to their professional identity construction in the appreciative collaborative reflection. The first author, as a qualitative researcher, was also aware of his involvement in the meaning making process by listening to participants' experiences, articulating his perspectives, and asking further clarifications and questions.

Data Analysis

The researchers repeatedly read the transcript of the FGD to ensure the accuracy of the data. A member-checking strategy, i.e., by giving the transcript to the participants, was employed to ensure the interview transcript's truthfulness (Candela, 2019). After verifying the truthfulness of the interview transcript, the researchers proceeded to conduct the initial coding process. This involved categorizing the available data into distinct parts and assigning codes to label them accordingly. Twelve codes were created by identifying and highlighting the sections that revealed the roles of appreciative collaborative reflection in shaping the participants' professional identities, which were drawn upon the works of Gregersen and Mercer (2022), Mann and Walsh (2017), and Walsh and Mann (2015). During this process, our emphasis was on the interpretations and significance conveyed by the participants, rather than solely on the exact wording they used. The examples of the coding process are shown in Table 4. After completing the initial coding, the subsequent step involved organizing the codes into broader thematic groups according to their degree of consistency (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and the themes referred to our research objective. Consequently, three distinct themes emerged and were employed in this study, namely recollections of professional views and experiences, equal engagement and interconnectedness, and positivity. While coding the data and clustering the codes into the themes, the researchers employed an inter-rating strategy to ensure the validity and reliability of the outputs. To provide a visual representation of the thematic coding process, Figure 1 illustrates the three different themes and their corresponding codes.

Table 4. *Examples of Coding Process*

Transcript in English Equivalents	Codes
I have undergone professional experiences throughout my life career span. Reflection made me bring back those experiences. And, among those experiences, I discovered why I am now an English teacher	Past professional experiences
I enjoyed the three-round reflective conversation. I actively participated in sharing my views about professional life but at the same time I was encouraged to listen to my friends' reflective stories… Listening to my friends made me feel closer with them.	Engagement, Interconnectedness
I felt empowered when I got appreciative comments from my friends. Such acceptance made me feel confident in educating my students.	Appreciative Comments, Self-Confidence

Findings

Based on the findings, the appreciative collaborative reflection, which accentuated individual and collaborative endeavors, accelerated the configuration of teacher identities through the recollections of professional experiences, equal engagement and interconnectedness, and positivity. Those emerging themes are discussed in the following sub-sections.

Recollections of Professional Views and Experiences

The first stage of the reflection encouraged the participants to recall their professional experiences and narrated their evidence-based reflective thoughts by filling in the blank form of the module by using Indonesian, as in Figure 2. By doing so, the participants collected data on their professional practices and experiences and used them as triggers to do the reflection (Mann & Walsh, 2017).
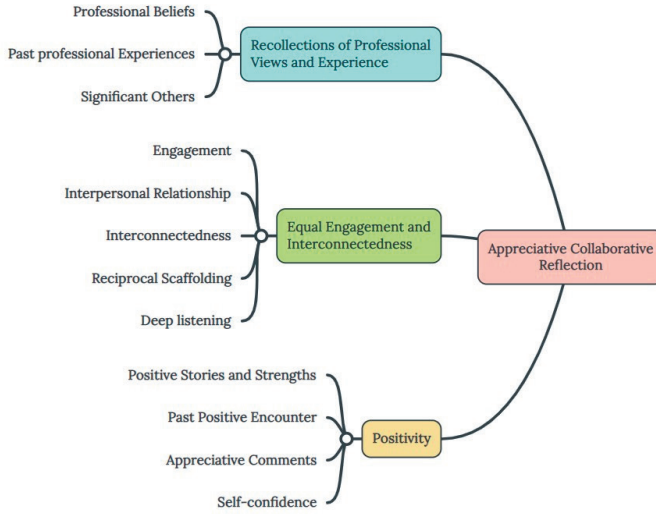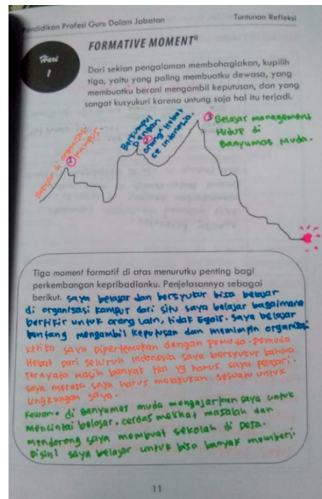
Figure 1. *The Thematic Coding Process*

