

Investigating Teachers' Identity Development in a Hybrid Course to

Prepare Online Teachers

by

Syeda Farzana Hafsa

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctorate of Philosophy

Supervised by Professor Raffaella Borasi

Education

Warner School of Education

University of Rochester

Rochester, NY

2019

Dedication

For my mother Suraiya Begum.

All my achievements are because of you and for you.

In loving memory of

My Aunt Mahbuba Begum Dolly

Sculptor and Freedom Fighter Ferdousy Priyabhashini

Table of Contents

Biographical Sketch	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Abstract	xi
Contributors and Funding Sources	xiii
List of Tables	xiv
List of Figures	xv
List of Abbreviations	xvi
Chapter 1: Overview of the Study	1
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Its Implications	17
Chapter 3: Literature Review	33
Chapter 4: Study Design	60
Chapter 5: Individual Cases	84
A. Ren	89
B. Lupin	129
C. Tulip	169
D. Peony	207
E. Laurel	244
F. Iris	284
G. Lilac	324
Chapter 6: Cross-Case Analysis	363
Chapter 7: Implications and Conclusions	411

References	445
Appendices	450

Biographical Sketch

The author was born in Mymensingh, Bangladesh. She attended the University of Dhaka and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) degree in English Literature in 2001. She also received her Master of Arts degree in English Literature from the same institution in 2003. She received an Advanced Certificate in Online Teaching and Learning from Warner School of Education in 2017. She was awarded the Scandling Scholarship to pursue her doctoral study at Warner School. She received a Fulbright FLTA scholarship in 2007/2008 and taught Bengali at NC State University and at UNC, Chapel Hill. She also won the Fulbright Alumni Project Grant Competition for 2009/2010 together with a colleague. She has over 15 years of foreign language teaching experience in the US and in Bangladesh. She has taught courses at Warner School of Education as an Adjunct Instructor and has worked as a Writing Consultant at the Warner Writing Support Services for five years. She has also worked as a Graduate Community Assistant at the University of Rochester. She has served as the Vice President of the Warner Graduate Student Association as well. Prior to coming to the US she was an Assistant Professor in English at American International University- Bangladesh. Her other work experience includes teaching at an English medium school and working as a Research Associate at an NGO. As a life member of Bangladesh English Language Teachers' Association (BELTA), she has served on the Executive Committee for six years and has served as a Publication Secretary for two years. She has diverse volunteering experience at different organizations in the US and in Bangladesh, including Wilmot Cancer Center at Strong Memorial Hospital, and Science STARS Project at East High School.

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to convey my heartfelt thanks to my advisor Dr. Raffaella Borasi who believed in me, mentored, guided and supported me in every way possible. Her commitment, knowledge and hard work were an endless source of motivation and inspiration for me. She has always been accessible and available for me. The things I have learned from her are invaluable treasures for me. The endless time she gave me, all the encouraging words she said and the enormous constructive feedback she offered me are priceless. I will make every effort to make you proud, Dr. Borasi.

My committee member and my teacher Dr. Kevin Meuwissen has been my mentor and guide since the beginning of my days at Warner School. I am thankful to him for being available, for listening to me, for guiding me with critical questions and feedback and for all his time. Being in the class of this outstanding teacher was one of the highlights of my Warner experience. My committee member Dr. Tobie Olsan has been extremely encouraging, supportive, and has provided me important guidance with critical insights, triggering questions, and clarifications— thank you Dr. Olsan, for your support.

I am forever thankful to my wonderful study participants Ren, Lupin, Tulip, Peony, Laurel, Iris, and Lilac – first of all, for agreeing to participate in my study, and for their precious time, flexibility, patience, encouragement, appreciation and amazing support all the way. I want you all to know that I could not do it without your support.

My years at Warner School of Education at U of R enabled me to learn invaluable things about theories, pedagogies, research, methodologies, best practices, mentoring, assessment, feedback and much more. This was possible because of a group of incredible

teachers who believe in the power of education, equality and reform. I am infinitely thankful to my teachers Dr. David Miller, Dr. Joanne Larson, Dr. Nancy Ares, Dr. Mary Jane Curry, Dr. Karen DeAngeles, Dr. April Luehmann, Dr. Eric Frederickson, Dr. Lisa Brown, Dr. Nathan Harris, Dr. Logan Hazen, Dr. Bette London and Ms. Nancy Swisher from NC State University. You have made me a better teacher, a better researcher, a more critical thinker, and a better human being. You have showed me how to value and respect others, appreciate diversity, make an inclusive environment, fight for equality, and how to be an advocate for the causes one believes in.

I am fortunate to have a family who never said “no” to the things I wanted to do, and a mother who always encouraged me to pursue my dreams though she was often unable to provide me with the means to do it, being a single mother. But she stood there all alone by us and worked extremely hard for us to survive. Seeing this strong lady with a soft heart, I learned to dream big, stay focused and work hard to reach my goals. With the patience I inherited from her, I persisted, though it was never easy. It is my mother Suraiya Begum whose sacrifice has made it possible for me to come all this way. I do not know how to thank you amma, for everything you have done for me. I love you.

I am thankful to my two nieces who were born in my absence, met me only twice but have filled my life with love and a new purpose. Suhina, Manha and (the new addition) Nihan, you will always be my source of inspiration to make the journeys of life. I am thankful to my two brothers, Sadi and Sunny, who have loved me and supported me always in all my endeavors. I know how proud they are of me. I would like to thank my sisters-in-law Mitu and Saima who have always wished me good and supported me

whenever needed. My deepest gratitude and thanks to my Aunt Mursheda Begum who has always loved me as her own daughter and to my Uncle Md. Anwarul Haque for his amazing support.

My dearest friend Dr. Yen Verhoeven believed in me when I stopped believing in myself. I am here today because of her and I do not have words to thank her, but I am sure she knows how grateful I am for having her as my friend and guide who has always been there for me. I am fortunate to have you as my friend, dear Yen.

I am standing here today because there are some incredible people who have lent me their support, guidance, affection and care. I am eternally thankful to Dr. ABM Nasir who helped me in many ways to make it possible to join the program, continue and complete the degree. I am thankful to Dr. Hosne Ara Mridha for always encouraging me, motivating me and for being a good listener. I would like to thank Neil Auroni for his love and for all the telephone conversations especially whenever life was hard.

I am grateful and thankful for the friendship and support of my exceptional friend Suhani Sanwar, who has been and, I know, will always be there for me. Your words of wisdom, good wishes, care and love have been my assets for many years. I would like to convey my sincere gratitude for the friendship and care of my friends Dr. Iftekhar Naim, Shantonu Hossain, Ashker Ibne Mujib, Talat Jabeen, and Mehrin Tariq. Iftekhar, you have been a great study partner and most amazing source of inspiration. Your support was priceless for my PhD journey. Shantonu, your friendship and love helped me walk a long way. Though you live far away, you have always been there for me and you are close to my heart. I will never forget your support, encouragements and wonderful care.

Talat, you have been my family, my buddy for all these years. You cared for me, checked on me, supported me, and encouraged me every way possible. You made my lonely Rochester days happy, lively and colorful. Ashker, I have always wished you were my brother; and I do consider you my brother who I call for almost every little thing. Words will fall short to tell you how thankful I am for everything you have done for me. Mehrin, you have been my youngest buddy here, always ready to listen to me. We made so many good memories together as family. Thank you for all your support, care and love.

I am thankful to Dr. Marcy Berger and Dr. Shufang Dong for their friendship, care and support both academic and non-academic. You gave me your precious time, valued me and taught me many things. I am thankful to my dear friend Sule Yilmaz for being there for me, for encouraging me, supporting me and believing in me. My heartfelt thanks to my friend Dr. Alicia Van Borssum who has supported me in many ways, encouraged me and valued me. I am thankful to another great friend Thomastine Sarchet-Maher who cared for, supported and valued me. I would like to thank Dr. Yanti Sri Rezeki for being an amazing friend who made my PhD journey enjoyable.

Parvin Shimu, thank you for your friendship, support, love and hospitality. Tarana Tithi, thanks a lot for your care and for everything you have done for me. I am thankful for your friendship, support, and your efforts to make my journey easy, Nafisa Alam. I would like to thank my dear Mahmuda Akter aunty, who was like my mom in Rochester, for all her love and care. Many thanks to Shajia Khan for her precious friendship and best wishes. I am thankful to my dear Noorjahan aunty for her love, care, support and friendship over the years. I am also thankful to Arafat Jahan Kastury for all the love, care

and hospitality. Thank you so much, Saikat and Somjit for everything you have done for me.

I would like to thank my best friends Lucky and Shawon for being my friends for decades, for being there for me always, for all the love, care, support and good wishes. Knowing you two are there for me is the greatest comfort to make any journey easier. I am also thankful to Bipul bhai for all his support and time. My heartfelt thanks to my wonderful friends Shama (apu), Shahira, Rehnuma, Liana, Shamsi, and Hena who have made my life meaningful, whose love and care are always with me no matter where I am. I am thankful to Momataj Begum apa for her amazing support and best wishes.

How can I forget the most amazing and supportive Warner School staff who were always there to make my academic life comfortable, easy and enjoyable! I would like to take the opportunity to thank Laura Brophy, Crys Cassano, Pamela Black-Colton, Constance Flahive, Lynne Kirst, David Garcia, Kosala Jayawardhane, Bishesh Srestha, Kim Kopatz, Claire Urbanowicz, Christine Ghinazi, Christopher Penders, Kristine Mager, and Tracy Korts. You are the best!

Abstract

Given the increased number of online courses offered every year across the world, it has become imperative that teacher preparation programs prepare high quality online teachers. Research suggest that teachers' professional identity can greatly affect their self-efficacy, confidence and competence, as well as the curricular and pedagogic decisions they will make. Therefore, it is important that online teacher preparation programs pay attention to *what kind of online teachers* they want their participants to aspire to be, and create learning experiences that support that identity development – above and beyond learning how to use specific digital tools, resources, and online teaching practices.

To contribute to this goal, in my study, I investigated the online teacher identity development of a group of graduate students in the context of a course designed to prepare them to teach online. The aim of my study was to understand what kind of identity the participants developed as online teachers (defined as *what kind of online teachers they aspire to be*), and which course activities most influenced that development, with the ultimate goal of informing the design of courses and programs that can better support novice online teachers' identity development so that they can become more effective online teachers.

This study took place in the context of a specific section of a graduate course preparing online teachers at the Warner School of Education. The study was informed by the following overarching question: *How can we positively affect the identity development of*

novice online teachers? More specifically, I investigated the following research questions in the context of this specific course:

1. What kind of online teacher did each participant aspire to be at the end of the course, and how did it differ from where they started?
2. How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?

Following a case-study methodology, I collected a rich set of data from two rounds of semi-structured interviews, as well as course artifacts such as the syllabus and lesson plans, students' online written work (including reflective journals, discussion boards, lesson plans for online modules, and final reflection papers), and researcher memos. I used qualitative methods to analyze the data, using identity theory as the main theoretical framework.

The findings show that, as a result of this semester-long course, changes did occur in how these novice online teachers perceived online learning and teaching; as well as the values and aspirations they developed for the kind of online teachers each of them wanted to be. The findings also suggest that the course experiences that most affected these participants' identity were: participation in carefully structured *experiences as online learners* and *experiences as online teachers*, accompanied by multiple opportunities for recognition of that participation – from self, from classmates and from the course instructor. Most importantly, the findings indicate that the participants perceived online teacher identity as a component of their overall teacher identity – not as a separate identity.

Contributors and Funding Sources

This work was supported by a dissertation committee consisting of Professors Raffaella Borasi (advisor) and Kevin Meuwissen of the Warner School of Education, University of Rochester and Professor Tobie H. Olsan of the School of Nursing, University of Rochester. All work for this dissertation was completed by the student independently, with the exception of the transcription of the interviews, which was done by Ms. Shirley Graham.

List of Tables

Table 4.1	Overview of data collection and analysis	78
Table 5.1	Pre-interview survey response	88
Table 7.1	Connection between findings and recommendations	439

List of Figures

Figure 7.1:	Factors contributing to online teacher identity	427
-------------	---	-----

List of Abbreviations

DB	Discussion board
ESL	English as a Second Language
FR	Final reflection
F2F	Face-to-face
IR	Initial reflection
OTL	Online teaching learning
PD	Professional development
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
WJ	Weekly journal

Chapter 1: Overview of the Study

The ultimate goal of this dissertation study is to inform the design and implementation of more effective courses and programs to prepare novice online teachers. This is important in today's world because of the increasing demand for online teaching and the recognition that the quality of online learning depends highly on the quality of the design and facilitation of online experiences (Allen & Seaman, 2013; Storandt, Dossin & Lacher, 2012; Sprague, 2006; Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000; Vaill & Testori, 2012; Faulk, 2010; Shea & Bidjerano, 2009; Richardson & Alsup, 2015). Therefore, educational institutions need high quality online instructors, and teacher educators need to learn how to prepare them most effectively. To achieve this goal, my dissertation study focused on how programs preparing online teachers could better support the development of their students' *online teacher identity*. While there are many definitions of *identity* in the literature, for this study I used the term *online teacher identity* to mean essentially *what kind of online teacher one aspires to be*. I used identity theory as the main theoretical framework for the study.

There are many reasons why teacher identity development is an important topic to investigate. It is evident from the literature that how teachers perceive themselves – that is, the kind of teacher they think they are and/or they want to be – impacts their self-efficacy and confidence, what they decide to teach and how, how they evaluate their performances as teachers, and what improvements and trainings they will seek. For example, Beijaard, Verloop and Vermont (2000) argued that “teachers’ perceptions of their own professional identity affect their efficacy and professional development as well

as their ability and willingness to cope with educational changes and to implement innovations in their own teaching practice” (p. 750). Hong’s (2010) study showed that there was a relationship between pre-service and beginning teachers’ perceptions of their professional identity and their decisions to remain in or leave the profession. Han (2017) argued that, to develop a “comprehensive and feasible curriculum, consideration of the teachers’ professional identity and its meaning systems is essential in curriculum design as well as implementation process” (p. 566). Beijgaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) also explicitly pointed out the relevance of identity development for teacher preparation as they contended “research on teachers’ professional identity formation is seen as relevant to teacher educators and mentors in schools in order to better understand and conceptualize the support student teachers need” (p. 109).

Research on online teacher identity development is still very limited, and few online teacher preparation programs today explicitly consider this important component. To address this gap, my dissertation study investigated the identity development of participants in a semester-long graduate course preparing online teachers, the design of which was informed by identity theory principles. Using artifacts from the course, as well as interview data, I first identified what kind of online teacher each of my participants aspired to be by the end of the course and how this changed from the beginning of the semester. I also investigated how key activities in the course influenced my participants’ identity development. I used this information to both create individual case studies for each participant and to identify commonalities and differences through a cross-case analysis.

Findings from this dissertation study are intended to help us design and implement more effective courses and programs to prepare high quality online teachers. Therefore, it is my hope that this dissertation study will benefit teachers, teacher educators, course designers, and eventually the students taking their courses.

