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VYTAUTO DIDŽIOJO UNIVERSITETO ŠVIETIMO AKADEMIJA

Exploring the Perceptions Regarding Language Teacher Educator Identity: A Multiple Case Study on Three ELT Teacher Educators

Magdalena Keskin[1], Gökhan Öztürk[2]

[1] Bursa Technical University, Mimar Sinan Campus, Bursa, TUR-16310 Turkey, magdalena.keskin@btu.edu.tr
[2] Anadolu University, Yunus Emre Campus, Eskisehir, TUR-26470 Turkey, gokhanozturk250@anadolu.edu.tr

Annotation. This study aims to explore the participants' perceptions of their language teacher educator identity, and to identify the factors that contribute to their teacher educator identity development. Participants included three English language teacher educators in a Turkish higher education context. The findings revealed that a desire to make an impact is a motivating factor in shaping the participants' language teacher educator identity with self-reflection playing a crucial role in its development.

Keywords: *language teacher educator identity, language teacher education, English language teaching.*

Introduction

Identity, in a broader sense, is shaped by a number of internal and external factors, ranging from personal biography stretching back to our formative years to the current values and culture of an institution or a community we are part of (Day et al., 2006). Our past and present social and cultural life experiences continue to shape our identity in a dynamic and lifelong process (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). What is more, the factors shaping, and reshaping identity should not be examined in isolation since it is the interplay between them that forms our "socially and culturally constructed self" (McKeon &

Harrison, 2010, p. 27). Consequently, the concept of identity extends much further than an individual's personality, character, or beliefs (Sfard & Prusak, 2005). When the concept of identity is narrowed down to the identity of teachers or teacher educators, it seems to escape a straightforward definition (Beijaard et al., 2004). The fact that teacher educators are not a homogenous group further complicates attempts at a clear-cut definition. Modern teacher educators can work in a wide variety of educational institutions and perform different roles towards multiple types of audiences (Ducharme, 1993). Barkhuizen (2021) identified fourteen different roles teacher educators perform and he insisted that his list is by no means exhaustive of the wide scope of responsibilities, working contexts, and interactions teacher educators might have in their professional communities.

Although a majority of teacher educators follow a path of progression from school teachers to teacher educators, there are also those who come into the profession without any prior experience in teaching (Newberry, 2014). Teacher educators who enter this profession from classroom teaching, are required to move from their position of "first order practitioners" to "second order practitioners" (Murray, 2002). Establishing a teacher educator identity is a time-consuming and strenuous process but it has far-reaching implications for teacher educators' practice (Ben-Peretz et al., 2010). Some of the factors which can impede the formation of teacher educator identity include insufficient recognition of the importance of the profession as well as lack of access to a supportive community of practice (Gee, 2000). In a phenomenological self-study, Newberry (2014) described being ostracized by other teacher educators working at an American university because she lacked teaching experience and entered the field of teacher education from a position of a youth counsellor. She was forced to establish her new identity as teacher educator under the pressure of criticism and lack of recognition from her students and colleagues alike. However, her experience should not be understood as an implication that the path of former teachers turning teacher educators is devoid of complications and struggles. An obvious advantage of an accumulated classroom experience is that novice teacher educators can rely on "deep knowledge and understanding of the classroom as disciplinary knowledge" (Wood & Borg, 2010, p. 19). Murray et al. (2011) conducted a case study of a group of English teacher educators working with pre-service teachers. He found that prior experience in classroom teaching was perceived as a "badge or currency used by novice teacher educators to strengthen their credibility among their students" (Murray et al., 2011, p. 264). On the other hand, if teacher educators' prior ELT experience is deemed insufficient or irrelevant by themselves, their professional community, or their students, it can result in diminished confidence and disrupt the process of identity shaping (Martinez, 2008).

According to Southworth (1995) tensions between identities can occur when our past, well-consolidated identities are juxtaposed against newly formed identities. In the case of teacher educators, the lack of alignment is usually observed between their identity as a teacher educator and those of a teacher and a researcher (Chang et al., 2016; Kim &