Figure 2. *Participants' Daily Reflective Log*

The participants revealed that the professional beliefs and experiences recollected through the individual written reflection accelerated them to make meanings of their professional selves as EFL teachers. Furthermore, as the collected views and experiences were specific due to following the structured module's topics, their meaning-making focused on particular views and experiences. Hence, contemplating their specific views and experiences led them to identify who they were across time and place. The following excerpts from the FGD illustrate the points mentioned earlier:

Excerpt 1
The questions and forms in the module stimulated me to bring together my previous professional experiences, including my views on specific topics. It is good because I can recall

my previous experiences and see myself from one time to another one. In addition, the recalled experiences helped me understand why I chose teaching as my career… I traced my professional journey…I saw myself as taking different roles. (Nadia, Female)

Excerpt 2

I have undergone professional experiences throughout my life career span. Reflection made me bring back those experiences. And, among those experiences, I discovered why I am now an English teacher. … I also learned that I showed my different professional selves in different occasions. The reflection makes me understand more my strengths and weaknesses. It helps me to understand my self and the journey of my profession as an English teacher. (Rene, Female)

Excerpt 3

Through the experiences written in the reflection, discovered the teacher personality within me. I realize that I am affected by other people I met in the past. Their thinking and views are instilled in me and influence my life as a teacher… I also learn that different experiences influence how I see myself. … When I reflected on my life, I am grateful for being a teacher. Being a teacher is the greatest gift from Allah…It is a divine vocation so that I have to show God's face in my teaching. (Sangha, Male)

The excerpts suggested that the stimulated recall provided by the module made the reflection data-led, which raised teachers' awareness of their professional (Allas et al., 2020; Mann & Walsh, 2017; Walsh & Mann, 2015). Recalling professional experiences was necessary for the in-service EFL teachers as they had undergone years of teaching experience. Indeed, the module helped them to make their past professional experiences present and make meaning of the experiences. Based on the findings, the participants enacted the configuration of their professional selves as EFL teachers and its antecedents, including the underlying reasons they chose the career. Also, they realized how significant others in the past and previous experiences contributed to their current professional life. Such contemplation led the teachers to achieve a thoughtful understanding of themselves as human beings and spiritual selves and put the conceptions into their teaching practices and professional life (Farrell, 2015, 2018; Farrell et al., 2020) .

Equal Engagement and Interconnectedness

Promoting a culture of encounter that facilitated the participants' engagement and interconnection was obvious in the second stage of the reflection. The participants underscored that they were fully engaged in the interaction and discussion of the second stage. They shared and discussed the meaning-making of their professional selves in the first stage with the other members. The interaction and discussion with their peers in the reflective practices led to their identity learning (Mann & Walsh, 2017). Moreover, the timely structured collaborative reflection allowed them to share and contribute equally to the small group's reflective processes. The participants shared their reflections and listened to the others' reflections based on the allotted time. In this regard, listening to the other group members was admittedly to initiate an interpersonal relationship. Rene and Sangha articulated:

Excerpt 4

I enjoyed the three-round reflective conversation. I actively participated in sharing my views about professional life but at the same time I was encouraged to listen to my friends' reflective stories… Listening to my friends made me feel closer with them. (Rene, Female)

Excerpt 5

I think that we had the same opportunities to speak and listen to one another. We did not dominate one another…Speaking and listening were the keys in the reflective conversation …they had to be equally distributed. (Sangha, Male)

The findings indicated that the participants had built an interpersonal bond and learned from one another during the reflection. Such interconnectedness and reciprocal scaffolding made them feel accepted, respected, valued, and supported (Mann & Walsh, 2017; Walsh & Mann, 2015). The following excerpt exemplified how the participants' interconnectedness and reciprocal scaffolding in the group smoothed their identity learning.