Terms Used in the Study

Since the term “online” has been used with different meanings in the literature, I would like to first state how it is interpreted in this study. I used the definitions provided by Allen and Seaman (2014) of *traditional course* as one requiring regular face-to-face meeting between the teachers and students within a classroom setting in a campus (including web facilitated courses), *fully online course* as “a course where most or all of the content is delivered online” and which “typically have no face-to-face meetings,” and *blended or hybrid course* as a “course that blends online and face-to-face delivery” where a “substantial proportion of the content is delivered online” (p. 6). I used the term *online course* in this study to mean both fully online and blended courses. Consistently, I used the term *traditional teacher* to mean a teacher who only teaches face-to-face (F2F) courses in a college or university, and *online teacher* to mean a teacher who teaches or intends to teach online courses (including fully online and hybrid courses).

Rationale for This Study

Why is the Preparation of Online Teachers Important? Views from the Field

Online teaching and learning is growing and evolving quickly in our current world of communication and technology (Faulk, 2010; Shea & Bidjerano, 2009; Storandt, Dossin & Lacher, 2012; Richardson & Alsup, 2015), and so is the need for high-quality

online instructors. Allen and Seaman's (2013) study on more than 2,800 colleges and universities reported that 6.7 million students were taking at least one online course in the United States. Baxter (2012) reported that there were 2,800 higher education courses offered online in the UK, and the number is continuing to increase – thus requiring an increasing number of competent online teachers. Vaill and Testori (2012) argued that “quality faculty development is critical to the success of online programs and online students” (p. 112). Therefore, with the growth of online education, it is imperative that higher education institutions provide high quality teacher preparation programs for online teachers (Storandt, Dossin & Lacher, 2012; Sprague, 2006; Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000).

Allen and Seaman (2011) reported that there was more training available for online teachers than traditional teachers in higher education, as 72% of online teachers got training in online teaching, compared to 34% of face-to-face teachers. Faulk (2010) posited that, though programs to prepare online teachers were growing, the empirical research on the quality of such programs and courses remained limited. Meyer (2014) called for more research on how teachers actually learn to teach online, and how they experience online teaching, as it could provide “perspectives that can inform how faculty development programs can be designed to achieve their goals” (p. 95).

Why is the Preparation of Online Teachers Important? Personal Perspective

My research is also very important for me personally. I believe that online education has great potential for Bangladesh (where I am from), especially with the recent boom of private universities. Distance education is offered by several public and

private institutions in Bangladesh, including Bangladesh Open University. There are also many teachers who take online courses through study abroad and through the US Consulate in Bangladesh, which offers scholarships for online courses from universities like the University of Oregon. Other private universities, including the university in which I worked, have certain online instructional elements but do not yet offer online courses as to my knowledge.

My three visits home from the US have helped me understand the changes in the education sector and the potentials much more clearly. People in Bangladesh are very enthusiastic about the Internet, which is readily available now, and the government is supporting the development of telecommunication. There are platforms like www.shikkhok.com, a free website conceived and designed by a Bangladeshi professor at University of Alabama at Birmingham, which offers free online courses to teachers and students. Another project in Bangladesh called English in Action, which is funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), offers internet, television, and print-based education to teachers and students across the country (<https://www.eiabd.com>). Also, there are Facebook and other social media based online learning platforms in Bangladesh that offer free classes to learners. The success of these initiatives has demonstrated the potential of online courses for aspiring learners in Bangladesh. Therefore, with the help of my wide network of teachers, colleagues, and friends, I would like to promote formal online learning in educational institutions in Bangladesh. For that, first of all, higher education institutions would need high quality courses to prepare online teachers.

My interest in the preparation of online teachers, and their identity development in particular, also comes from realizing that many people in Bangladesh, as well as the US, still have negative impressions about online education. Sometime this is because of prior negative experiences with online courses, but more often it is because of a lack of knowledge and experience. When I took my first course on teaching online at the Warner School, I knew little about online teaching but was curious to better understand its affordances and limitations. Soon, I started to realize that online contexts offer great potential for teacher learning and teacher education, and my view was affirmed by the scholarship we read and discussed in the course. As a result of taking this specific course, my beliefs about online learning and teaching changed significantly, as I developed a new appreciation for the affordances and contexts of online learning, and for the kinds of online teaching practices linked with effective learning. These beliefs, in turn, shaped the kind of online teacher I wanted to be – in other words, my identity as an online teacher. I feel that this change in identity was most influential to my future practice as an online teacher, as it would inform all of my instructional decisions. This is why I decided to investigate online teachers' identity development for my dissertation.

Identity Theory as a Lens

This dissertation draws upon identity theory as a primary theoretical framework. As discussed in more detail in Chapter 2, many scholars have argued that learning is more than acquiring a set of knowledge and skills, and in fact any learning is connected with identity development (Gee, 2000-2001). In the field of teacher education, in

particular, there is growing appreciation of how *the kind of teacher one aspires to be* will affect one's instructional decisions and practices.

My study was especially influenced by Gee's definition of identity as *being recognized by self and others as a certain kind of person* and his notion that identity is developed through *participation* in activities and discourse within a specific community, as well as *recognition* of that participation by self and by others (Gee, 2000-2001). This is consistent with Wenger's (1998) position that to develop an identity, individuals have to participate in communities of practice and this participation has to be reified. It is also consistent with Danielewicz's (2001) statement that identity encompasses how we understand ourselves and how others understand us. There is consensus in the literature that individuals can hold multiple identities, and that identities may change over time as new identities are constructed and reconstructed in various contexts (Richardson & Alsup, 2015).

As documented in Chapter 3, there is a substantial amount of literature on teachers' identity development – although there is less research specific to online teacher identity (Richardson & Alsup, 2015). How teachers perceive themselves as teachers and how they identify themselves within a social and environmental system of teaching contributes to their confidence as educators, which is important for their and their learners' success. Teacher identity also impacts their motivation and instructional decisions (Nykivist & Mukherjee, 2016) and the depth of their participation in the teaching profession and its standards and practices (Hammerness et al., 2005). These findings are especially crucial to novice teachers, who often enter the profession with

already-formed views of what teachers and teaching are like, built through the apprenticeship of observing their own experiences as students (Lortie, 1975). For these reasons, it is important that teacher education programs shape novice teachers' dispositions, knowledge, and social practices – and thus, their identities.

Research Design

Given the importance of teacher identity development, I was interested in the following overarching question for my dissertation study:

How can we positively affect the identity development of novice online teachers?

To investigate this question, I focused on the experiences of novice online teachers who took a foundational course in online teaching and learning within a graduate-level teacher education program. This hybrid, three-credit graduate course is the first of a two-course sequence designed to prepare online teachers, and is offered at the University of Rochester's Warner School of Education as part of its advanced certificate program in online education.

I chose this context for my study because this course was designed with the explicit goal of supporting the development of a "certain kind of online teacher," and because it had a transformational effect on my own identity as an online teacher. Informed by identity theory, the course includes carefully designed sequences of experiences as an online student and an online teacher intended to provide participants with rich opportunities to participate in activities and recognize that participation (Gee, 2000-2001).

I studied the identity development of the participants in a section of the course for which I was a Teaching Assistant. There were a total of eight students from diverse backgrounds who took the course. Given the small number of students, I planned to include as participants all who agreed to be a part of this study; and all but one of the students agreed to do so.

The seven participants – to whom I gave names of flowers as pseudonyms – presented some interesting differences in background, pedagogical training, teaching experience, field of study, gender, age and nationality. They included:

- A. Ren – a counselor and future counselor educator, with no formal training in teaching;
- B. Lupin – a college administrator and doctoral student in human development, with limited in-service teacher training and some experience teaching higher education courses;
- C. Tulip – an international student from China learning to become a TESOL teacher;
- D. Peony – another international student from China, with two years of TESOL teaching experience;
- E. Laurel – an experienced international TESOL teacher with ten years of teaching experience in a European country;
- F. Iris – a veteran special education teacher with over 20 years of experience in K-12 US schools; and
- G. Lilac – a veteran TESOL teacher and currently an instructional coach, with over 20 years of teaching experience in K-12 US schools.

I investigated the following research questions with all seven of these participants:

1. *What kind of online teacher did each participant aspire to be at the end of the course, and how did it differ from where they started?*
2. *How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?*

I adopted a case study approach (Yin, 2014) to address the research questions articulated above, using each course participant as a unit of analysis. Then, I conducted a cross-case analysis. My data set came from the following sources:

1. The course syllabus and instructor's detailed lesson plans;
2. Written work produced by students in the course, including several individual assignments, online discussions, reflective journals at the end of each module, plans for two online learning modules (a group project and an individual project), and most importantly, a final reflection on what they learned in the course;
3. Transcripts of semi-structured interviews with students who agree to participate in the study after they completed the course. I interviewed each participant in the study twice: once after an initial analysis of the artifacts collected from the course, and a second time as a "subject check" to verify the claims and findings I generated through my initial analysis and to ask follow-up questions for further details; and
4. Analytical memos written by the researcher to capture insights and questions throughout the study.

Preview of Key Findings

As a preview, below I have highlighted key findings related to each research question.

Research Question 1:

What kind of online teacher did each participant aspire to be at the end of the course, and how did it differ from where they started?

Online Teacher Identity as a Part of Teacher Identity: As all participants of my study came to see online learning as something they want to capitalize on for all of their students (in ways that are appropriate to specific instructional context and learning goals), they did not develop separate identities as online teachers, but rather expanded their identities as teachers to include what they aspired to be with respect to using online technology in their teaching. This might help explain why none of the participants – including those who were veteran teachers – experienced resistance or tension in developing their online teacher identity in the course.

Widespread Need for “Repair Work”: All but two of the participants came to the course after negative past experiences as learners in online courses; and even the remaining two had developed negative perceptions about online teaching, thus requiring what Gee calls *repair work* as they worked to develop their identities as online teachers. The course offered opportunities to engage in this repair work.

Changes in Perceptions about Developing Relationships with Students

Online: All participants aspired to be the kinds of teachers who develop close relationships with students and were concerned at the beginning of the course about

whether they could achieve this online. They resolved this concern by the end of the course, as everyone was able to identify ways to leverage available online technology to get to know students and maintain rapport and relationships with them.

Changes in Perceptions about the Effectiveness of Online Courses: As they entered the course, most participants believed that online courses could not achieve the same learning outcomes as face-to-face courses – and they articulated this as a core concern, given their aspirations for powerful and effective student learning. They also resolved this concern by the end of the course, since they themselves experienced effective learning outcomes while participating in different activities in this course.

Changed Expectations and Priorities about the Level of Technology Mastery Needed to be a Successful Online Teacher: Most participants expected that a major focus of the course would be on learning the technology needed to be good online teachers and were concerned about their ability to succeed in that regard. But by the end of the course, all participants recognized that minimal technological knowledge and skills were needed to be the kinds of online teachers they aspired to be.

New Aspiration for Collaborating with Other Teachers in Designing Instruction: All participants demonstrated that course experiences had strengthened the role of collaborator as a component of their professional identities. This involved ascribing new value to collaborative planning and teaching with others and a new desire to find opportunities to do so within online instructional contexts.

Preference for Teaching Hybrid Online Courses: As all participants identified affordances and limitations specific to online and face-to-face learning, they also

expressed a preference for teaching hybrid courses, as they believed such an environment would provide them “the best of both worlds.” This implicitly shows that they aspired to be the kind of teachers who can choose when to use online versus face-to-face activities to maximize students’ learning.

All Participants Embraced at Various Levels the Kind of Online Teacher

Promoted by the Course: Each participant explained that the kind of online teacher they aspired to be was consistent with the key components of online teacher identity that the course designers had identified as their targets, although with some variations.

Consequently, by the end of the course, each participant had achieved a quite extensive and nuanced articulation of the kind of online teachers they wanted to be.

Impact of Other Professional Identities on Online Teacher Identity:

Depending on their areas of specialization (TESOL, special education, counseling, human development, teacher education), participants identified specific affordances for online learning and focused on aspects of online teaching that were particularly relevant to their field – thus adding some unique dimensions to the kinds of online teachers they aspired to be.

Research Question 2:

How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?

Participants’ *Experiences as Online Learners* in this Hybrid Course Were Essential Conditions for Modeling Online Teaching and Engaging in Repair Work:

There was rich direct and indirect evidence that the online learning experiences the

participants engaged in as part of the course helped them come to appreciate affordances and limitations of online learning in a powerful way, and in many cases dispelled their previous negative perceptions and concerns. Indeed, these “experiences as online learners” provided the participants with some unique opportunities for “participation,” which were also instrumental in achieving the needed “repair work.” Several participants also articulated that the course design and the course instructors became a powerful model for the kind of online teachers they were aspiring to be.

The Course's *Scaffolded Experiences as Online Teachers* Provided

Participants with Critical Opportunities for *Participation*: All participants recognized the Group Project (where, as part of a team, they designed and taught an online module to the rest of the class) and the Individual Project (where they had to independently design an online module for a topic and an audience of their choice) as critical to their development as online teachers. Several participants mentioned that experiencing success in going through the entire cycle of teaching in the Group Project, in particular, was a pivotal moment, as it gave them confidence that they could indeed be effective online teachers.

All Participants Made Good Use of the Opportunities for Reflection Provided

in the Course: The participants had multiple opportunities for reflection – in online journals and discussion boards, as well as in a final reflection paper – and they all used these opportunities well to make sense of both their *participation* experiences as online learners and as online teachers, and the readings assigned in the course. This represented the important identity work of *self-recognition*.

The Course Provided Valuable Opportunities for *Recognition by Others*:

Many opportunities for *recognition by others* were provided in the course, as each participant received comments on their posts in discussion boards as well as feedback from both their peers and the instructor on drafts of their instructional plans. All participants expressed their appreciation for the feedback received on their instructional materials, as they felt that it not only helped them improve the products, but also provided valuable affirmation that contributed to their growing confidence and self-esteem as novice online teachers.

The Perceived *Stigma* Concerning Online Teaching Negatively Affected some Participants: All the participants reported negative perceptions about the quality of online learning and teaching in their field which almost acted as *negative recognition by the field*. However, some participants seemed to be more affected by this *stigma* than others; in fact, some participants reported that realizing that people in their fields had misconceptions about online education turned them into advocates for online learning and teaching.

Overview of This Dissertation

In this introductory chapter I have briefly described the problem I addressed in my dissertation and its significance, the main theory informing my study, and the research design I chose, and I provided a summary of key findings and implications.

In Chapter 2, I discuss the theoretical framework that informed the design of this study's course context, which I also chose as the theoretical framework for my research: identity theory as articulated by Gee (2000-2001) and applied by Luehmann (2007, 2008)

in the context of teacher identity development. I also describe in detail the design elements of the course, and how they reflect key tenets of the assumed theoretical framework.

A summary of the literature review I conducted to learn about existing research on teacher identity development and online teaching and learning contexts can be found in Chapter 3. Since my theoretical framework informed this review, I chose to report it following the articulation of my theoretical framework in Chapter 2.