Greene, 2011; McGregor et al., 2010; Wood & Borg, 2010). Implementing a self-study| approach to research, Wood and Borg were able to identify such tensions among themselves and two other newly appointed teacher educators who used to be classroom teachers. Their findings proved that lack of calibration between "situational" self and "substantial" self can lead to feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt and discomfort. The dichotomous relationship between teacher educator and researcher identities were also explored in a number of extant research studies (Dinkelman et al., 2006; Khan, 2011; Murray, 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; Wood & Borg, 2010). Some teacher educators, particularly those for whom experiential classroom practice is embedded deep within their substantial selves, struggle with the requirement of conducting academic research imposed on them by their higher-education institutions (Murray et al., 2011). McGregor at al. (2010) carried out an ethnographic study utilizing reflective narratives to gain an understanding of how teacher educators reshape their identity to accommodate for the inclusion of the researcher identity. Starting as peripheral participants in research, teacher educators in the study managed to transform themselves into thoughtful scrutineers (McGregor et al., 2010). Though ultimately successful, the participants were forced to overcome a number of challenges including ethical dilemmas of researching their own colleagues and students and lack of confidence in one's skills and performance. Even experienced teacher educators who managed to find balance between their multiple professional roles can grapple with their teacher educator identity under the weight of external circumstances beyond their control. When a group of proficient teacher educators at an American university transformed their educational system from university-based to field-based, their teacher educator identities underwent a transformation as well (Chang et al., 2016). Suddenly, they experienced doubts about their self-efficacy and the quality of contributions they were able to make in the new professional context. Studies like that are evident of the fact that the concept of identity is by no means stable and, on the contrary, it is constantly reshaped and modified under the impact of internal and external factors.

Conceptual Framework

Identity is a complex and multifaceted construct which escapes a straightforward explanation (Clarke, 2009). Different scholars assigned importance to various factors influencing identity as a construct. Richards (2017) emphasised the role of the social context in the creation of identity. Wenger (1998) believed that the concept of identity cannot be separated from practice and notions such as participation, negotiability, and identification. Faced with the multitude of theoretical frameworks applied to the construct of identity, Varghese et al. (2005) stressed the importance of combining different perspectives in future studies on identity in an attempt to offer a more vivid and insightful rendering of identity. Taking it into account, the present study draws from a number of theories of identity. The primary conceptualization of identity implemented in the current study was drawn from Pennington's (2015) framework which encapsulated

self-image, professional practice and positioning oneself within a community of practice. The concept of self-image was of particular interest to the researchers since their aim was to gain an insight into the participants' perceptions of themselves as teacher educators. This understanding of identity was crucial for the current study since the researchers sought to explore both formation and sustenance of teacher educator identity among her participants. In this perspective, the understanding of identity existing and developing in a community of practice was instrumental in comprehending the interplay between the participants' identities as teachers and teacher educators.

The Current Study

Due to the complexity of the formation and sustenance of a teacher educator identity, Wood and Borg (2010) called for more studies to be conducted with a particular focus on the strategies teacher educators use to balance their identities. Lack of clarity in the understanding of the concept of identity is additionally exacerbated by the complexities of the teacher educator profession and should be studied more thoroughly (Murray, 2005; Murray & Male, 2005; Vloet & van Swet, 2010). What is more, most studies on teacher educator identity are conducted in the US, Europe, and Australia, leaving the inquiry into Asian teacher educators' identities under-researched (Izadinia, 2014). Pertaining to data collection methods, a comprehensive review of extant studies of teacher educator identity revealed a need for incorporating observations of educators' professional practices in order to enrich our understanding of the interplay between identity and practice (Banegas & Gerlach, 2021; Barkhuizen, 2021; Izadinia, 2014). The purpose of the current study is to address the gap in extant literature by exploring three Turkish teacher educators' perceptions of their language teacher educator identities and the perceived factors that have shaped and continue to affect these identities. The following research questions were addressed throughout the study

1. How do the participating language teacher educators perceive their identity as teacher educators?
2. What factors do they perceive as influential in the formation and sustenance of their teacher educator identities?
3. What coping strategies do they use to reduce tensions between their identities as "self", teachers, teacher educators, and researchers?

Methodology

Research Design

The study employs a qualitative multiple case study design. In multiple case studies, the researcher describes and compares multiple cases through various forms of data

collection tool and the main purpose here is to provide an insight into an issue under investigation (Creswell, 2018). Besides, providing such an in-depth perspective on an issue could be achieved via in-depth focus on a few cases. For that reason, a multiple case study design was embraced to present an in-depth focus and uncover the subjective experiences participants with a special interest in their perceptions of their teacher educator identity. The main focus is, therefore, placed on the subjective and individual meaning the participants attach to their experiences and gaining a deeper understanding of their complexity (Creswell, 2009).