Excerpt 6

I know my friends more deeply through their inspirational stories … I still remember that Sangha once told us about his father, who inspired him to be a teacher. His story stimulated me to think about my family members, who might have inspired me so much that I chose this job. Finally, I found that teaching was my DNA because my parents and grandparents were also teachers…It is why I am now also a teacher. I could realize this because Sangha shared his story with us…It was difficult for me to remember the details of my experiences but listening to others' stories stimulated me to think about myself. (Nadia, Female)

The participants acknowledged that the reflective stories exerted by their fellow teachers encouraged them to ponder the same situation. They got inspiration from their friends, which made them also think about their professional journeys. In this regard, deep listening was admitted to contributing to the sense of being interconnected with the group members. The participants acknowledged that their willingness to listen to their fellow teachers' meaning-making of professional selves without judgment had led them to go to their fellow teachers' worlds. Oftentimes, they delved into the other participants' emotional state. Such empathetic listening reaffirmed the others' sense of worth and strengthened a positive interpersonal relationship (Tubbs et al., 2012). The participants recalled:

Excerpt 7

In the three-round reflective conversation, listening to my friends' thoughtful stories was interesting… I learned how my friends understood their professionalism. While listening, I did not assess their reflection but put aside all my assumptions. I trusted their reflective stories and their views of themselves as teachers. Well, I was actually not allowed to judge their reflection, but understand them… Their reflections were personal and what I could do was relate them to mine. (Nadia, Female)

Excerpt 8

I really enjoyed listening to my friends' sharing their reflections. Sometimes, I could feel my friends…It was because of my attentive listening. I could also understand my friends more deeply and, of course, learn from them how to be a good teacher. Really, my friends' stories about their professional lives were inspiring. The stories affirmed me as an English teacher. To some extent, we were in the same boat. (Rene, Female)

Excerpt 9

I was trained to be a good listener. At first time, it wasn't easy because I sometimes wanted to spontaneously comment on my friends' stories. As time passed, I realized that

attentive listening was essential in our life. For example, by listening to Rene's reflective stories, I could understand her professional journeys and successes she had achieved. I also learned the paths that she had undergone in her profession. At the same time, I also reflected on my professional experiences, making connections between hers and mine…We shared the commonalities… Listening to my friends thoughtfully made me closer to them. (Sangha, Male)

It is worth noticing that the participants tried to understand and make meaning of their fellow teachers' reflective stories by connecting them with their own reflections. In doing so, while listening to the others, they went beyond the expressed words and linked the parts of the stories to search for meaning (Worthington & Bodie, 2018). This meaning-making was paramount in identity configuration as the teachers actively constructed the meaning of their professional selves. Therefore, to a certain extent, deep listening encouraged the teachers to contemplate, construct, and negotiate their professional identities.

Positivity

The first stage of the reflection fostered the participants to personally think of their positive professional experiences. The participants admitted that positivity and strength-based personal reflections encouraged them to optimistically value their professionalism and led them to be grateful for their whole life. They understood that their lives and careers were complex miracles that they had to appreciate. Reflecting on positive stories and strengths of their professionally-committed lives and practices hence led the teachers to go more deeply into their professional experiences and cultivate their professional selves. Rene acknowledged:

Excerpt 10

In the first stage (of the reflection), I was encouraged to look at the history of my calling as a teacher… In junior high school, I had difficulty learning English. My English teacher patiently assisted me in learning English. I felt that my teacher cared for me… It was the first time I was interested in becoming an English teacher. I felt loved at that time. I have kept the memory in my mind, making me happy as an English teacher…I want to share my love with my students who are struggling with English. (Rene, Female)