A detailed description of my study design can be found in Chapter 4. This chapter includes a more in-depth rationale for choosing a case study approach, a description of the context for the study (i.e., the section of the course I studied and its participants), my positionality as a researcher in this study, and an elaboration of the research questions informing the study, as well as a detailed description of the data sources I used and the way I analyzed them to address each of the research questions. Additional information about the course and the data collection instruments can be found in Appendices A and B.

I report findings from the study in two separate chapters. First, in Chapter 5, I include narrative case reports of each of the seven participants who agreed to participate in the study. Results from the cross-case analysis built on those narratives can be found in Chapter 6, organized around the two research questions and key findings within each of them.

This dissertation concludes in Chapter 7 with a summary of the study and its key results, along with some implications and recommendations for the future preparation of online teachers.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and its Implications

Introduction

While identity theory was used as a theoretical framework in all the studies of teacher identity that I reviewed, scholars assume different definitions of “identity” and “identity development” along different loci (e.g., professional identity versus online teaching identity); and therefore, they describe and focus on different aspects of teacher identity. For this dissertation study, I chose to use the same definitions of identity and identity development, and related theoretical assumptions that informed the design of the course in which I studied the development of online teachers' identities. This theoretical framework was derived from the identity theory proposed by Gee (2000-2001) as interpreted by Luehmann (2007) and Luehmann and Borasi (2011) with respect to the identity development of “reform-minded STEM teachers.”

In this chapter, I first articulate the key principles and elements of my theoretical framework, while also making references to other scholars who have supported similar theoretical tenets. Then I provide an in-depth description of the key design elements of the online teaching and learning course, making explicit how key principles from identity theory were applied in the design of the course (based on course artifacts and conversations with one of the course designers).

I will refer to this chapter as appropriate in chapter 3, as I report on my literature review of empirical studies of teacher identity, and in Chapter 4, as I discuss my choice of research questions and categories to create the structure for a case-study database.

I would like to clarify here that the concepts of *teacher identity* and *online teacher identity* were not considered as dichotomous in my study. Rather *online teacher identity* was seen as a component of a more general *teacher identity*. There are several reasons why I chose to focus on *online teacher identity* as an aspect of *teacher identity*:

1. Online contexts present some important differences from face-to-face (F2F) contexts, which in turn may call for different practices as well;
2. Online learning presents some unique affordances and limitations that online teachers need to learn to deal with;
3. Unlike traditional teaching, many teachers do not have rich personal experiences with online learning; and
4. Even experienced teachers may “become novices again” when asked to teach online because it requires special training and changes in expectations.

Identity Theory Informing the Study

Definition of Identity and Online Teacher Identity Assumed

Identity theory recognizes that “all learning...requires identity work” (Gee, 2003, as cited in Luehmann & Borasi, 2011, p. 22). Beijaard (2019) also held similar view that “learning to teach is an identity making process” (p. 1). Among the definitions of identity that can be found in the literature, for this study, I assumed Gee’s definition of identity as “being recognized as a certain ‘kind of person’ in a given context” (Gee, 2000-2001, p. 99). Adopting Gee’s definition, Luehmann defined teachers’ professional identity as “being recognized by self or others as a certain kind of teacher” (p. 27). Consistent with Gee’s and Luehmann’s definitions, I defined *online teacher identity* as “being recognized

by self or others as a certain kind of online teacher.” As in the literature, the terms *teacher identity* and *teacher professional identity* are mostly used interchangeably; I also did not make a distinction between the two.

The way Gee's identity theory was used in Luehmann (2007) to describe the identity development of *reform-minded science teacher* in the teacher preparation program she designed has some important similarities with my study. Luehmann (2007) focused on preparing a *certain kind of teacher*, which in her case was a *reform-minded science teacher*. In my study context, the course was trying to prepare a *certain kind of online teacher* – a teacher with certain mindsets and practices, as identified later in this chapter.

Key Elements of Identity and Identity Development

Luehmann (2007) described the following characteristics of identity development:

- a) Identity is socially constituted, that is, one is recognized by self and others as a kind of person because of the interactions one has with others;
- b) Identity is constantly being formed and reformed, though the change process for one's core identities is long-term and labor intensive;
- c) Identity is multifarious – that is, consisting of a number of interrelated ways one is recognized as a certain kind of person, participating in social communities;
- d) Identity is constituted in interpretations and narrations of experiences (Luehmann, 2007, p. 827).

Indeed, there is substantial support in the literature for the concept that identity is never static, as it continues to be molded by new experiences and understandings (e.g., Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Johnston, 2012; Taylor, 2017), nor monolithic. For example, Danielewicz (2001) posits that each individual has “multiple, often conflicting, identities, which exist in volatile states of construction or reconstruction, reformation or erosion, addition or expansion” (p. 10). Similarly, Johnston (2012) contends that identity is

“holistic and individually unique, comprised of a convergence of all the elements of life experiences, physical characteristics, personality, roles and background, genetic makeup, ethnicity and culture” (p. 18). He also posits that identity “includes a person’s understandings, knowledge, beliefs, feelings and values” (Johnston, 2012, p. 18). Empirical research also suggests that teachers might have multiple identities, and sometimes those identities shift and conflict, so that teachers have to negotiate among them (Soreide, 2006; Han, 2017).

Factors That Influence Identity Development

There are two key factors contributing to identity development as proposed by Gee (2000-2001) – *participation* and *recognition* – as discussed in more detail below.

Role of participation and factors affecting it. Based on Gee’s definitions and descriptions, Luehmann contends that “...learning as professional identity development occurs through participation in specific professional activities” (p. 818). It is important to note here that “... not all forms of participation and engagement are equal with respect to learning potential” and as such, not all participation has equal potential to promote identity development (Luehmann & Borasi, 2011, p. 24). Building on Nasir and Hand’s work (2008), Luehmann and Borasi (2011) identified some factors as especially important in making an “activity” conducive to supporting identity development. They argue that an activity has greater potential to impact learners’ identity development when:

- learners are actively engaged in the activity;
- learners have some control over what is learned and how they engage in that learning; and
- learners are held accountable for their learning (Luehmann & Borasi, 2011, p. 24).

Learners' successful participation in the activity also needs to be supported by:

- having expertise distributed across the students in the class;
- receiving frequent and formative feedback, from both the teacher and the peers; and
- having rich opportunities to have students' competence recognized, both by the teacher and by the peers (recognition) (Luehmann & Borasi, 2011, p. 25).

Nasir and Hand (2008) also contend that positioning the learners in their learning is important for their identity development, which means they should be assigned specific responsibilities, and this positioning of the learners' "participation" is "central to both individual and group progress" (p. 174).

Support for the importance of participation in identity development can be found also in the work of Wenger (1998), who considers identity development as inseparable from the concepts of "practice, community, and meaning" (p. 145) as part of his social learning theory. Wenger argues that identity is closely connected with practice because "engagement in practice gives us certain experiences of participation, and what our communities pay attention to reifies us as participants" (p. 150).

Importance of Recognition. Gee's identity theory makes clear that, while participation in key activities within a community of practice is critical, "identity work occurs in the interpretation, narration and thus recognition of that participation" (Luehmann 2007, p. 828). And it is important that this recognition occurs both by self and by others. Luehmann also suggests that "the interpretation of one's participation through reflective work is a process through which identities are fashioned" (p. 828).

Once again, there is considerable support in the literature for the key role played by recognition, as Wenger (1998), for example, describes identity development as "a

layering of events of participation and reification by which our experience and its social interpretation inform each other” (p. 151), and Danielewicz (2001) defines identity as “our understanding of who we are and of who we think other people are” (p. 10). Cohen (2010) also argues that reflective talk can play an important role for achieving a professional identity, as those identities are “established and maintained” through the recognition process, and their validity depends on the group members’ recognition of “each other’s ways of talking, thinking, and interacting as appropriate to the group” (p. 475) – even if this recognition is often implied.

Common Challenges in Identity Development

Luehmann and Borasi (2011) contend that “trying on a new identity... involves assuming a number of challenges and risks” (p. 23). Some common challenges include:

- Tensions caused by prior experiences and beliefs – in the case of online teacher identity, this could be partly because of negative past experiences with online learning;
- Need for negotiation among multiple identities – especially for experienced teachers who have already developed a teacher identity and then learn to teach online later; and
- Additional challenges when “going against the norm” – as was the case in the online teaching and learning course at the center of this study, which may have interrupted norms for some participants who previously had experienced online education differently from the ways it was advanced in the course.

When challenges and risks are experienced by learners, the teacher needs to support the students through “repair work,” specifically by: a) enticing learners to try new identities through specific activities; b) motivating learners to put efforts in those activities; and c) providing opportunities to experience success in those activities (Luehmann, 2007, p. 831).

Description of the Online Teaching and Learning Course in Which This Study Was Situated (EDE 484), In Light of the Theoretical Framework

General Information about the Course

My study focused on the first course – EDE 484: Online Teaching and Learning – in a sequence of three 3-credit, graduate-level courses designed to prepare online teachers. The course has been offered multiple times by different instructors and has been taken so far by over 100 students. This is the same course I took as a student, although for this study I focused on a later section of the course, for which I was a Teaching Assistant. The course design was explicitly influenced by the elements of identity theory articulated above, as discussed in more details below.

Course Goals

The course design was informed by the goal of preparing a *certain kind of online teacher*. As made explicit in the course syllabus (reproduced in its entirety in Appendix A.1), and further articulated by one of the course designers in conversations with me, the *kind of online teacher* the course was striving to prepare could be described by a combination of the following mindsets, beliefs, values, and aspirations:

1. Seeing online learning as a complement, rather than an alternative, to traditional/face-to-face learning;
2. Seeking to increase students' access to learning opportunities by leveraging online spaces;
3. Seeking to create a caring and interactive learning community in any instructional context;
4. Seeking to enhance students' engagement and motivation by capitalizing on the many affordances of digital technologies;
5. Seeking to promote deep learning and understanding by capitalizing on appropriate digital tools and resources;
6. Seeking to promote collaborative learning in any instructional context;
7. Seeking to provide students with choices and differentiated learning opportunities, leveraging technology whenever possible;
8. Seeking to enhance student assessment practices through the use of digital technologies, so as to better support learning and inform instruction;
9. Appreciating the need for goals-driven and meticulous instructional design – especially when planning online learning experiences; and
10. Seeing the use of digital technologies as a tool rather than a goal.

The course designers recognized the importance of supporting the development of an online teacher identity consistent with the aforementioned vision and made it an explicit goal of the course, using many of the principles of identity development

identified earlier in this chapter to create a rich set of opportunities for participation and recognition for students in the course – as described in more detail below.

Creating Multiple Opportunities for Participation and Recognition. The course was designed to provide multiple and diverse opportunities for participation and recognition. Students participated in several activities as online learners and online teachers, reviewed examples of online modules to discuss what online learning and teaching could look like, and reflected on the implications of these experiences. There were several *core experiences* designed to promote identity development as described below.

Early Experiences as Online Learners. The course was purposefully designed to start by providing some personal experiences as online learners that could challenge the participants' previous negative experiences or perceptions and concretely show the many affordances (as well as limitations) of online learning. As explicitly described in the syllabus:

In the first part of the course, students will learn some fundamental principles of learning, motivation, assessment, teaching and instructional design relevant to online teaching and learning by engaging in a carefully designed series of learning activities including both in-class and online components. These experiences are intended not only to facilitate students' learning of this important content, but also enable them to "experience as learners" a number of online instructional tools and online teaching practices. Explicit reflections on these experiences (both in class and online) will take place in parallel to enable students to generalize from these concrete experiences and gain insights about best online teaching practices that can inform their own future teaching.

In the first few modules of the course, participants engaged in several online learning experiences as if they were participating in online learning contexts as novices. For example, the tasks in the first module were designed to provide the students "with an

opportunity to try out and become familiar with some of the tools and features of Blackboard” that they would use in the “hybrid online course (i.e., accessing reading materials – both texts and multi-media documents, posting assignments, using the Discussion Board, etc.).” The students were also expected to review an online module to get sense of what a quality online course may look like.

In another asynchronous online module early in the course, the students explored constructionist learning theories to better understand the concepts of learning and motivation. The learning activities in this module incorporated a review of various principles through readings, websites, and videos. The students used discussion boards to discuss how teaching activities are impacted by learning theories and motivation, and they reflected in an online journal on how their own understanding of learning theories and motivation would guide their practices as online teachers. In the face-to-face sessions accompanying the online modules, they discussed the asynchronous aspects of the module, talked about assessment, discussed Bloom’s Taxonomy and participated in a case discussion about grading discussion boards.

A key element of each of the course modules was the use of Discussion Boards as a way to share student work, as well as to engage in online discussions focused around specific questions (see Appendix A.4 for the prompts focusing each of these Discussion Boards). In each discussion board, each student was required to make an initial post as well as comment on at least two posts by classmates. This allowed for participation from each of the students to help build their online teacher identity and to share their experiences and develop views related to online teaching and learning.

Each module also concluded with a reflective journal, where each student was expected to synthesize key take-aways – as described in more detail later.

As illustrated by these examples, these *experiences as online learners* were designed to include both participation and recognition components. They also were intended to enable some of the *repair work* needed to counter common negative perceptions about online learning, as well as negative online learning experiences some of the participants might have had prior to the course.

Scaffolded Experiences as Online Teachers. In the second part of the course, students engaged in supported *online experiences as teachers*, where they first designed and delivered to the rest of the class an online learning module on content related to online teaching and learning as part of a group, and then they individually designed an online learning module on a topic and for an audience of their choice.

Group Project. In this first *experience as online teacher*, with some support from the teacher, participants worked collaboratively in groups to design and teach an online learning module to the rest of the class. This project was designed to scaffold the students' participation so that they get the opportunity to utilize distributed expertise and learn from and support each other while designing and teaching the project with the intent that they would utilize this learning to design their individual projects. This was intended to offer the students an opportunity to experience success as an online teacher for the first time.

To scaffold this first experience as online teachers, they were provided with a “planning template” informed by a “backward design” approach (Wiggins & McTighe,

2005). Each group submitted their initial plan to their instructor and the instructor gave them feedback, so the plan could be revised before they were expected to post their instructional materials on Blackboard and facilitate the online module (so as to ensure a first successful experience for them, as well as a worthwhile learning experience for the students participating in their module). After each group taught their module, they received feedback from their students as well as from the instructor, and then they were given the opportunity to make revisions on their plan – to improve future implementation of the same module (for more information, see the detailed guidelines provided by the instructor for this major project, reproduced in Appendix A.5).

As evidenced even in this brief description, this activity embedded several of the principles identified by Nasir and Hand (2008) conducive to identity development, such as: “access to domain,” or opportunities to participate in domain-specific practices and learn from observing and from receiving continuous feedback on their learning practices; “integral roles,” or opportunities to participate in specific assigned roles as part of the team/group; and “opportunities for self-expression,” which come from “dedication and commitment,” social interactions, and “responsibility of decision making” (Nasir & Hand, 2008, p. 159).