Participants and Research Context

The participants of this research study consisted of three teacher educators selected through the process of maximum variation sampling. In this sampling strategy, the researcher intentionally determines cases with different forms of experience to explore the variation among respondents (Dörnyei, 2007). In this regard, there were two criteria selected by the researchers in an attempt to differentiate between the participants and grant a wider perspective of how these differences impact their teacher educator identities. The first criterion was years of experience as professional teacher educators. The rationale behind determining these criteria was to explore the concept of teacher educator identity in inexperienced and veteran teacher educators and also to gain an insight into the interplay of teacher identity and teacher educator identity. The second criterion was the presence or absence of a community of practice. A number of studies conducted on teacher identity spotlighted the significance of a membership in a professional community as playing a salient role in the development of teacher educator identity (Izadinia, 2014; McGregor et al., 2010; Newberry, 2014; Pinnegar & Murphy, 2011). The adverse consequences of an unsupportive community were illustrated in Newberry's reflective narrative study (2014). However, since the vast majority of teacher educators work in liaison with other educators, very little is known about freelancing teacher educators who cannot access the benefits of such cooperation but are also not affected by discouraging colleagues.

Table 1

Information About the Participants

	Educational Background	Experience as a teacher educator	Experience as an ELT practitioner
Hasan	MA in ELT	3 years	11 years Still teaching private students online
Ahmet	MA in English Literature	5 years	15 years Not actively teaching
Maya	MA in ELT	2 years	8 years Teaching part-time in a language school

The researchers observed one online workshop for each participant. Hasan's was conducted in a private K12 school. The aim of the session was to share ideas for energizing activities and warmups. Ahmet's session was also conducted online for a private K12 school in Turkey. The aim of the session was to familiarize the teachers with the concept of mindfulness and present practical activities directed at increasing mindfulness among students and also their teachers. Maya's session was conducted at a public high school. The goal of the workshop was to identify the characteristics of a successful feedback session and offer practical strategies on how they can be incorporated into teachers' everyday classroom practice.

Data Collection Tools and Process

A combination of semi-structured interviews and observations was selected by the researchers as data collection methods in the current research study. After each participant was thoroughly informed about the purpose of the study and written consents were signed and collected, the data collection process began by conducting one-on-one interviews with each participant. Before the interviews, the researchers discussed the issue of the participants' anonymity, and reassured the participants that their identities and personal details will be fully concealed. Since the participants were based in different cities in Turkey, online interviews were preferred for convenience purposes. The length of the interviews ranged from 60 to 90 minutes. Each interview was then transcribed by the researchers and a copy of the transcript was sent to the participants giving them an opportunity to add, clarify or retract any statements they made during their interviews. The second stage of data collection involved observations of the participants' workshops. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all workshops were conducted and recorded online allowing the researchers to rewatch the recordings when needed. One 45-minute workshop from each participant was observed and rewatched multiple times. The fact that the interviews were also recorded and readily available for the researchers, strengthened the iterative process of data analysis which lies in the foundations of qualitative data analysis, granting the researchers an opportunity to move back and forward between data from both data collection tools (Heigham & Croker, 2009). During the observations the researchers concentrated their attention on several elements including the content and the structure of the workshops, the interactions between the educators and their audience, as well as the language used by the presenters.

Final 30-minute interviews with the participants were conducted after the data from workshop observations were collected and a preliminary analysis was carried out. Such sequence of data collection processes allowed the researchers to address information collected in the first interviews and workshop observations during the final meeting with each study participant, further strengthening the iterative nature of the data collection stage.

The researchers finalised the data collection process when data saturation was reached, which was determined by means of code frequency counts. In other words, the saturation was achieved when newly collected data failed to offer additional information which could aid the researchers in their investigation of teacher educator identity, but it merely repeated already identified codes (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022).

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed with the aim to thoroughly analyse the collected data. The analysis stage was a reiterative process with the researchers analysing the emerging codes and the interrelationships between the newly formulated codes and the already existing ones. This approach to data analysis was selected by the researchers due to the fact that it facilitates a detail-oriented examination of data, hence increasing the credibility and effectiveness of the analysis (Nowell et al., 2017). First, it involved careful examination of interview transcripts and recorded online training sessions in an attempt to identify codes emerging from the data (Charmaz, 2001). The codes were then reanalysed in order to eliminate any redundant or overlapping codes and formulate within-case themes. After coding each participant's data separately, a cross-case analysis of the three experiences documented in this study was conducted in order to identify broader themes. The themes derived from the cross-case analysis are explored in the discussion section of this article.

Trustworthiness

The credibility of this research study was warranted by the triangulation of data collection tools as well as member checking. Triangulation is understood as "the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection" (Creswell, 2018, p. 259). The participants' own accounts of their experiences were paired with observations of their daily practices in order to validate the findings collected during the interviews. Secondly, benefiting from the fact that all participants of the study are ELT practitioners and teacher educators, knowledgeable about pedagogical issues as well as more theoretical concepts in education and methodology, they were able to verify not only the transcripts of their interviews, but also codes identified by the researchers in the data analysis process. For example, comments on the role of community in shaping the participants' teacher educator identity were not very common in their interviews but were added in the process of member checking. As a result, the participants were able to verify the accuracy of collected data as well as support the researchers in the analysis process (Rallis & Rossman, 2009).