The excerpt illuminated how Rene's reflection on her past positive encounter with her English teacher instilled happiness in her professionalism. It also shaped a sense of calling in her professional identity construction. Drawing on her positive experiences, she also articulated her compassionate commitment to her professional life. Similarly, the other two participants' recalling their committed actions and professional successes enhanced their sense of self-efficacy and fulfilment. They said:

Excerpt 11

Through the reflection, I realized that I had implemented innovative teaching in my classes. I used technological tools that made my students excited and motivated. Based on the experience, I defined myself as an innovative teacher… I believe that I can do more to motivate my students to learn English even though they face challenges and difficulties…I believe I can help them. (Sangha, Male)

Excerpt 12
I reflected on my successful experience when I assisted my students in preparing for a speech competition at my district. I trained them for two months. On the day of the competition, one of my students got second rank. I was so contented and satisfied… But for me, the most important thing is that I could help them… That was satisfying. (Nadia, Female)

The second stage of the reflection allowed the participants to share their positive professional experiences and give appreciative comments to one another. The participants revealed that the second stage of the reflection strengthened their built professional identities and self-confidence with their professional selves as EFL teachers. The followings are some of their quotes:

Excerpt 13
I felt empowered when I got appreciative comments from my friends. Such acceptance made me feel confident in educating my students. (Rene, Female)

Excerpt 14
My friends' comments on my experiences were so powerful that they made me positively see myself as a teacher. (Nadia, Female)

Discussion

The findings revealed that the appreciative collaborative reflection implemented in the PPG program catalyzed the participants to make meaning of their professional selves as EFL teachers in the Indonesian context. The five-week reflective activities provided the teachers with an intrapersonal and interpersonal dialogic space that encouraged them to configure their teacher identities and share them with their fellow teachers. As a result, they co-constructed and negotiated their professional identities (Gutiérrez et al., 2019; Turhan & Kirkgöz, 2021). Moreover, the infusion of appreciative inquiry into the reflection enhanced the participants' positive and considerate understandings of their professional selves as EFL teachers (cf. Gregersen & Mercer, 2022).

This study highlighted that reflection initially facilitated the teachers to identify their professional selves. Posada-Ortiz (2022) found that identification was quintessential in identity formation as it could reveal how the teachers saw themselves and others viewed them as teachers. The participants' identification of their professionalism through the reflection showed that significant others and past experiences admittedly shaped their identities, as in Excerpts 1, 2, and 3. Such interconnected selves across time and place resonate with the notion that teacher identity construction is relational, shaped by how individuals perceive themselves and how others influence them (Sadeghi & Bahari, 2022; Thompson, 2022).

The participants' recollection of personal and professional data helped them see their professional lives, as in Excerpts 1, 2, and 3. Through the data-led reflection, they personally examined the negotiations of their professional self-concepts during their professional careers, including their actions, understandings, beliefs, and goals (cf. Beauchamp & Thomas, 2010; Gutiérrez et al., 2019; Körkkö, 2021; Mann & Walsh, 2017; Richards, 2023). This meaning-making process of professional selves allowed them to see the dynamics of their professional identities. The participants realized that their identities fluctuated over time and were configured differently in different socio and spatial contexts (Buchanan, 2015; Flores, 2020), highlighting that the teacher identity construction is also

experiential (Sadeghi & Bahari, 2022; Thompson, 2022). Even, when they involved in the reflective practice, they still re-negotiated their identities.