The participants' identity development was supported in terms of how the learner was “positioned” and what kind of “support” was provided as they were “positioned” as teachers, learners, and group members, with support from the course instructor as well as from each other. Multiple opportunities for recognition were also embedded in this activity, as each participant continually received feedback from members of the group, as

well as from the instructor and his/her “students” at specific points in time. Participants also were expected to reflect in a journal entry about the experience of designing and teaching the online module.

Individual Project. In this second *experience as online teacher*, each participant designed an individual lesson plan independently, making all of the decisions about topic, goals, contents and audiences, with the support of a “thinking partner” and with the instructor only acting as a consultant to offer feedback and suggestions for improvements. In this case, the task involved designing an online module and posting all the instructional materials on Blackboard, but it did not require teaching the module. Once again, students were expected to use the same planning template to design their modules. They shared an initial plan with both their *thinking partner* and the instructor, and based on the feedback received, they revised and resubmitted the plan before finally posting the instructional materials on Blackboard (for more information, see the detailed guidelines provided by the instructor for this major project, reproduced in Appendix A.6).

In this project, the learners were again positioned as teachers, and they were supported by their teacher by providing feedback on their work in progress as well as on the final product, while expecting students to be more independent. Some opportunities for recognition were embedded in this activity as well, as the participants received feedback from the instructor and from their *thinking partner* at specific points in time, as well as from selected classmates once the module was completed.

Additional Opportunities for Recognition. The course also purposefully offered several opportunities for “recognition by self” as well as by the “others,” including most notably:

Discussion Boards. The students were required to participate in various discussion boards throughout the course, where they interacted with each other as well as with the instructor, sharing their ideas, experiences, views, concerns, challenges, and solutions on specific issues related to online teaching and learning. For each discussion board, students received a prompt from the instructor (see Appendix A.4 for a complete list of these prompts). The students were required to make an initial post in response to the prompt, as well as comment on at least two posts by their classmates. This allowed for multiple opportunities for “recognition” from other students in the course. While most discussion boards were parts of the already mentioned online modules at the beginning of the course, others occurred later in the course as well.

Reflective Journals at the End of Each Module. For each of the eight instructional modules in the course (both the early online modules, and later modules designed around their experiences as teacher), the students were asked to write a reflective journal that summarized what they learned from that module – as a way to help them synthesize and articulate their learning, and by doing so, provided an opportunity to “recognize by self” how their views about online teaching and learning might have changed. For each journal, the instructor provided detailed instructions. For example, for module three, the instructor provided the following prompt:

For this week's entry, please include your main takeaways regarding learning theories and motivation, including implications for your future practice as an

online instructor. Additionally, identify some specific questions (at least two) that the readings and experience in this module have raised for you (see Appendix A.6 for a complete list of the weekly journal prompts).

Final Reflection. The students were asked to write a final reflection paper at the end of the semester to capture their learning and growth as a result of the course. The students were asked to answer eight specific questions for this reflection paper – see Appendix A.8 for a list of these questions as well as the complete guidelines for this final project.

Conclusions

For my dissertation study, I used the identity theory proposed by Gee (2000-2001) as understood by Luehmann (2007) and Luehmann and Borasi (2011). However, I recognize that the different components of identity theory proposed by diverse researchers often overlapped or were inter-connected; they had just used different terms and had explained them in different ways. Therefore, my study also was informed by identity theories explained by researchers like Wenger (1998) and Nasir and Hand (2008).

As my site for this research, I chose a hybrid course preparing online teachers, which was purposefully informed by Gee's (2000-2001) identity theory as interpreted by Luehmann (2007) and Luehmann and Borasi (2011). The course created rich opportunities for "participation" and "recognition" for the students and offered them the opportunity to design and teach online modules to experience success to support their identity development as online teachers. Hence, it was an ideal site for me to explore two things: (1) what kinds of online teachers the participants aspired to be at the end of the

course, relative to those dispositions when they started the course; and (2) how participants took on the opportunities of “participation” and “recognition” offered by the course to build their identities as online teachers.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Introduction

To inform my study of the identity development of participants in a graduate course preparing online teachers, I reviewed the literature that studied teacher identity and online teacher identity. My search confirmed that research on online teacher identity is still limited, although I was able to find some valuable literature reviews (e.g., Richardson & Alsup, 2015), as well as individual studies. In contrast, more research has been done on teacher identity construction in the context of K-12 education, and some at the college level as well. Given my choice of considering online teacher identity as a component of teacher identity, these studies also were important for me.

In this chapter, I first summarize key findings from my literature review of teacher identity, followed by results from my literature review of online teacher identity. In both cases, given that researchers assumed different definitions of identity, I have tried to make explicit the authors definitions and assumptions, as well as the methodology used. As mentioned earlier, researchers have mostly used the terms *teacher identity* and *teachers' professional identity* synonymously, but I will note when that was not the case. I will conclude this chapter by discussing the implications of this literature review for my own study.

How Teacher Identity Has Been Studied in the Teacher Education Literature

As professional identity development is considered by many teacher educators as a central constituent of “the process of learning to become a teacher” (Friesen & Besley, 2013, p. 23), researchers have worked intensively to study the identity development of

teachers, especially in the past two decades or so (Thanaraj, 2016). When Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop conducted a review of literature on the topic of teachers' professional identity development in 2004, they reported that there were not that many articles available from a web search. But as I searched the web for teacher identity or teachers' professional identity, it yielded a substantial amount of results. In this section, I will discuss findings from empirical research about teacher identity development.

Reviews of Studies on Traditional Teacher Identity

Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) provided a review of literature of the research on teachers' professional identity where they categorized these research studies as three types: 1) studies focusing on teachers' "professional identity formation," 2) studies focusing on the "identification of characteristics of teachers' professional identity" and 3) studies representing professional identity by "teachers' stories" (p. 107). They argued that the concept of teachers' professional identity is "an area in which researchers conceptualize professional identity differently, investigate varying topics within the framework of teachers' professional identity, and pursue a diversity of goals" (p. 108). The authors mainly used 22 articles they found from a web search and some additional ones they found from those articles and other sources. Then they analyzed the articles "with regard to their (1) purpose, (2) definition of professional identity, (3) concepts related to this definition, (4) methodology, and (5) major findings" (p. 109). Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) found that most of the reviewed literature concentrated on "understanding and describing teachers' perceptions of aspects of their professional identity in general or perceptions that are related to specific issues of their

profession and that can enrich the debate on these issues” (p. 116). They reported that “a shared sense or perception of professional identity is hard to identify in the studies” (p. 119). Their findings also revealed that the majority of the research on professional identity formation of teachers “demonstrated or reconstructed ways in which teachers build their personal practical knowledge from experiences in practice” (p. 123) which supports Gee’s (2000-2001) position about the critical role of “participation” in a teacher’s identity development.

Based on the studies they reviewed, Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) identified four features of teachers’ professional identity: a) “professional identity is an ongoing process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences” (Kirby, 1991, as cited in Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004, p. 122), b) “professional identity implies both person and context,” c) “a teacher’s professional identity consists of subidentities that more or less harmonize,” and d) “agency is an important element of professional identity, meaning that teachers have to be active in the process of professional development” (Coldron & Smith, 1999, as cited in Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004, p. 122). They suggested that these features could be used as a framework to conduct research on teachers’ professional identity. They contended that “professional identity is not something teachers have, but something they use in order to make sense of themselves as teachers” (p. 123).

From a review of literature on how identity was studied in education, Johnston (2012) reached similar conclusions as she contended that there were three types of teacher identity studies in the literature: a) literature that relate teacher identity to teacher

professionalism and that study “identity of people in their role as teachers” (p. 6); b) literature that “approaches identity from a narrative, storied and/or biographical perspective;” and c) the literature that looks at identity “in the contexts of teachers’ lives and work” (p. 7).

Teacher identity has been studied in a wide range of contexts, including pre-service teachers’ education, in-service “novice teachers,” and experienced teachers’ education. In the following few sub-sections, I will discuss findings that relate to these three different contexts.

Pre-service/Student Teachers’ Identity. Based on Wenger’s (1998) concept of learning, Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) conducted a qualitative study of 45 student teachers using semi-structured individual and focus-group interviews to explore how teachers perceive themselves and “describe their professional identity” (p. 1565). Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) explain that they based their study on Wenger’s social concept of learning, where identity is “defined through learning, experiencing, doing, and belonging” (p. 1568). They contended that Wenger looked at learning as becoming someone – “an understanding of how learning, in the context of the community, affects and moulds [sic] us” (p. 1568). Participants reported that their professional development was influenced primarily by the interactions and cooperation with their students and supervising teachers. There were very few instances shared by the participants when they felt they belonged to the teachers’ community. The participants reported that they valued the support from the school, but seemed not to experience it much. The authors concluded that student teachers’ identity is “described by experiencing, that it is strongly

related to emotions and, in the majority cases, is linked to personal social context” (p. 1569).

Analyzing the discourse of discussion board posts, Irwin and Hramiak (2010) explored pre-service teachers’ “expressions of identity as both university student and a developing professional teacher” as well as the role played by the mentoring university professor in the process of transforming their identity (p. 2). Findings from this study, which used discourse analysis to examine how university mentors shaped preservice teachers’ identities through online discussions, showed that the student teachers established themselves as a “distinct group from the teacher community, defining boundaries in their text” with language like “we” to define themselves and “they” and “them” to define people outside their pre-service group (Irwin & Hramiak, 2010, p. 6). They also used certain terms “to differentiate” themselves in a way to define their own group – for example, “real teachers” referred to those who are already teaching (p. 7). Participants developed a community culture supporting each other, requesting help, sharing experiences, and uplifting their spirit through humor. The author contended that the way the university mentor “refers to the trainees reveal the way she sees them, and this subconsciously affects the way they see themselves” (p. 12).

Beginning Teachers’ Identity. Flores and Day (2006) investigated “the ways in which the identities of a cohort of new teachers were shaped and reshaped over the first 2 years of teaching” (p. 219). They explored the participants’ “beliefs,” “values” and “learning experiences” and “their views of the challenges of teaching, learning and being an effective teacher in different school settings” (p. 219). Fourteen participants were

interviewed for one and a half hours each. They also kept a “case record” of the participants for two years, which were analyzed, too. The findings suggested that the identities of the participants had been “strongly personally embedded at the beginning of their teaching careers, but destabilized by the negative school contexts and cultures in which they worked” (Flores & Day, 2006, p. 230). Moreover, the “meanings, values, images and ideals of what it meant to be a teacher with which they entered teaching were challenged and, for many, teaching became more routine, more rule governed and less creative” (p. 230). How the new teachers perceived their school culture and its leadership played an important role “in (re)shaping teachers’ understanding of teaching, in facilitating or hindering their professional learning and development, and in (re)constructing their professional identities” (p. 230).

Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) investigated how 45 new teachers from two universities in Canada “describe their professional identities through the metaphors they choose to represent their teaching selves” and compared the metaphors that they used while they were participating in the teacher education program and during the first year of their teaching. Participants in the study generated their own metaphors in two interviews. The authors investigated whether offering opportunities to use metaphors to discuss identities was useful to understand the complex subject of identity. Findings of the first interview showed that the metaphors “focused on supporting future students, nurturing, protecting and helping them find their way,” whereas, in the second interview the participants emphasized more themselves and their own classroom experiences, with emphases on being “challenged, facing changing and unpredictable situations, and

focused on survival” (p. 765). The authors identified patterns in the metaphors used by the teachers and categorized them in five themes: “supporting the student,” “often changing,” “transformed from the beginning of the teacher education program,” “flexible or being moulded [*sic*] by others,” and “uncertain” (p. 765). Findings also suggested that though the participants attended the program for a considerable amount of time, and they were involved in the practice of teaching for many weeks, they lacked a “strong and positive feeling about their professional selves” (p. 767). These metaphors could have implications for teacher educators as well as researchers. This study helped us to recognize that because “the development of a professional identity does not automatically come with experience, and that some form of deliberate action is necessary to ensure that new teachers begin their careers with the appropriate tools to negotiate” their identities and survive their first year (p. 767).

In-service teachers' identity. In an exploratory study, Beijaard, Verloop and Vermunt (2000) examined the perceptions of professional identity of 80 experienced secondary school teachers in Netherlands using a four-part questionnaire. They operationalized what teachers' professional identity should mean and what factors might influence that identity by describing teachers' professional identity “in terms of the teacher as a subject matter expert, the teacher as a pedagogical expert, and the teacher as a didactical expert” (p. 750). They argued that the recent shift in education, which emphasized learning more than teaching, had caused a shift in teachers' roles affecting the teachers' understanding of their professional identity. Findings of the study showed that most of the teachers in the study “saw themselves as a combination of subject matter

experts, didactical experts and pedagogical experts” (p. 762). Also, 31% participants reported that their “current perceptions of their professional identity did not differ from their prior perceptions of this identity;” however, the researchers noticed significant differences in their previous and current conceptions (p. 762). There was a shift in their perceptions of professional identity; many of the teachers “shifted specifically from subject matter expertise to didactical and pedagogical expertise during their careers” and different subject teachers experienced different levels of development (p. 762).

Soreide (2006) explored “how different teacher identities were constructed within the teachers’ narratives about their job” using interviews among five elementary school teachers from Norway (p. 528). She reported that her participants referred to several “subject positions” to explain how they understand themselves, three of which were more noticeable: a) a person who was “concerned with the child/pupil’s well-being and development,” b) someone who focused on cooperating with their students, co-workers and parents, c) someone who cared about the “social climate” in class (p. 532). Soreide also mentioned seven other subject positions that the teachers used to describe themselves, with emphases on teachers’ knowledge, their ethics of care and dedication to students’ development and positive changes in their field, their separation of public and private life, and demanding nature of teaching. Then the author explained how these narrative subject positions were used to construct teachers’ identities through “distancing, opposition and/or rejection of the available subject positions,” which she called “negative positioning,” and through “identification with and recognition of the available subject positions,” which she calls “positive positioning” (p. 534). Some of the teacher narratives

in her study described what the teachers wanted to be or do and what they did not want to be or do, with clear allusions to how these teachers wanted to be “perceived as teachers” (p. 535). For example, one of the participants identified herself as a “child-centred [*sic*], learning-centred [*sic*] and responsibility-centred [*sic*]” teacher, while others stated that they would like people to perceive them as other types of teachers. Soreide also reported that the participants constructed multiple teacher identities concurrently: “the caring and kind teacher; the creative and innovative teacher; the professional teacher; the typical teacher” (p. 536). None of these identities should be taken as “ready-made” or “sharply defined;” rather, they should be understood as “flexible” (p. 536). Some of the subject positions were dichotomous, the author posited. She also contended that the participants seemed to negotiate between their identities “to construct identities that feel comfortable and unique” (p. 543).

Han’s (2017) study aimed at conceptualizing professional identity “based on the socio-psychological understanding of identity” and examined what constituted professional identity and what the dynamics of professional identity were (p. 550). He investigated how “Korean teachers respond to their curriculum and related ELT [English language teaching] policies” which revealed their various identities contributing to their professional identity (p. 558). He adopted qualitative methods using a narrative approach in his study of five Korean English language teachers from different state high schools. The narratives from the participants of Han’s study showed that they had several identities that constituted their professional identity: “national identity,” “English teacher identity,” “teacher identity,” “learner identity,” “public teacher identity,” “gender

identity,” and “person identity.” He argued that “each identity is not totally subordinated to professional identity,” as these could work as distinct identity or as “part of other identities” (p. 562). These identities might manifest themselves differently in various contexts and might overlap as well. There might be conflicts of identities, which might be negotiated. The author maintained that because of different requirements of the ELT policy, the environments, and education department, the Korean English teachers’ professional identity experiences conflicted and so did their negotiations.