Findings

The Case of Hasan

Hasan's motivation to start a new career as a teacher educator was to share his ideas and strategies which he accumulated during his teaching practice as well as university education. As a teacher, he felt that his contributions were confined to the walls of his classroom. On the other hand, by addressing other ELT practitioners, he was able to spread his ideas to his audience but also to their students, triggering a chain reaction which could influence far more people in the ELT world.

> When you have a classroom of say 20 students and you have a whole year with them. You can only touch as many hearts and brains. When you're dealing with teachers, imagine there are 10 sitting in your session. Then they go and they have 20 students, so it becomes 200 students. (Interview)

Hasan was not only concerned with the number of teachers and students he could reach, but also with the sustainability and durability of the impact. He described his role as teacher educator as "planting ideas" and, in the process, creating his own "legacy", his own mark. With an increased and more long-lasting impact, comes more responsibility which exerted a lot of pressure on Hasan. He felt it most when working with pre-service teachers who he perceived as more open to knowledge, but at the same time much more vulnerable and delicate. Although he desired for his work as a teacher educator to inspire a positive change among ELT practitioners, he expressed fear that a wrong decision or even a misguided comment uttered during a training session might set off a chain reaction of unwanted consequences beyond his control.

> It's like throwing a stone into water and this ripple effect can go on forever. That really scares me sometimes. What if I have been sharing something wrong? (Interview)

During the interview, Hasan revealed that he sees himself as a guide and a sharer. The assumption of one of these roles was determined by the level of experience of his audience as well as the level of intimacy they shared. When educating inexperienced teachers, he saw himself as a guide, leading them and mentoring them. However, when dealing with experienced ELT practitioners, Hasan perceived himself as a sharer of ideas, practical activities, and teaching strategies. Transitioning from a mentor to a sharer, allowed Hasan to establish an equal and bidirectional relationship with his audience. His goal was not to "teach", but to create a safe and respectful platform for teachers to not only be inspired, but also inspire him as an educator. He also emphasized the importance of not dismissing his participants' opinion or beliefs about teaching just because they do not align with his own.

> So why should I always say that this is the right thing, and the others are wrong. I think there are always things that we cannot see and that teachers can see from their perspective. (Interview)

Even though Hasan was not teaching English fulltime, his teacher identity played an instrumental role in building confidence as a teacher educator. The skills he acquired while working with students such as the ability to listen and show empathy and care are still actively employed when he conducts training sessions. These abilities allow him to form stronger bonds with the participants of his workshops. The language of care and appreciation was easily perceptible in his training session. He frequently offered reassurance to his participants and even directly thanked them for the effort they devote to their profession. Apart from the abovementioned capabilities formed during his years as a full-time teacher, Hasan's current limited exposure to teaching English was also perceived as a crucial validator in his identity as a teacher educator. The fact that he can test his ideas and practical classroom activities before sharing them in his training sessions boosts his confidence and increases his credibility in the eyes of his participants.

The Case of Maya

Among the participants of this research study Maya was the only teacher educator still teaching in an institutional context. Multiple strong references to classroom practice could be identified both in her interview and the actual training session on effective feedback techniques she delivered to a group of university ELT instructors. She stated that she employs the same techniques in a classroom with her students as well as in a conference hall with a group of experienced ELT practitioners. An example of such strategies might be elicitation, peer-correction and planning a workshop like a communicative lesson. The importance of students was also resonating in the way Maya described her role as teacher educator.

> I do it (teacher training) for the students, not for the teachers. I have seen a lot of teacher-centred lessons which resembled lectures, not communicative classes. Students have no voice, no say in the way they are taught and by educating their teachers, I feel like I am representing them, advocating for them to get them a higher quality of education. (Interview)

Maya described herself as a "collector of ideas". She believed that by researching and collecting engaging classroom activities as well as strategies to combat typical classroom problems, she could provide her participants with a ready-made "package" they could open and immediately use in their teaching practice. This was also evident in her training session which she concluded by providing her audience with a practical checklist entitled: "Do's and don'ts of effective feedback".

Maya stated that her personality is a powerful factor in her identity as a teacher educator. She stated that she behaves in exactly the same manner during her workshops, in her classroom and in her private life. She described herself as outgoing, outspoken, and energetic. At the same time, she was aware of the negative impact her impatience has on her career as teacher educator as well as language teacher.