As the participants were fully and equally engaged and connected to one another, as in Excerpts 7, 8, and 9, the interconnectedness in the collaborative reflection instigated an intrapersonal dialogue that facilitated the co-constructions of professional selves, through which new understandings and the development of professional identity took place (Gutiérrez et al., 2019; Turhan & Kirkgöz, 2021). In a collectivist culture, like in Indonesia, such an interdependent self-construal, i.e., the degree to which people perceive the self as being intrinsically tied to other individuals, is to maintain a sense of group cohesion by taking others' perspectives (Giacomin & Jordan, 2020). The findings also resonate with Tutyandari (2022), who found the importance of interconnectedness in instigating Indonesian EFL teachers' professional growth. Indeed, the interconnection between individuals in the group played an essential role in identity development as the teachers longed to be socially accepted and valued by the members.

Since the reflection was infused with appreciative inquiry, the positivity and strength-based individual and collaborative reflection raised EFL teachers' happiness, self-efficacy, self-fulfillment, and confidence in their professional lives, as in Excerpts 10-14, which resonates with Gregersen and Mercer (2022). Those psychological states archetypically stimulated the participants to configure positive professional self-concepts. For example, the participants' configurations of professional identities, as in Excerpts 11 and 12, were instructional and vocational (cf. Pennington, 2015). More importantly, reflecting on and reaffirming positive experiences and successes encouraged the participants to continuously improve themselves and prolong their committed actions as EFL teachers. Richards (2023) argues that commitment is one of the teachers' essential characteristics in achieving excellence in teaching and educating their students. Hence, appreciating the best practices and successes in the reflection was a transformative endeavor that fostered the teachers to grow and envision the future professionalism (Bergmark & Kostenius, 2018; Gregersen & Mercer, 2022; Hammond, 2013; He, 2013; Lessard-Clouston, 2020; MacIntyre, 2021).

Conclusion, Implications, and Limitations

This qualitative case study revealed that appreciative collaborative reflection accelerated the configuration of EFL teachers' professional identities during the teacher professional education program in the Indonesian context. The elements of the reflection, which were data-led, personal, collaborative, and appreciative (Gregersen & Mercer, 2022; Mann & Walsh, 2017), encompassed an intrapersonal and interpersonal dialogic space that allowed them to cultivate their professional selves, appreciate their professionalism, and foster their professional growth. More importantly, the emphasis on positivity helped the teachers to configure positive professional selves.

The findings provided implications for EFL teacher education and teacher professional development. First, as the reflective practice focusing on appreciating and valuing teachers' ongoing professional experiences and growth developed a stronger sense of professional identity, such identity-focused reflective practices should be incorporated into EFL teacher education and teacher professional development programs to assist teachers in finding the essential meaning of being teachers and purifying their calling as teachers. As such, the meaning-making of their professional selves can contribute to their commitment to their job. Second, incorporating evidence-based reflection into the programs can encourage pre-service teachers and serving teachers to examine their professional practices and make informed decisions about their professional development. Lastly, reflection's personal, collaborative, and appreciative nature can facilitate teachers

to introspect, engage in dialogue and exchange ideas, and cultivate a more optimistic and confident professional self-concept, which can positively impact their motivation, self-efficacy and overall well-being as teachers.

While this study successfully offered insightful findings, notable limitations affected the results. The first issue was the cultural context of the study. This study's findings tended to underscore the engagement and interconnectedness among the participants since this study was conducted in a collectivist culture. Future studies are expected to be conducted in other cultural settings to determine how different cultures influence teachers' reflection and identity formation. Another limitation was the small size and the need for more diversity of the participants. As the three participants were chosen based on their interpersonal bond within a group, the findings could not capture the perspectives of a more diverse range of teachers. Future researchers need to address this issue to provide a more comprehensive understanding. Lastly, the study's findings were influenced by the only data collection method, i.e., FGD, to reveal the roles of reflection in helping teachers configure their professional identities. While this method provided valuable insights, it might not encapsulate the complexity and dynamics of identity negotiations in collaborative reflections. Combining data sources from observations, participants' recorded conversations, and interviews helps to capture the group dynamics and discursive negotiations in greater detail.

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