Using two in-depth semi-structured interviews, O’Connor (2008) studied how three Australian secondary school teachers “constructed and maintained a sense of professional identity which cohered with their philosophical or humanistic beliefs about the teaching role” (p. 118). The results of the study showed three types of care that the participants demonstrated: a) “caring as performative,” which indicated “behaviour [*sic*] geared towards motivating students in order to reach pedagogical goals;” b) “caring as professional,” which indicated “the management and maintenance of appropriate relationships with students in order to maintain a professional role;” and, c) “caring as philosophical/humanistic,” which indicated “making the personal decision to care in adherence with a personal and individual philosophy or code of ethics” (p. 121). The teachers reported to have found meaning in their conscious choice of being caring to their students. One of the participants resisted the “service provider” label given by the private school where she taught. This teacher also mentioned that her “meaningful relationships” with her students were the reason for her to continue teaching; however, she also recognized that emotional engagement could be “exhausting” (p. 124). She viewed her

“professional identity as being pervasive and as involving a process of *becoming* as opposed to merely *being*” (p. 125, emphasis in the original). The author concluded that the participants in their research “used their identities to guide and shape their professional and emotional decisions” (p. 125) and they used these identities to justify their caring attitude in their professional activities.

Luehmann and Tinelli (2008) examined how blogging provided a space for 15 school teachers enrolled in a graduate seminar at a US university to interact with each other, and thus helped support their identity development as reform-minded science teachers. They defined the term identity using Gee’s (2001) definition: “being recognized by self or others as a reform-minded science teacher” (p. 324). They identified “participation” and “recognition” from the 395 posts and 551 comments made by the teachers in the blogs and analyzed those to see how blogging helped support their new identity development as reform-minded science teachers. They categorized evidence of participation and recognition under three broad categories: a) “cognitive work,” when “participants displayed and discussed understanding of pedagogy, students, or other issues related to the field of teaching;” b) “affective work,” when the participants shared emotions or advocated for something; and c) “social work,” when they shared resources, mentored and encouraged each other (p. 329). The authors presented details of how the participants shared emotions, wrestled with dilemmas in the process of becoming reform-minded teachers, offered advice and information to each other to cope with the dilemmas, shared resources, discussed their experiments, provided encouragements, and mentored each other. They valued the support provided by the community through the blogs.

Luehmann and Tinelli concluded that the blog connected the participants to other “like-minded” colleagues and offered them a platform to participate in the discourse and engage in “meaningful discussions” contributing to their learning as well as to their professional identity development as reform minded science teachers (p. 331).

Finally, in a recent study, Taylor (2017) used narrative as a tool to investigate the identity construction of six teacher-researchers in a graduate program, examining how the process of becoming a teacher-researcher was supported by interactions with their instructor. She drew on case study discourse analysis methods and used a socio-cultural view of identity, which posits that the development of new practices requires construction of new identities. Findings from her study showed that the instructor “used language to both construct the identity of teacher researcher and to position her students as teacher researchers” via different strategies like personal narratives (p. 19). But Taylor also clarified that how the participants understood themselves within their experiences also helped them construct a new identity. The author described how the instructor helped the teachers construct teacher-researcher identities and positioned them as teacher-researchers. The instructor did not overtly discuss issues related to teacher identity or teacher-researcher identity, but she used language carefully to help them construct their identities. For example, she used the pronoun “we” deliberately to indicate that the teachers are also teacher-researchers. The participants later were involved in a study which further reinforced that identity; however, the construction of identity as mentioned by Taylor was not “linear.” At some points, participants would differentiate themselves

as non-researchers, going back to their older identities as teachers only, claiming that the instructor was the researcher, not them, because she had published.

Identity Tensions and Struggles. Some of the available research focused on the tensions and struggles of teachers in constructing their teacher identities. Using semi-structured interviews, Pillen, Beijaard, and den Brok (2013) studied the professional identity tensions 24 beginning teachers experienced in the Netherlands. They posited that professional identity conflicts might cause tensions among teachers resulting in serious consequences, which in turn might lead them to leave teacher education programs or the profession. They defined identity tensions as “internal struggles between the teacher as a person and the teacher as a professional regarding an undesirable situation” (p. 662). They categorized 13 professional identity tensions experienced by beginning teachers based on a review of literature:

- Feeling like a student versus being expected to act like an adult teacher
- Wanting to care for students versus being expected to be tough
- Feeling incompetent of knowledge versus being expected to be an expert
- Wanting to invest time in practicing [*sic*] teaching versus feeling pressured to invest time in other tasks that are part of the teaching profession
- Feeling treated like a student versus wanting to take responsibility as a teacher
- Feeling like a peer versus wanting to take responsibility as a teacher
- Wanting to respect students' integrity versus feeling the need to work against this integrity
- Wanting to treat pupils as persons as a whole versus feeling the need to treat them as learners (or vice versa)
- Experiencing difficulties in maintaining an emotional distance
- Experiencing conflicts between one's own and others' orientations regarding learning to teach
- Being exposed to contradictory institutional attitudes
- Feeling dependent on a mentor (colleague/supervisor) versus wanting to go one's own way in teaching
- Wanting to invest in a private life versus feeling pressured to spend time and energy on work (Pillen, Beijaard & den Brok, 2013, p. 88).

Pillen, Beijaard, and den Brok (2013) described professional identity tensions experienced by their participants as consisting of three themes: “the change in role from student to teacher,” “conflicts between desired and actual support given to students,” and “conflicting conceptions of learning to teach” (Pillen, Beijaard & den Brok, 2013, p. 90). Then they compared the experiences of tension shared by the participants with the 13 categories from the literature, and reported that 36 experiences fit with those categories, while the other 23 fit with the three themes they had identified. The participants reported to experience these tensions, some of which were quite serious, on a regular basis. These tensions were accompanied by “feelings of helplessness, frustration or anger” (p. 674). But these tensions had some positive outcomes as well; the participants reported to have learned from their experiences with them. They felt “stronger as teachers,” and were more equipped to handle certain situations. The authors concluded that professional identity tensions were “very common,” and therefore, measures should be taken to transform these into positive experiences.

Ruohotie-Lyhty (2013) used a qualitative narrative study approach to explore how the two participants in her study “use their identity, their self-stories” to interpret their experiences and “in which ways does their identity develop through the process of making sense of their experiences” (p. 122). The findings from the reflective essays and interviews showed that one participant, Taina, experienced difficulty in the beginning in the profession and “doubted her ability” to be a teacher, while the other participant, Suvi, had an easier beginning. Both of the participants perceived their work and their positions differently before they entered the profession. Taina had a strong self-conception as a

subject teacher. But her narratives after entering the profession changed to “disappointment, shock, guilt, and betrayal” (p. 125). She wanted to teach innovatively but failed, which caused disappointment for her. She stated that the teacher education program gave her a “false picture of school reality” (p. 125). In her second-year narrative, she reported that the level of her students and the school was poor, and there were not enough resources available, which contributed to her poor performance. As a result, she became alienated from the teacher community and her students. In the fourth year, her teaching ideals continued to remain far from her professional reality. In contrast, Suvi had several similar challenges but she reflected upon herself as an educator, she was not shocked, and maintained a positive tone. She involved herself deeply with the teacher community in her second and third years. She developed a strong identity as a language teacher and developed strong pedagogic approaches. In her fourth year she was confident and believed that the previous years were significant for her professional development.

Before entering the profession, Taina had a strong sense of herself as a teacher of the languages she taught, whereas Suvi understood herself as a teacher who focused more on “education and interaction.” The author argued that Taina’s previous “subject teacher” identity contradicted with her “school realities” (p. 126), and that she was not ready to “abandon her initial identity” (p. 126). The author concluded that her professional identity development was “partly hindered because of her inability to accept the current situation” (p. 126). She developed two identities: “ideal and forced identity that are in constant conflict,” which led her to adopt a “victimic stance” that ultimately limited her “agency as a teacher” (p. 127). By contrast, Suvi’s preliminary teacher identity developed

before starting the profession and made the beginning of her career easier, since it aligned with the school realities. This helped her to have “purposeful agency” and “continuing professional identity development” (p. 127). Based on these findings, the author argued that “pre-service teacher education is an important phase in constructing teacher identity,” therefore, teachers should be supported to develop their identities in these programs.

Reviews of Studies on Online Teacher Identity

There are not as many research studies available on the identity and identity development of online teachers. In 2018, I conducted a web search using Google Scholar and the US Educational Resource Information Center (ERIC) using terms like “online teacher identity,” “online teachers’ identity development” or “professional identity of online teachers.” This search did not yield many useful results. I also searched the database in my university library to identify articles that focus on online teachers’ identity and used the references of available literature to look for articles on online teachers’ identity development. Via these searches, I focused my review on publications dealing with identity development of online teachers within professional development contexts and beyond. I will discuss the results of this review in this section.

Richardson and Alsup (2015) investigated the professional identity construction of seven new online teachers from the US using qualitative interview method to explore “online teachers’ perceptions of their own identity as online instructors in college settings” (p. 146). They used Beijaard et. al.’s (2004) “four characteristics of teacher professional identity” identified earlier which are: a) “professional identity as an ongoing

process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences,” b) “professional identity implying both person and context,” c) “a teacher’s professional identity consists of sub-identities that more or less harmonize,” d) “agency is an important element of professional identity” (p. 146). The participants in the study came from various backgrounds and were assigned to teach online courses for the first time by their institutions; six of the seven participants already had positive perceptions about teaching online. The participants expressed that their challenges were mainly related to interacting with the students, providing feedback, planning the lessons, and managing time.

Based on these findings, Richardson and Alsup (2015) argued that, in an online teaching role compared to traditional one, the instructors must “re-design course content and re-think his or her teacher behaviors” (p. 153). They also argued that teaching online requires that teachers “re-think, or engage” in an internal “dialogue” with the various prejudices or “beliefs” that are related to traditional teaching (p. 152). They contended that, to effectively teach online, teachers sometimes have to “deconstruct and re-build a traditional teacher identity or some traditional assumptions about effective teaching and learning” (p. 152). Initially, the participants in their study wanted to be the same teacher online as they were in their traditional classes. Later, they recognized that teaching online was different, and they shared their concerns regarding connecting and building relationship with the students in an online setting. To meet the challenges, they utilized “instructor videos, student-driven videos, and Skype” (Richardson & Alsup, 2015, p. 152).

In a three-year study at the Open University UK, Baxter (2012) qualitatively investigated how higher education distance-learning teachers approached professional development and learning, and the “type of learning” that might be most impactful “in creating and sustaining an online teaching identity” (p. 1). She also investigated the “expressions of resistance discourse in the formation of online teaching identities” and its implications for professional development (p. 2). She used a phenomenological research methodology and twice interviewed 12 students working with a single faculty that was moving from blended to fully online teaching. The transcribed interviews were analyzed “according to the research questions and the framework for professional identity” (Baxter, 2012, p. 1).

Baxter (2012) reported that her study identified several areas in which her participants were “attempting to find new online teaching identities” (p. 5). The first resistance was visible in grading the student papers, where the teachers were concerned about grading students who they haven’t met face-to-face. The teachers argued that it was difficult to grade students without knowing them much. To solve this, one participant browsed the Facebook group of the students, which helped him to understand the students’ character a little. The teachers reported that it was difficult to get meaningful feedback from the students about their teaching to feel that they were doing a good job, the students’ feedback felt very impersonal to them. The other area that was challenging to them was the facilitation of virtual group work and making sure that all students engaged in such group work. The participants felt that they did not facilitate the online group work as effectively as they did in face-to-face environments, which impacted their

professional online teaching identity negatively. One participant mentioned that she felt like a beginner teacher again though she was an experienced face-to-face teacher, which “compromised an important part of her professional identity” (p. 6). The other area of their concern was conveying online presence through texts and visuals. To fill out the gap of body language in online contexts, the participants argued for the use of avatars. Baxter concluded by saying that her findings indicated the “changing nature of professional teaching identities” and awareness among the participants of “the ways in which they present and manipulate these online identities” (p. 8). She argued that identifying the resistance discourse among teachers will allow us to ascertain the professional learning needs of teachers and to intervene accordingly to support their identity formation and development as online educators.

Using semi-structured interviews and case study methodology, Thanaraj (2016) examined how three academics moved from being traditional teachers to online teachers, and if their definitions of themselves as academics changed in an online context. The participants, who had teaching experiences ranging from one year to twenty years, were interviewed three times: before they started teaching online, after the first year, and 20 months after their online teaching experience. Thanaraj used Margaret Archer's (2000, 2003, 2012) reflexivity theory that proposes that “personal identities are created through the various internal conversations we have with ourselves” (Archer, 2003, as cited in Thanaraj, 2016, p. 41). Findings showed that the teachers were nervous about the new teaching approach as they had four months to prepare themselves before teaching online. The author stated that the three participants “were challenged in recognising [*sic*] their

identity” in the online space (p. 45). Participants 1 and 2 wanted to replicate classroom lectures in their online classes, whereas participant 3 recognized the need for change but did not know “what role she should adopt” (p. 45). Participant 1 reported to have benefitted from readings about good online teaching practices and from reflections. Participant 2 reported to have realized that online teaching requires “knowledge and skills” beyond content knowledge (p. 45) and she felt that in the online context, “her role was more of a learning space architect” (p. 46). Participant 3 reported to have made significant changes in her practices and approach, and discussed how her identity was challenged from being an expert face-to-face teacher with authority in her subject area to be someone whose limited technological skills made it difficult for her to impart knowledge online. However, after their first year of teaching online, the participants reported to be “more confident and comfortable” (p. 45). They realized that their “role and identity changed significantly” while teaching online (p. 47). Thanaraj also reported that after 20 months, participant 1 “described herself as a ‘facilitator of learning,’” participant 2 “described himself as ‘an instructor and manager of discussions’” and participant 3 “described herself as an ‘interaction facilitator’” (p. 47). The author concluded that though the three participants experienced challenges in the beginning, as they continued to involve in their new roles and examined the “expectations” of that role, they started “to develop new expertise, knowledge and skills for online teaching” (p. 50) and developed a new identity.