> I am who I am, I can tweak it a little bit depending on my audience, but I can't change it. For example, I hate to wait and sometimes I need to force myself to keep quiet and wait patiently for a teacher to respond. Sometimes I catch myself finishing their sentences for them and it doesn't leave a good impression. (Interview)

Maya felt that being a teacher educator required her to continually educate herself. Self-study was perceived by her as a salient building block of teacher education. She reflected on her successes and failures as an ELT teacher as a way of gaining a better understanding of the fundamentals of language teaching. She attributed more value to self-reflection than to the study of theoretical knowledge and extant research on ELT methodology. Her reluctance to rely on theory was also based on her aspiration to equip her participants with ready-to-use ideas and solutions. To her mind, overreliance on theory created unnecessary distance and detachment from classroom practice. The more practical the content of her workshops were, the more immediate impact she felt she could achieve.

The Case of Ahmet

In his work as a teacher educator, Ahmet is guided by a negative perception of the quality of English language education in Turkey and a strong urge to rid the current educational system of an outdated, teacher-centred approach to ELT. In an attempt to familiarize local teachers with genuinely communicative and student-focused practices, he positioned himself as a "bridge" between the international world of ELT with its acclaimed and renowned teacher trainers and Turkish ELT practitioners.

> I'm trying to be a bridge between the other trainers and the teachers. Sometimes I collect different things, activities, ideas from the other trainers, put them together, I add my own taste to them and deliver them to the teachers who don't have access to training sessions. (Interview)

Ahmet felt that his extroverted personality was a critical factor in developing his teacher educator identity. He believed that this trait of character awarded him with a heightened emotional intelligence and the ability to "read" his audience and establish a meaningful connection with them. The attempts he made at forming such a connection were evident in his training session, in particular in the way he accentuated the shared classroom experience and his appreciation for his participants' work. Even though he had stopped actively teaching prior to his training session and was, therefore, detached from the actual classroom context, he chose to use the pronoun "we" instead of "you" when discussing the teaching profession.

The sense of responsibility expressed by Hasan was echoed in Ahmet's interview. Like Hasan, Ahmet also emphasized the carefulness and meticulous attention to detail required in his career as a teacher educator. With time, he was able to develop his own

strategies of mitigating potential risks and their unwelcome consequences. One of such strategies was to soften a direct comment by suggesting an alternative perspective rather than imposing it on his participants. For example, in his online session he asked his audience to give examples of the benefits of mindfulness for teachers. When one of the participants gave an example referring to students, he thanked her for the example and moved on instead of questioning her statement.

In parallel with Maya's preference of practice over theory, Ahmet expressed a belief that practical content should take precedence over the theory of ELT methodology. He traced this conviction back to his own education as a teacher. As a graduate of literature, he lacked theoretical grounding and turned to practical ELT experience as a means of shaping his teacher educator identity. As an enthusiastic proponent of experiential learning, Ahmet stresses the vitality of prioritizing "doing" over "talking". Consequently, instead of describing several mindfulness techniques, he asked his audience to do them during the training (e.g., deep breathing).

> Once we get into practice, they start enjoying the activities and I specifically choose the activities that are fun for the teachers. It gives them a feeling of being a student again. Once they have gone through this phase they say: "Aha, I have learned something". (Interview)

Discussion

The Desire to Make an Impact

All participants expressed an aspiration to make an impact through their work as teacher educators, although the extent and directionality of the impact differed among the participants of this study. Their desire to inspire the audience was also a strong motivating factor among teacher educators in McGregor's (2010) study. His participants used a metaphor of a light bulb to convey the enlightening impact they would like to have on their students. In the case of Ahmet, the impact he was hoping to spread was directed at the "fossilized" educational beliefs cultivated by some Turkish ELT practitioners. The extent of his desired impact was also the greatest among the participants encapsulating the whole educational system in his country. An emphasis on novelty in language education and a desire to bridge the perceived gap discrepancy between the modern ELT world and what is being done in Turkish classrooms were motivational factors shaping Ahmet's teacher educator identity. Hasan's desire to make an impact was also concentrated on classroom practice, but he also hoped to ignite or reignite the love of teaching among his participants. He hoped to direct his impact at inexperienced, pre-service teachers who had very limited practical experience in ELT to mould a new generation of

communicative English teachers. The desire to touch and shape a student's life is a powerful motivator for many teacher educators, especially those working with pre-service teachers. Newberry (2014) recalled the feeling of exhilaration she felt when her pre-service student described their interactions as life-changing. On the other end of the spectrum, Maya focused on exerting impact in actual classrooms by providing ELT practitioners with teaching strategies toolkits. Consequently, her motivation was not necessarily to change Turkish teachers' fundamental beliefs about language education, but rather to trigger immediate, minor changes in their practice to benefit their students.