In an informal self-study, Hurst (2015) used equivalency theory to find out if “student outcomes and student perceptions of learning and enjoyment and learning” in

her online classes were comparable to her F2F classes (p. 37). She examined her identity as an online teacher by comparing student works and student evaluations from seven online and seven face-to-face courses that she taught. Hurst reported that, at first, she had extremely negative perceptions about online classes and was very reluctant to teach online, because she believed that “social interactions” were most important in education and they did not take place in online contexts. She was also concerned if she would be able to “achieve the same goals” in online classes as she did in traditional classes (p. 36). After her first class, she was surprised to see that the student quality and their work quality were good. She also received good evaluation from her students about their learning. She developed strategies to design her face-to-face classes as online ones and checked what activities and assignments could be used online. From her experiences and findings she posited that “based on the students’ perceptions and coursework, their learning and enjoyment of learning did not seem to be tied to whether I was in the room with them or not. But it did matter that I was there” (p. 39). She looked at this self-study as “a paradigm shift for herself” (p. 39). In terms of her professional identity, she concluded that she “did not have to change as a teacher just because the format of delivery changed,” for her, teaching online was “still teaching” (p. 39).

Johnson, Ehrlich, Watts-Taffe and Williams (2014) drew on reflective case studies to report identity shifts among four faculty members at a US university who were learning to teach online. They argued that exploring online teacher identity “allows for a greater understanding of teachers’ relationships to the modality” (p. 43). Reflections, peer evaluations of course designs and informal notes were used as data, analyzing what the

authors “identified four distinct identities” of themselves as online teachers (p. 45). Within their community of practice the four faculty members emerged as “the doubting perfectionist,” “the critical facilitator,” “the accessible pragmatist” and “the absent framer.” Paula, “the doubting perfectionist” who had 20 years of teaching experience in traditional classes, continuously felt the needed to “make things right” and felt that she had become a student while learning to teach online (p. 45). Technology was a barrier for her in the beginning to be an efficient online teacher. Loreen, “the critical facilitator” acknowledged the importance of online classes, but had negative perceptions about those. She felt that online classes caused distance between the teacher and the students. She lacked skills in technology use as well to be effective as an online teacher. “The accessible pragmatist” Anna viewed online classes to be an “opportunity” as well as a “challenge” (p. 47). Anna moved from being an “observer of online teaching” to someone who achieved and practiced new skills. The authors reported that she experienced a shift in how she valued online classes, but “the overall value she placed on constructing meaningful and engaging learning experiences had not changed her identity as a teacher educator” (p. 47). Maggie, “the absent framer” had fairly good knowledge about online teaching learning and she was considered very tech-savvy by her colleagues. The authors note that her identity was connected to “her colleagues’ perceptions” (p. 48) and her “identity was grounded not in her teaching ability but rather in her expertise and facility with technologies that could be used for teaching online and developing online programs” (p. 48). She looked at online teaching to be “professionally fulfilling” (p. 48), and she gradually moved from being a “framer” to a “teacher” emphasizing more on the

quality of teaching using technology. Based on their analysis, the authors concluded that “the continuum of our teaching identities replicated our stances toward technology” (p. 49).

Using surveys and interviews, Comas-Quinn (2011) explored in what ways online-teacher participants' in a blended Spanish course valued “identity and notion of self” and how they learned to undertake their new roles as teachers of blended courses in a teacher training program (p. 4). The participants were required to teach the blended course by their institution and attended two mandatory training sessions. Comas-Quinn (2011) argued that online teachers needed special skills and personalized trainings, not a “one size fits all” kind of professional development. The findings showed that the training sessions were more focused on the use of technologies and did not emphasize helping teachers to “reconsider their professional identities as teachers” in an online setting (p. 25). The author also argued that such trainings should focus more on supporting the teachers as well as learners to re-conceptualize their new roles in an online environment and how they “co-construct understanding through synchronous and asynchronous online interactions” (p. 25). She contended that teacher identity was a concept that played a central role in determining the success of professional training for online teachers. But such training programs often disregarded the “understanding and transformation” of the learners, and became courses “about learning to teach online rather than learning to become an online teacher” (p. 26).

Implications of the Review of Literature for My Study

My desire to study the identity development of novice online teachers was motivated by the impression that, while there is a growing interest in teachers' professional identity in the field of education, and there is significant recognition of its impact on teaching practices, there are not many studies that explore the process of their professional identity development, and there are fewer studies available that focus on the identity development of online teachers. My literature review, as reported in this chapter, confirmed this initial impression. Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) also argued that the "process of envisioning the self as a professional" was very critical in the development of a teacher identity. Yet, the available literature on teacher identity development relative to "how identity develops and how teacher educators might influence this development" is thin (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011, p. 768). Miles and Mikulec (2008) also contend that there are few studies on factors that impact teacher training programs with regard to "identity, power, and professional satisfaction and growth" (n. p.). Taylor (2017) suggests that there is not enough literature on how teachers' identity construction could be supported by teacher educators. These arguments support my belief that more research is needed to understand how online teacher identity is constructed and how teacher education programs can support aspiring online teachers to develop their professional identities.

Different definitions of teacher identity also delimit what researchers study and why they choose those directions. Many studies seemed to focus on identifying the "meanings, values, images and ideals of what it means to be a teacher" (Flores & Day,

2006, p. 230), and how this changed over time. This direction informed the articulation of my first research question: “What kind of online teacher did each participant aspire to be at the end of the course, and how did it differ from where they started?” It also was evident from my review of literature that the available research on online teachers’ identity did not focus much on the kinds of learning experiences offered to the participants within professional development programs and how those learning experiences might have impacted their identity development. This informed the articulation of my second research question: “How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?” By addressing these questions, I aim to explore how specific kinds of online learning experiences offer opportunities for “participation” and “recognition,” and in turn how those experiences might impact identity development – with the ultimate goal of providing suggestions about the kind of activities or other components that could be included in courses that prepare online teachers to deliberately support and encourage their identity development.

My review also showed that the past research identified some specific concerns and challenges experienced by novice online teachers that I wanted to pay special attention to in my study, including:

- Concern about creating a sufficient connection with students;
- Fear of not knowing enough technology;
- Expert teachers feeling like novices again, and losing efficacy; and
- Negative past experiences that may require “repair work”.

In particular, my literature review highlighted a potential tension for novice online teachers about their identities as traditional teachers versus online teachers. People who teach online or are willing to teach online often already have constructed a traditional teacher identity. Even those who do not have a traditional teacher identity may already hold strong beliefs from lengthy “apprenticeship of observation” experiences (Lortie, 1976). But when they start to teach online they discover themselves as “beginners” (Thanaraj, 2016). So, becoming online teachers might require some deconstruction of their traditional teacher identity to reconstruct their teacher identity as online teachers (Richardson & Alsup, 2015). Hence, in my study, I planned to pay special attention to the interaction between their “traditional” versus “online” teacher identity.

The literature also told us that the teachers might have multiple identities, and sometimes those identities might conflict, so teachers would have to negotiate among them (Soreide, 2006; Han, 2017). Though some of the studies I reviewed indicated the impact of multiple identities in the development of a professional identity, only one empirical study (Han, 2017) from my review had reported the findings on this aspect showing that multiple identities might overlap and conflict; therefore, I wanted to look specifically for this in my data analysis.

The literature I reviewed for my study used different types of research methods, including case study methods (Taylor, 2017; Thanaraj, 2016), discourse analysis (Taylor, 2017; Irwin & Hramiak 2010), semi-structured and focus-group interviews (Flores & Day, 2006; Timoštšuk & Ugaste 2010; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011; Soreide, 2006; O'Connor, 2008; Pillen, Beijaard & den Brok, 2013; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013; Richardson

and Alsup, 2015; Baxter, 2012; Thanaraj, 2016; Comas-quinn, 2011), surveys (Comas-Quinn, 2011) lexis analysis and critical discourse analysis (Irwin & Hramiak, 2010), narrative approach (Han, 2017, Taylor, 2017), phenomenological research methods (Baxter, 2012), informal self-study (Hurst, 2015) and reflective case studies (Johnson, Ehrlich, Watts-Taffe & Williams, 2014). Some unconventional approaches were also used in the studies; for example, Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) offered metaphors for their participants to describe their identities. For my study, I chose to use a case-study method given the richness of data provided by student work in the course, to be complemented by semi-structured interviews.

To sum up, this literature review confirmed the value of investigating how participants in EDE 484 perceived themselves as online teachers and what it meant to them to be an online teacher. More specifically, it also informed my decision to examine how their beliefs, values, and views of teaching and learning, and being an effective teacher, changed as a result of the course. I also wanted to explore how their engagement in different activities within the course allowed them to “participate” in practices and discourses as online teachers, and how they described their perceptions of themselves as online teachers in their reflections. Additionally, I wanted to examine how they were recognized by their peers, as well as their instructor, as online teachers; what kinds of challenges they faced in the process of developing the identity of an online teacher; and how the curriculum and course instructor’s scaffolding supported them to see themselves as online teachers.

Chapter 4: Study Design

Introduction

This chapter describes in detail my research design to study the identity development of participants in a section of EDE 484 – a course designed to prepare them to teach online with an explicit focus on developing their identities as online teachers – as described earlier in Chapter 2. First, I will identify my choice of research methods and its rationale. Then, I will describe the context of my study – that is, the specific section of EDE 484 I studied, and the study participants. Next, I will describe my research design, and conclude the chapter with a discussion on issues related to trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

Rationale for Qualitative Research Design

My study explored the identity development of participants in a course designed to prepare online teachers. As I wanted to investigate “thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values, and assumptions” of the participants, I realized that a qualitative research approach would be most appropriate for my study (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 91). As pointed by Denzin and Lincoln (2005), a qualitative researcher emphasizes the “socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (p. 10), as well as studies the “lived experiences of real people in real settings” (Hatch, 2010, p. 6) – which well-describe the nature of my study. I chose to adopt qualitative methods also because I wanted to be meticulous in collecting “specifics” from my study site to identify “patterns of relationships among the specifics” (Hatch, 2010, p.10).

Rationale for Adopting a Case Study Approach

I chose case study approach for my dissertation because it “allows for a level of understanding explanation not possible through conventional experimental or survey designs” (Merriam, 1985, p. 204), it also allows to “bring about understanding that in turn can affect and perhaps even improve practice” (Merriam, 1998, p. 41) and it presumes that “such an understanding is likely to involve important contextual conditions pertinent to” a case (Yin, 2014, p. 16). My study was “anchored in real-life situations” (Merriam, 1998, p. 41). It was context specific, the study setting was “naturalistic” and it dealt with an emergent issue of aspiring online teachers’ identity development (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p. 44). Adopting a case study method allowed me to have a “means for investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon” (Merriam, 1998, p. 41), in my case, the identity development of online teachers.

Studying Yin (2002), Merriam (1998) and Stake’s (1995) works on case-study methodology, Yazan (2015) contended that it is mandatory for a case study researcher to collect data from various sources and “capture the case under study in its complexity and entirety” (p. 142). Therefore, I designed my study to involve “multiple sources of evidence” which I then used to triangulate the findings (Yazan, 2015, p. 142). Yin (2014) also stated that a case study “benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis” (p. 17); my “theoretical propositions” are articulated in chapter 2, and they truly guided my data collection and analysis – as described in more detail later in this chapter.

There are two concerns regarding case study method as identified by Yin (2014) – whether the study is rigorous enough or not, and if it is generalizable. According to him, it is essential to show in a case study that the researcher has been “rigorous” methodologically, has done a systematic literature review and has chosen the research questions carefully - which I have shown in chapter 3 and 4. Also, because my research includes seven case studies of participants from diverse backgrounds, I believe several of my findings have the potential to apply to various types of novice online teachers. While conducting my study, especially while collecting and analyzing my data, I also kept in mind that “the process of conducting a case study is perhaps more art than skill, the success of which is somewhat dependent upon the sensitivity, tolerance, and flexibility of the investigator” (Merriam, 1985, p. 214). I also shared a preliminary draft of each case narrative with my participants to check if my interpretations were close to what they had said, and they all agreed that those were. I believe my study has “something important to say” and I made efforts to make it “well-structured” and write it well, which are important elements of a case study method (Harland, 2014, p. 1120).

Study Site and Participants

This study focused on a specific section of EDE 484: Online Teaching and Learning, in which I participated as a Teaching Assistant (TA). There were several reasons why the course was an ideal site for my study. As mentioned earlier, I chose this course because as a student in an earlier section of EDE 484 I myself experienced a change in my perspectives and a complex process of identity development. This course is the entry course for preparing online teachers offered at Warner School. As such, many

of the students taking this course get the opportunity for the first time to learn about online teaching learning via this course and, thus, begin to develop an identity as online teachers. Moreover, the course design was influenced by identity theory – as discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

Using emails, I approached all the eight students who took the aforementioned section of EDE 484, inviting them to be my study participants. Out of the eight total students in the class, seven students responded and agreed to take part in my study and I recruited them all as my participants. The other student never responded to my email or communicated in any other way, and therefore, was excluded from the study.

Background Information

The Warner School of Education is one of the academic units in a small private research university situated in upstate New York which has about 11000 students. The school has approximately 650 graduate students and offers master's and doctoral degrees in Teaching and Curriculum, Human Development, Counseling, Higher Education, School Leadership and Educational Policy. The school is committed to social justice, diversity and inclusion, and strives to create a learning community that values people's background, their experiences and their cultures. International students comprised about 15% of enrollment in the school at the time when this study was conducted.

Accessibility

Because I am a student at the Warner school and I was a TA in the course, it was easy for me to gain access to conduct my research. Being a TA in the course, I still had access to the course on Blackboard so that I could use the course assignments and other

documents as my data after gaining written permission from each of the participants as well as the university's Institutional Review Board's (IRB) approval for my study.

Researcher Role and Reciprocity

Being a TA in the course allowed me to get to know the participants and build a rapport with them prior to my research. I strictly maintained my status in the class as a TA and did not make any participant observation as a researcher while the course was taking place, since my dissertation proposal was still in process and I had not yet received IRB's approval. I believe, however, being a TA in the class and participating in discussions in the class and sharing my ideas and thoughts, I was able to build a good relationship with the participants and gain their trust, as well as a deep understanding of the course.

While conducting my interviews and communicating with my participants, I listened to them carefully, conveyed my sincere thanks to them in my communications for participating in my research.

Participants

The seven participants in this study presented very diverse backgrounds. Three of them were pursuing master's degrees, 2 were pursuing PhDs and 2 were pursuing EdD degrees. They included 4 domestic students (one African American and 3 Whites), and 3 international students (2 from China and one from a European country). Five of the participants were trained k-12 teachers (four in TESOL and one in special education), but their teaching experiences varied from a few months to more than 20 years; two of the participants were Counseling and Human Development doctoral students with limited

formal training in teaching. The participants also had diverse prior experiences with online teaching learning - for some this was the first ever online course, some had a little experience of taking online classes in the US, and others had taken online courses outside the US. These diverse backgrounds and experiences made my study rich.

Overview of Research Design

In this section, I will describe my research design, starting with a more detailed articulation of my research questions, followed by a presentation of my data collection and analysis process.

Research Questions

My study investigated the following overarching question in the context of the course EDE 484: *How can we positively affect the identity development of novice online teachers?*

More specifically, this study addressed the following research questions:

1. What kind of online teacher did each participant aspire to be at the end of the course, and how did it differ from where they started?
2. How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?