The motivation of Hasan and Ahmet who, in their careers as teacher educators, have worked with pre-service teachers is also a salient factor in a number of studies on teacher educators in higher-education institutions (Fulton, 1996; Halsey, 1992; Murray et al., 2011). Many teacher educators consider themselves to be "gatekeepers" to the teaching profession and feel responsible for creating a "new generation of good teachers" (Murray et al., 2011). The fact that Maya does not share the same motivation can be explained by the fact that she has never interacted with pre-service teachers, so the role of a "gatekeeper" has never been accessible to her.

The Interplay of Identities: Teacher and Teacher Educator

Although to a varied extent, the teacher identity was still present and coexisting with the teacher educator identity in all participants of the study. In the case of Maya, her teacher identity was so strong that it even overshadowed and dominated her teacher educator identity. Referring to participants of her workshops as "students", reliance on classroom techniques and strategies such as peer correction and elicitation during her workshops or even describing the process of planning a workshop as almost identical to lesson planning are all tellsigns of how active her teacher identity is in her teacher educator career. The disproportion between her tenure as a teacher (10 years and still active) and teacher educator (2 years) can serve as an explanation of this phenomenon. Murray et al. (2011) suggested that, particularly in the case of novice teacher educators, the distinction between their well-established teacher identity and teacher educator identity is blurred. Consequently, such educators can transfer their ingrained behaviours and developed strategies into their new careers. Retracting towards her teacher identity was a strategy Maya developed to compensate for her limited experience in teacher education. Similarly, Field (2012) observed that novice teacher educators display a proclivity for staying in their safe zone and "cling to the tried and tested" (p. 823). Ahmet and Hasan absorbed their pedagogical beliefs such as the essential role of movement and fun and empathy into their training sessions.

The experiences of the participants of the study are evident of what has previously been established about the way our past and present identities are connected (Harrison & McKeon, 2008). The teacher identity is still active even among teacher educators who

are no longer involved in teaching English in classrooms. For example, teacher educators at an English university continued to capitalize on their teaching experience and cherished it as one of the fundamental building blocks of their teacher educator identity (Murray et al., 2011). Just as Hasan takes advantage of his teaching experience to build relationships with his audience, the teacher educators in Murray's study used their prior teaching experience to "convey a sense of shared identities with their students" (2011, p. 265). In parallel to Maya's case, for many teacher educators the attachment and the influence of their teacher identity is still so strong that it can even dominate over their new identity of teacher educators (Murray & Male, 2005). The reliance on classroom teaching experience is also reinforced by external factors such as an official requirement in many educational institutions for teacher educators to have teaching experience (Murray et al., 2011).

The Influence of Self-Attributed Roles

One point of similarity among all participants of this research study was their self-identification as collectors of ideas. They perceived their role as gathering ideas and best practice models from three primary sources including their ELT experience, workshops of other teacher educators that have participated in as well as interactions with their participants during their own training sessions. Assuming the role of a "collector" by teacher educators was also documented in a study of English university teacher educators who described their mission as "bringing pieces together to construct something new and helpful" (McGregor et al., 2010, p.179).

While all teacher educators who participated in this study expressed empathy and a sense of care they felt for their participants, the role of "carer" was most pronounced in Hasan. The study conducted by Murray et al. (2011) revealed that teacher educators transfer the nurturing and caring relationship they used to have with their students, especially young learners, into their new teacher educator identity. The pastoral role adopted by Hasan might explain why, whereas all participants manifested a sense of responsibility over their students, in the case of Hasan, this sense of weighty responsibility triggered feelings of self-doubt. Whereas Maya and Ahmet positioned themselves as "bridges" between information they gathered and classroom teachers, Hasan's self-identification as a guide and "carer" placed him in a closer and more intimate position with respect to his participants. It can be speculated that this is the reason why the feeling of self-doubt and the fear of making a mistake affected him more than the other participants, the emotions which are quite common among teacher educators (Murray & Male, 2005).