Below, I will explain in more detail what each of these research questions entailed and how I addressed each question:

- 1. What kind of online teacher did each participant aspire to be at the end of the course and how did it differ from where they started?**

Based on the definition of identity by Gee (2000-2001), and consistent with the approach taken by several of the studies on teacher identity I reviewed (i.e. Baxter, 2012; Flores & Day, 2006; Luehmann, 2007; Luehmann & Borasi, 2011; Luehmann & Tinelli, 2008; Richardson & Alsup, 2015; Thanaraj, 2016, Han, 2017), studying the identity developments of my participants throughout the course required first of all making explicit *what kind of online teacher* each of the participant identified with by the end of the course, and how this was different from what they were thinking at the beginning of the course. More specifically, for each participant I looked for how their beliefs, values, aspirations, and ideals developed within each of the following categories, which were identified by one of the course designers as characterizing the *kind of online teacher* the course aimed to prepare:

1. *Seeing online learning as a complement, rather than an alternative, to traditional/face-to-face learning*
2. *Seeking to increase students' access to learning opportunities by leveraging online spaces*
3. *Seeking to create a caring and interactive learning community in any instructional context*
4. *Seeking to enhance students' engagement and motivation by capitalizing on the many affordances of digital technologies*
5. *Seeking to promote deep learning and understanding by capitalizing on appropriate digital tools and resources*
6. *Seeking to promote collaborative learning in any instructional context*

7. *Seeking to provide students with choices and differentiated learning opportunities, leveraging technology whenever possible*
8. *Seeking to enhance student assessment practices through the use of digital technologies, so as to better support learning and inform instruction*
9. *Appreciating the need for goal-driven and purposeful instructional design – especially when planning online learning experiences*
10. *Seeing the use of digital technologies as a tool rather than a goal.*

In addition, I also looked explicitly at how other identities might have affected the development of each participant's online teacher identity and was open to notice any other changes related to my participants' identity development.

2. How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support identity development?

For each participant, I looked for evidence in their online written work from the course and interviews in relation to how specific experiences in and/or characteristics of the course might have affected any of the changes identified in the findings for Research Question 1. I looked specifically at the impact of each of the following key activities within the course (which were explicitly designed to support identity development):

- *Experiences as online learners* in the first part of the course;
- Group Project: Designing and teaching an online module to the rest of the class;
- Individual Project: Designing an online module of their choice;
- Reflective Journals at the end of each module, and Final Reflection.

My theoretical framework suggested that “participation” and “recognition” are most significant components of identity development. Therefore, I identified which opportunities of participation and recognition were offered within each of these key elements of the course, and how each participant made use of these opportunities. I also looked for the implications of the level of activity/ engagement, agency, and accountability of specific activities/learning experiences, as well as the level of support provided (and perceived) in terms of expertise, feedback, and recognition. I also looked for similarities and differences across individuals.

In addition to these key course components, I was also open to identify other aspects of the course that might have affected participants' identity development.

Data Collection

I used several data sources to collect the data for my study, as described below:

Course Artifacts. I used the following artifacts from the course as data for this study:

- Documents created by the course instructor - these artifacts allowed me to better understand the course design and expectations, and later examine their impacts on the participants' identity development, these included:
 1. The syllabus of the course, as posted on Blackboard and accessible to all students, which was a 9 page document with detailed description of the course, its goals and objectives, key components of the course and course expectations (see Appendix A.1).

2. "Guidelines for success in an online course" provided by the instructor on Blackboard, which among other things articulated expectations about participants' online interactions (see Appendix A.2).
 3. Detailed descriptions of major course projects and assignments, as posted on Blackboard and accessible to all students – including most notably:
 - a) The prompts provided for the initial introductions and the journal entry students were asked to write prior to other course activities (see Appendix A.3);
 - b) The prompts provided for each Discussion Board (see Appendix A.4);
 - c) The prompts provided for the Reflective Journals to be completed at the end of each instructional module (see Appendix A.5);
 - d) Detailed guidelines for the Group Project (see Appendix A.6);
 - e) Detailed guidelines for the Individual Project (see Appendix A.7);
 - f) Detailed guidelines for the Final Reflection (see Appendix A.8).
 4. Instructor's detailed lesson plans prepared by the instructor for each of the modules, which were shared only with the TA but not with the students.
- Writing produced by the students in the course (as captured online in Blackboard):
 1. Students' posts from the "meet your classmates" discussion board and the preliminary Journal entry (see Appendix A.3 for the prompt provided for these assignments): These preliminary journals served as a "baseline," as they were completed before the course started, and required students to share what

interested them about the course, what experiences they had with online teaching learning, and their current beliefs about online teaching and learning.

2. Discussion board posts and comments from each module (3 discussion boards in total – see Appendix A.4 for the specific prompts): Through their participation in the discussion boards, students shared their ideas, experiences, views, concerns, challenges and solutions on different issues related to online teaching and learning at different points in the course; therefore, discussion boards entries provided valuable information to trace how participants' views changed throughout the course and the kind of online teacher they wanted to be.
3. Reflective Journals at the end of each instructional module (total of 7 journal entries by each student – see Appendix A.5 for the prompts provided by the instructor for each module): These journal entries, in addition to providing each student with an opportunity for reflecting and synthesizing their key take-aways from each module, also provided valuable data for me to trace the development of participants' views and insights about various aspects of online teaching and learning, and the impact of specific components of the course on this development.
4. Iterative plans for the Group Project module (including instructor's feedback): This project was the first ever opportunity for most participants to design an online module to teach to others; looking at how their plan developed provided some implicit yet concrete evidence of what they most valued about online teaching and learning, and how that changed over time.

5. Feedback from the students who took the Group Project module: This feedback provided very valuable data about how students in the class recognized each other as online teachers, and how this recognition impacted the identity development of the participants.
6. Iterative plans for the Individual Project (including instructor's feedback): I also looked at each participant's Individual Project plans as implicit evidence of what they most valued about online teaching and learning by the end of the course; the individual project assignment was especially valuable to identify each participant's identity as an online teacher, as they were solely responsible to make all the decisions and design it based on what they have learned throughout the course.
7. Final reflection papers: These final papers represented one of the most important data points, as each student provided answers to the following questions:
 - a) *What do you think are the most valuable affordances of online learning, and how do you plan to capitalize on them in your future teaching?*
 - b) *What do you think are the greatest limitations of online learning, and how could you minimize them if you were asked to teach an online course because your students do not live in the region?*
 - c) *Which types of OTL practices are you planning to use with your students, why and how?*

- d) *What do you think are the greatest challenges for you with respect to designing high-quality online learning activities? What do you plan to do to address these challenges?*
- e) *How would you choose when and where to use online learning activities for your students?*
- f) *Looking back at your learning throughout the course, what stands out as main “take-aways” and surprises?*
- g) *How did your perceptions about and approach to online teaching and learning change as a result of this course?*
- h) *How did each of the OTL practices you learned about in the course impact your thoughts about teaching and learning practice, generally, and how might you be able to apply these practices in your future practice – either in online teaching or in F2F teaching?*

Semi-Structured Interviews. Interviews are often used in qualitative data collection as they allow the researchers to ask key questions defining the main issues to be investigated (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008) – and indeed many of the studies I reviewed in chapter 3 used this mode of data collection. I used semi-structured interviews for my study because they gave the participants the opportunity to elaborately discuss things that were significant to them. The semi structured interviews allowed me to explore the experiences, perceptions and beliefs of the participants to have a deeper understanding of their identity development, the challenges they faced in the process of the identity development and how they dealt with those challenges.

I used intensive interviewing with my participants. Intensive interview refers to a “gently-guided, one sided conversation that explores research participants’ perspectives on their personal experience with the research topic” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 56). Intensive interviews rely on “open-ended questions” and explore “participants’ experience and situations” in detail, with an emphasis on “understanding the research participant’s perspective, meanings, and experience” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 56). Intensive interviewing also allows flexibility and “opens interactional space for ideas and issues to arise” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 56). Therefore, for my study, intensive interview enabled me to follow up on “unanticipated areas of inquiry, hints, and implicit views and accounts of action” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 56). I interviewed all the seven participants twice; after asking them to respond to a pre-interview survey prior to the first interview.

(a) *Pre-Interview Survey:* Based on the course goals in terms of the kind of online teachers the course was aiming to develop and the initial analysis of the existing data from students’ online work, I developed a survey (see Appendix B.3) for the participants to fill in before they participated in the first interview. The main goals of this survey were to get some systematic data about key issues and to create an opportunity to ask follow up questions. The survey had 16 questions, which were based on the ten aspects of the kind of online teacher the course wanted to promote – the participants had to rate those on a scale from 1-3 with 1 as least important and 3 as most important.

I sent the survey to the participants well in advance to go through and respond to – most of them sent it back to me with their response prior to the interview, and I printed and took those with me for the interviews. Two participants responded to it before we

started the interview- which took 3-5 minutes. During the interview I focused on some of the listed items in the survey to add information I was not able to gather from my reading of their online work. This enabled me to know more about what they thought about those specific items as an aspiring online teacher. I also requested them to talk about the survey items they rated less and share why they rated those less than the others.

(b) First Interview: Before conducting the first semi-structured interview, I had coded and analyzed most of the course artifacts (initial reflection, weekly reflective journals and final reflections). This analysis enabled me to finalize what questions to ask in the interviews, and where I needed more elaboration to have a better understanding of the changes and transformation each participant experienced in terms of identity development. I developed some general questions based on my research questions and my experience as a TA in the course (see appendix B.1). Each of the interviews was maximum 1.5 hours long. Prior to the interviews, I shared an information letter with the participants describing my research and providing my contact details, so that the prospective participants could contact me with additional questions they had.

Though I had a set of questions for the interviews, I was conscious not to focus too much only on them during the interviews, because Lindlof and Taylor (2010) suggested that one can have a list of questions but has to be flexible. I also remembered the suggestion of Seidman (1991) for asking for clarification, seeking concrete details and requesting stories during the interviews. I ensured my qualitative interviews to be very free flowing and context-bound. In the interviews I made sure to “listen more, talk less” (Seidman, 1991. p. 56).

(c) *Follow-up Interview*. After analyzing the first set of interviews, and writing a first draft of the case narrative for each participant, I interviewed my participants for a second time, asking follow-up questions and elaborations on emergent important issues. Prior to the interview, I shared the draft of their narratives with each participant, so that I could request their comments and feedback. This allowed me to cross-check issues and points. The data from the second set of interviews helped me to revise the individual narratives, as well as contributed to addressing my research questions more generally. The follow up interviews were shorter – about half an hour for each of the participants, except for one which was about one hour.

Analytical Memos. Memos are useful data for qualitative studies which can be coded and categorized (Saldana, 2009). According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), “writing notes, reflective memos, thoughts, and insights is invaluable for generating the unusual insights that move the analysis from the mundane and obvious to the creative” and these contribute to analytical memos (p. 213). Throughout the process of collecting the data for my dissertation as well as analyzing them, I wrote analytical memos about the process, about insights gained and the changes I had done and why. I used those memos as data for my dissertation.

Data Analysis

According to Goldenberg (1992), “Our analysis more often than not is an appendage, an interruption, a parenthetical effort attached to the actors’ own statements, transforming them and reconceptualizing them, but never replacing them” (p. 324). While analyzing the data one must keep in mind that the “analysis strategies have to be

compatible with” the questions asked (Maxwell 1998, p. 90). Keeping all these considerations in mind, I analyzed the data collected from various sources to find answers to my research questions. In this section, I will describe the data analysis process of my study.

Transcribing the Interviews. To ensure accuracy and to save time, I used professional help to transcribe all my interviews.

Data Analysis Process. For analyzing my data, I followed the process described below.

Phase 1: My first phase of analysis took place before interviewing the participants. I first read through the initial journal entries, weekly journals and the final reflections for each participant, and coded them using attribute coding and descriptive coding related to the following specific questions for each participant:

- What does s/he perceive as the main values and limitations of online learning?
- What kind of online learning does s/he want to promote as a teacher, and why?
- When does s/he envision using online learning in her/his teaching, and why?
- What kind of online learning environment does s/he want to create and why?
- Which online teaching practices does s/he consider most important (and would want to acquire), and why?

For each participant, I summarized my findings for each of these questions, at the “beginning” and “end” of the course respectively in a table (Appendix D.1), and identified changes that occurred. I then reviewed all the rest of the course artifacts chronologically to identify evidence of some of these changes taking place (and in

relation to what course activities), as well as evidence of challenges the student encountered. This preliminary analysis allowed me to finalize my interview questions.

Phase 2: After I had conducted the first round of interviews with each participant, I got the interviews transcribed and coded them using the same set of questions mentioned in phase 1 to add to the previous tables, and with references to specific course activities as impactful.

Phase 3: Based on the coding from phase 1 and 2, I created a new table for each of the participants organized around my two research questions, using categories related to the kind of online teacher the course was striving to prepare, and the main course activities providing opportunities for participation and recognition, respectively.

Phase 4: In this phase, I conducted follow-up interviews with each of the participants to verify my interpretation of their online teacher identity and their journey towards their identity formation as online teachers, and asked supplementary questions. As part of this interview, I shared in advance the preliminary narrative with each participant and requested for their comments and feedback. None of the participants wanted to change anything in the narratives that I had written; they stated that the narratives well represented their views.

Phase 5: In this phase I analyzed the discussion boards that were most relevant to my study (module 3, module 5 and module 8). Additionally, I also analyzed the group lesson feedback the students provided to the group where they were students. Lastly, I analyzed the feedback the instructor provided to the students in their individual and group projects.

Phase 6: At this phase I finalized the narratives for each of the participant based on all the available data as reported in chapter 5. After all the individual narratives were finalized, I systematically looked across them to conduct my cross-case analysis – the results of which are reported in chapter 6.

The following table presents an overview of the data collection and analysis process:

Table 4.1:

Overview of Data Collection and Analysis

Data sources	Data analysis
Course artifacts (Syllabus, Discussion Board prompts, Final paper prompts, Weekly journal prompts)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reviewed to gather information about the course- course requirements and expectations, requirements for specific assignments 2. Reviewed to identify opportunities for “participation” and “recognition” provided to the participants
Blackboard documents- Initial reflections, Final paper, Weekly journals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First review and open coding 2. Second coding based on pre-determined categories 3. Creation of tables summarizing key data for each category 4. Used the data to write the first draft of the narrative for question 1 and 2 (prior to the interview) 5. Used this first draft to finalize the questions for the first interview 6. After the first interviews, revised the narrative and added from the interview data 7. Used the narratives to determine the follow-up questions for interview 2.
Transcript of Interview 1 (see Appendix B.1 for interview questions)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First reading 2. Coding based on the pre-determined categories 3. Added findings and selected quotes to the case narratives 4. Used the revised narratives to determine the follow-up questions for interview 2 5. Shared these narratives with the participants during Interview 2 for member check
Blackboard documents -	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. After the first interview and writing the first draft of narratives, read and coded the discussion boards

Discussion boards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Used the data primarily to identify quotes to illustrate how the participants received recognition from their teacher and peers. Added the findings to the narratives
Transcript of Interview 2 (see Appendix B.2 for interview questions)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> First reading Coding based on the pre-determined categories Added new findings and quotes to the case narratives
Researcher Memo	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed and used to write down the individual cases, cross case analysis for chapter 6 and for writing down the recommendations and implications

Note: Final case narratives were used as the base to conduct the cross case analysis

Study Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness of a qualitative study answers questions like whether the data are reliable, whether the claims are supported well enough by evidences, and if the claims are useful or not, which “capture concerns with validity, reliability, objectivity, and generalizability while broadening and deepening them” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 40). “Credibility,” “dependability,” “confirmability” and “transferability” are the four constructs of trustworthiness of a qualitative study originally proposed by Guba in 1981 (Shenton, 2004). In this section, I will discuss how I made efforts to achieve the four constructs of trustworthiness throughout my study.