The roles the participants attributed to themselves had a direct impact on how they perceived their relationship with the audience in their workshops. Ahmet and Maya referred to their participants as students which allowed them to establish connection with their participants while still maintaining a degree of distance. On the other hand, Hasan did not view his participants as students, but as partners. Although it allowed

him to form close bonds with his audience, it also made it more challenging for him to assert his point of view. Whatever role they attributed to their audience, Maya, Hasan and Ahmet turned to their participants for validation of their teacher educator identity. Cohen et al. (2008) emphasized that others' perceptions of our actions influence the way we construct our identity. Similarly to the participants of this study, teacher educators in McGregor's research (2010) were also able to appreciate the bidirectionality of interactions with their students with educators and their audience learning from each other. Through their communication with their audience, teacher educators form small-scale communities of learning (Alsup, 2006). A considerable part of teacher educators' identity is, therefore, developed based on how teacher educators interpret their audience's reactions and responses to them (Clarke, 2009). This process of self-verification through direct or indirect feedback is particularly important for those teacher educators whose identity is at the early stages of development (Burke & Stets, 1999).

Self-Reflection as a Way of Refining the Teacher Educator Identity

As professional teacher educators, Maya, Ahmet, and Hasan are presented with a rare opportunity of repeating their workshops multiple times in front of different audiences. All participants of the study agreed that the refinement of their content and delivery style through repetition is a factor that reinforces their teacher educator identities, increases their confidence in their skills and allows them to develop themselves and their skills. The benefits of self-reflection cannot be disputed, but its negative consequences should also be acknowledged, especially on those teacher educators who already struggle with self-doubt and feelings of inadequacy. Self-reflection and self-evaluation are a systematic, time-consuming process (Bullock, 2009). The heavy physical toll of extensive self-reflection and self-evaluation of one's performance was very prominent in the case of Hasan who even reported having sleepless nights spent dwelling on his performance as a teacher educator.

Self-reflection is considered to be one of the intrinsic conditions for learning and professional development (Haamer et al., 2012; Williams & Power, 2010). It also allows teacher educators to shape and reshape their identity (Murray & Male, 2005). At the same time, Samaras (2002) argues that reflection should be a collaborative process with members of a professional community challenging each other's routinized practices. In the case of Hasan, transforming reflection into a collaborative activity performed within his community of practice can be instrumental in reducing the amount of stress and emotional tension he experiences.

The Role of Community in Developing Teacher Educator Identity

Thanks to the fact that Hasan and Ahmet worked in a close-knit group of teacher educators they could reap the benefits of mutual support and cooperation within their

educational institution. Cohen et al. (2008) observed that positioning one's actions and beliefs against those of other members of a professional community is an essential condition for learning and development. Similarly, Hussein (2007) underlines the importance of collaboration and support in developing and sustaining a teacher educator identity. However, belonging to a professional community can also impede the development of some teacher educators, especially those who wrestle with self-doubt and lack of confidence. Such teachers might be tempted to imitate more experienced colleagues without making an effort to understand the rationale behind their mentors' actions (Newberry, 2014). This was not the case with the participants of this study. Even though Hasan and Ahmet spoke highly about their colleagues and internationally renowned teacher trainers, they still sifted the models they observed through the lens of their personal pedagogy.

Working independently, Maya was not able to receive support from her community. The strategy she developed to compensate for the absence of support from other teacher educators was to turn to the community she was a member of, other ELT practitioners at her school. Even though her colleagues did not share the same professional experience, Maya still felt a need to consult and collaborate, proving the importance of "the collectives we belong to in the process of identity development" (Pinnegar & Murphy, 2011).

Tensions Between Personality and the Teacher Educator Identity

The relationship between the participants' "self" and their teacher educator identity was another point of dissimilarity between them. Ahmet reported that his extrovert and confident personality allowed him to perform the duties of a teacher educator with more ease and higher effectiveness. Similarly, Maya talked about how her energetic and outgoing personality helps her to create a rapport with her audience. On the other side of the spectrum, Hasan's proclivity for engaging in self-doubt and his perceived lack of assertiveness made it more difficult for him to interact with experienced in-service teachers because he felt their rich practical classroom experience gave them more credibility in the sessions than his own teaching experience. In order to compensate for it, Hasan devised a number of strategies including doing extensive reading and self-study before his workshops as well as distancing himself from the teacher-student relationship adopted by Maya and Ahmet. Intensive self-study sessions facilitated the creation of "safe-zones" he felt comfortable discussing with experienced ELT practitioners. He felt he could use the theoretical knowledge he accumulated to better assert himself in discussions with his participants. Nevertheless, this strategy was not completely fool proof since it allowed him to decrease the tensions between his personality and teacher educator identity but not eradicate them. As Murphy and Pinnegar (2011) emphasized, even if our identities are reshaped, we never become completely different people. Experiencing stress and self-doubt is a common symptom of misaligned identities among teacher educators (Izadinia, 2014;

Wood & Borg, 2010). Despite years of experience and a supportive professional community, teacher educators can still struggle with feelings of inadequacy, but it is much more common among novice educators (Field, 2012). For some teacher educators these feelings are so crippling that they refuse to even consider themselves as teacher educators and introduce themselves as school teachers working in a new sector (Izadinia, 2014). The case of Hasan proved that a new identity cannot be fully developed if it is in a state of conflict with past identities and the "substantial self" (Southworth,1995).

Conclusions

The purpose of this research study was to explore how three Turkish teacher educators perceive their teacher educator identity and how it interacts with the identities of "self", teacher, and researcher. The first research question posed by the researchers aimed to explore how the participants perceived their teacher educator identities. It was revealed that the participants self-assigned a wide array of roles ranging from the nurturing role of a guide to a practice-oriented facilitator of knowledge. Pertaining to the factors which played a significant role in the process of identity development, the researchers observed that the participants' prior teaching experience and particular aspects of their personality such as an inclination to engage in self-doubt, extroversion and empathy were instrumental in the process. The participants' teacher identities manifested themselves mainly in the workshop design stage whilst their identities of "self" were dominant during the interactions with their audience and in the post-workshop reflection stage. The final area the researchers explored was the participants' use of coping strategies. It was observed that teaching experience was drawn upon in order to strengthen the participants' teacher educator identities and increase their credibility as teacher trainers. Other strategies involved engaging in self-reflection on one's performance, as well as activating personality traits developed in the participants' professional and personal lives such as empathy and outgoingness.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

The researchers identified several limitations to the current study. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all the observed sessions were conducted online. At this point it is difficult to gauge how much of an influence this fact had on the way the participants conducted their workshops. What is more, only one training session was observed for each participant and expanding the observation element in the data collection to several sessions could increase the validity of the findings. Finally, since only one of the participants was a freelance teacher educator, the inquiry into the impact of the lack of professional community in shaping teacher educator identity could benefit from further studies

to confirm if the strategies employed by the participant are shared by other freelance teacher educators. Researchers interested in exploring the formation and the development of teacher educator identity can also add to the existing knowledge of this issue by conducting studies with a longitudinal design. Extending the data collection process can grant a deeper insight into the transformational processes of acquiring, mediating, and strengthening of teacher educator identity.

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Kalbų mokytojo-ugdytojo tapatumo suvokimo tyrimas: trijų anglų kalbos mokytojų-ugdytojų atvejo analizė

Magdalena Keskin[1], **Gökhan Öztürk**[2]

[1] Bursos technikos universitetas, Mimar Sinan miestelis, Bursa, TUR-16310 Turkija, magdalena.keskin@btu.edu.tr
[2] Anadolu universitetas, Yunus Emre miestelis, Eskišehiras, TUR-26470 Turkija, gokhanozturk250@anadolu.edu.tr

Santrauka

Kalbų mokytojo-ugdytojo tapatumas susijęs su kitų mokytojų-ugdytojų tapatumu, todėl tyrinėjama tai, ką jie daro ir kaip jie jaučiasi atlikdami savo, kaip mokytojų ir ugdytojų, vaidmenį (Barkhuizen, 2021). Atsižvelgiant į tai, šių kelių atvejų tyrimo tikslas yra dvejopas: a) ištirti, kaip tyrimo dalyviai suvokia savo, kaip kalbos mokytojo-ugdytojo, tapatumą ir su juo susijusius konkrečius elgesio modelius; b) nustatyti veiksnius, kurie prisideda prie mokytojo-ugdytojo tapatumo formavimosi. Tyrime dalyvavo trys anglų kalbos mokytojai-ugdytojai, dirbantys

Turkijos mokyklose, o duomenys iš jų buvo renkami atliekant giluminius interviu ir stebint praktinį mokymą. Tyrimo rezultatai atskleidė, kad noras daryti įtaką yra motyvuojantis veiksnys, formuojantis tyrimo dalyvių, kalbų mokytojų-ugdytojų, tapatumą, o savirefleksija vaidina lemiamą vaidmenį jo raidai. Nustatyta, kad tyrimo dalyvių mokytojo tapatumas vis dar išlieka aktyvus, tačiau skiriasi jo pasireiškimo laipsnis ir būdai. Galiausiai tyrimas atskleidė keletą strategijų, kurias tyrimo dalyviai taikė siekdami sumažinti įtampą tarp mokytojo tapatumo, mokytojo-ugdytojo tapatumo ir asmenybės.

Esminiai žodžiai: *kalbų mokytojo-ugdytojo tapatumas, kalbų mokytojų rengimas, anglų kalbos mokymas.*

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