Credibility

The credibility (also known as internal validity by many researchers) of the data in a qualitative study refers to how far the interpretations of data are true to the context. As a TA in the course, I engaged in conversations and interactions with the participants throughout an entire semester prior to starting my research study, which I believe added

to the credibility of my study. I also shared the draft narratives with the respective individual participants before the second interview to ensure “member checks” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Moreover, I also wrote analytical memos to ensure “reflexivity” which is “the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher” (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 210). Reflexivity allows us to think critically about our research choices, and examine critically our efforts (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Lastly, I ensured triangulation in my study through data collection from multiple sources over a long period of time, using multiple methods, and I also used “peer debriefing” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 40).

Dependability

Dependability means applying techniques in the study so that “if the work were repeated, in the same context, with the same methods and with the same participants, similar results would be obtained” (Shenton, 2004, p. 71). To achieve dependability, I remained true to my data and developed an audit trail (Marshall & Rossman, 2011), where I transparently described every steps of my planning, data collection, analysis and reporting of findings. I recorded every decision and their reasons throughout my research path. I also utilized reflexivity to ensure dependability in my study.

Confirmability

According to Shenton, “The concept of confirmability is the qualitative investigator’s comparable concern to objectivity” (2004, p. 72). A qualitative researcher has to make sure that the findings of the study represent the “experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher” (Shenton, 2004, p. 72). The findings of a research should be free of the researcher’s biases. To

achieve confirmability I was very careful in interpreting the participants' responses. I also utilized reflexivity and triangulation which helped me to achieve confirmability.

Moreover, I used member-check for confirmability.

Transferability

In a qualitative study transferability indicates the applicability of the findings of the study in other contexts, settings, time, situation and people. In this study, I aimed at finding out how the participants developed their identities as online teachers, and how the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course supported such a development, with the purpose of identifying what helped or hindered their identity development, to use these findings to help design better online courses and programs. I believe the findings will be transferable to other contexts and settings to understand teachers' identity development because my participants represented diverse backgrounds in terms of their race, nationality, teaching experiences and online learning experiences, grade levels they teach or would be teaching, and their fields of education. The findings of my study were also contextualized in each of the case narratives. To ensure transferability I utilized "thick description" (Geertz, 1973), which means, when reporting specific findings I also described the context, participants, and situations.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout my study and beyond, I was respectful and honest to my study participants. I ensured my best effort to keep all their responses confidential. I informed them about my study and was flexible to answer any questions they asked regarding the study and its design. I was honest in all my communication with them. I received the

Research Subject Review Board's (RSRB) approval from the University of Rochester's Office of Human Subject Protection (OHSP) after completing the required procedures. This included providing an outline of my research methods, benefits to my participants and potential risks as well as participants' informed consent letter and confidentiality statement.

Informing Participants

I shared information about my study to my participants in an email attachment where I told them what the study was about, why I was doing it, why it was relevant, why their participation was important (Appendix C). I also explained the benefits of the study for them, for the future students, course and program designers and teachers of courses that prepare online teachers. I assured them that their story would be kept confidential and would be used only for the research purpose for my dissertation. I made "complete disclosure" about my study to my participants (Patton, 2002, as cited in Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 113). I also requested for their permission to access their written works in Blackboard to use those as my data for which they consented; I also requested for permission to interview them twice for which they also consented. I handed over the semi-structured interview questions to them prior to each of the interviews and informed them that they could decline answering questions, as well as being interviewed. None of the participants declined to answer any questions or being interviewed. The interviews were conducted at their convenience. I made sure that no harm or discomfort was caused to them because of this study.

Participant Privacy and Anonymity

I made efforts to ensure the anonymity of all my participants. The data was kept confidential and the participants' privacy was maintained strictly. During the interview I offered the participants to choose their pseudonyms for the study. However, I had already used pseudonyms for the participants during my preliminary analysis of the data before I conducted the interviews. I chose flower names for each of them because Rochester is called *the city of flowers*. At the beginning of the first round of interviews, I told them this, informed them the names I had used so far and invited them to choose any name they would prefer for themselves. Each of my participants happily agreed to the pseudonym I had chosen for them and they told me they liked those. While reporting my findings and writing my dissertation, I took utmost caution so that the identity of my participants remained concealed. I shared my findings and narratives with them before I included those in my dissertation. I kept my interview and other data password protected in my personal laptop which I believe is secured because I am the sole user of it.

Chapter 5: Individual Cases

Introduction

In this chapter I report on the findings of the case study of each of the participants who took the course and agreed to participate (7 out of 8), in the following order (based on the pedagogical training received and their teaching experience prior to entering the course):

- A. Ren – a counselor and future counselor educator, with no formal training in teaching;
- B. Lupin – a college administrator and doctoral student in human development, with limited in-service teacher training and some experience teaching higher education courses;
- C. Tulip – an international student from China learning to become a TESOL teacher;
- D. Peony – another international student from China, with two years of TESOL teaching experience;
- E. Laurel – an experienced international TESOL teacher with ten years of teaching experience in a European country;
- F. Iris – a veteran special education teacher with over 20 years of experience in K-12 US schools; and
- G. Lilac – a veteran TESOL teacher and currently an instructional coach, with over 20 years of teaching experience in K-12 US schools.

Each case narrative will be organized as follows:

Background Information

To provide a context for each case, I will briefly report information about the subject's field of specialization, current occupation, teacher training and past experiences with online teaching and learning.

In His/her Own Words

Before reporting the findings of my systematic analysis of the rich set of data collected, I think it would be useful to report verbatim the "key take-aways" from the course each participant recorded in his/her last journal – as I think these lists capture what stood out the most from the course experiences for each of the participants.

Response to Research Question #1

What kind of online teacher did each participant aspire to be at the end of the course, and how did it differ from where they started? – to answer this question, in this section I have reconstructed the participants' beliefs, aspirations, and ideals with respect to each of the following categories (originally identified by one of the course designers as characterizing the "kind of online teacher" the course aimed to prepare):

1. Seeing online learning as a complement, rather than an alternative, to traditional/face-to-face learning.
2. Seeking to increase students' access to learning opportunities by leveraging online spaces
3. Seeking to create a caring and interactive learning community in any instructional context
4. Seeking to enhance students' engagement and motivation by capitalizing on the many affordances of digital technologies
5. Seeking to promote deep learning and understanding by capitalizing on appropriate digital tools and resources
6. Seeking to promote collaborative learning in any instructional context
7. Seeking to provide students with choices and differentiated learning opportunities, leveraging technology as most appropriate
8. Appreciating the need for goals-driven instructional design and thoughtful instructional decisions – especially when planning online learning experiences

9. Seeking to enhance student assessment practices through the use of digital technologies, so as to better support learning and inform instruction
10. Seeing the use of digital technologies as a tool rather than a goal in itself. (R. Borasi, Personal Communication, June 11, 2018)

In addition, in this section I will also examine systematically how each of the participants addressed a few other themes that emerged from my analysis, those are:

- Considerations related to who the participant wanted to be as a professional teacher.
- Field specific considerations – which may shed light on how other identities might have affected the participant's development of her/his online teacher identity.
- Changes in perceptions about online teaching and learning the participant explicitly identified.

For each of these categories, I describe the views of the participants by the end of the course (as identified from the systematic analysis of the data collected from the course as well as from the interviews); I also report on changes that might have occurred as a result of the course, and any challenges or concerns they encountered. Whenever the information is available, I will also identify what experiences within the course might have affected the reported change.

Response to Research Question #2

How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development? – in this section of each case study, I will systematically examine how the participants engaged with each

of the following key opportunities offered in the course and the impact of these experiences on their identity development:

- a) *Opportunities for Participation: Experiences as online learners*
- b) *Opportunities for Participation: Experiences as online learners*
- c) *Opportunities for Recognition: From Self*
- d) *Opportunities for Recognition: From Others*

At the end of this section, I will also identify other factors that seemed to have affected the participants' identity development.

Case Summary

In this final section, I will summarize key findings about the kind of online teacher the participants wanted to be, how that changed as a result of the course, the challenges they might have encountered as well as the impacts of the *participation* and *recognition* opportunities they were offered in the course.

The results of my cross-case analysis will be reported later in Chapter 6, and in Chapter 7 I will discuss the findings and recommendations. Before reporting the seven case narratives in the remainder of this chapter, I have included a table that summarizes the score each participant (identified by the alphabet at the top of each column) provided to items in the pre-interview survey – so that I will be able to refer to these data as needed in the context of each case narrative.

Table 5.1

Pre-Interview Survey Response

I aspire to be an online teacher who:							
Statements	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1. Is knowledgeable about the content taught	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
2. Is knowledgeable about the latest technology	2	2	3	2	3	2	3
3. Is knowledgeable about digital resources students could use	2	2	3	2	3	3	2
4. Is a life-long learner and innovator	3	3	3	2	3	2	3
5. Is goal-driven/ Designs instruction to meet specific learning goals	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
6. Fosters a caring and vibrant learning community in class	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
7. Creates a personal relationship with the students	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
8. Promotes deep learning, building on students' prior knowledge and providing students with meaning-making opportunities	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
9. Creates opportunities for students to work together	3	2	3	2	3	2	2
10. Designs motivating and engaging activities	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
11. Meets students' individual needs and preferences	3	3	2	3	3	3	2
12. Provides multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate learning	3	2	3	2	3	3	3
13. Clearly communicates learning goals and expectations/ provides clear directions	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
14. Creates and curates great online materials from students	3	2	3	3	1	1	1
15. Collaborates with colleagues to design quality instructions	3	2	3	2	2	1	2
16. Increases students' access to learning opportunities and resources	3	2	2	1	1	1	2

5A. The Case of Ren – A Counselor and Future Counselor Educator

Background

Ren was a white male PhD student in Counseling at the Warner School. He was a mental health and addictions counselor who aspired to be a counselor educator.

Teaching Training and Experience

As a trained counselor, Ren did not have any formal training on teaching before taking EDE 484. After his experience in EDE 484, however, he decided to continue his training for the Advanced Certificate in Online Teaching. By the time of the interview he had taken two additional courses and the Online Teaching Practicum.

Prior to taking EDE 484 and after he completed his master's degree, Ren guest lectured at a university, but he never taught an entire course. By the time of the interview, however, he had already taught some face-to-face courses at the Warner School.

Online Experience

Ren took a hybrid online course during his master's program, which he thought was "poorly organized" with very little feedback from the instructor. It was mostly self-paced and there was no communication between students, there was "an absolute ton of reading" and nobody responded or commented on others' posts (Interview 1, L- 11).

What Kind of Online Teacher Ren Aspired to Be

In this section, I will address my first research question by describing what Ren aspired to be with respect to each of the ten components identified by the course designers as characterizing the "kind of online teacher" the course aimed to prepare, and then report on other elements that emerged from my analysis of the data. I will conclude

this section by discussing the changes Ren reported to have experienced as a result of the course. I will start with Ren's own take-aways at the end of the course, as reflected in his last journal entry.

In his own words – main take-aways at the end of the course:

1. Make sure the online module is organized.
2. Make sure design of module keeps the student's attention and is aesthetically pleasing.
3. Make sure that you are not continuously redesigning while the course is in progress, or moving course materials around.
4. Give clear and explicit directions.
5. Set clear and explicit deadlines/timelines for assignments.
6. Provide resources for troubleshooting technology.
7. Do not be limited by your own technological capacities; look up how to do new things on the internet, ask other technologically inclined individuals for ideas.
8. Thoughtfully use technology, don't just use it because it is a new tool or an arbitrary reason.
9. Make sure you are available to the students and encourage questions.
10. Establish an online presence and identity as an instructor.
11. Do something different; it will be memorable.
12. Login to the module frequently.
13. Have students interact with each other and the instructor using multiple modalities to build a community.
14. Check-in with the students about the requirements of the course, and how they're doing with those requirements.
15. Use humor. (W.J.7, L- 372-390)

1. Seeing Online Learning as a Complement, Rather Than an Alternative, to Traditional/Face-to-Face Learning

Ren did not see a distinction between the kind of the online teacher and the kind of face-to-face teacher he wanted to be – although he recognized that some modifications in approach and pedagogy might be called for by the two different environments. Talking about the list of items in the pre-interview survey, Ren stated that they were all “pretty

core competencies of being a pretty good teacher or instructor” (Interview 1, L- 250-251), that were necessary for both online and traditional classes:

Best practices are always important, being organized and being supportive and providing materials and being available for students and I think those are really the basics of any kind of instruction, you have to have those if you’re going to have a successful course. (Interview 2, L- 211-214)

He considered these best practices to be “difficult” but “doable” in both online and face-to-face learning environments (Interview 1, L- 252-253), although he also recognized that “You may just have to change some of your pedagogical approaches and change some activities that may have worked in an offline setting and being able to integrate that into an online setting” (Interview 1, L- 253-255). He concluded, however, by saying, “I do think that all of these are important for a teacher whether you’re an offline, hybrid, or no matter what kind of course” (Interview 1, L- 255-256).

2. Seeking to Increase Students’ Access to Learning Opportunities by Leveraging Online Spaces

Ren wanted to be a teacher who would promote wide access to education, and he believed that using online teaching and learning (OTL) would provide him with a valuable tool to expand access and include students who were not able to participate before. He also expressed some concerns, though, about how access to the Internet might limit this affordance.

One of the greatest values of OTL identified by Ren was that “education is no longer confined to a brick and mortar institution,” students could be anywhere in the world and “at their convenience” (I.R. L- 2-4). He contended that those who work full-time and are not able to attend classes on campus can take classes online easily (F.R. L-

50-51). He reflected upon the affordances brought by Coursera and other Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that have enabled access to education to “people who were unable to attend traditional universities, whether due to disabilities, familial obligations, or employment constraints” (I.R. L- 5-7) – thus addressing social justice issues. He thought that this “flexibility” offered by online education to students “is something that has been conspicuously absent from education in the past” (I.R. L- 7-8). He stated, “With the physical-location barrier broken down, a classroom can become more diverse” and students with different types of physical disabilities could be included without them being worried about “navigating challenging locations on campus” (F.R. L- 47-50). Thus, according to him, OTL creates “an opportunity to include and just get more voices in the room in terms of not excluding anybody” (Interview 1, L- 320-321).

Ren shared, however, his concern about the fact that not everyone might have the same access to online education:

My concern now is, whether or not the audience who really needs access to online courses is actually capable of doing so. Sure, online learning is a great convenience for me, but I have access to a computer, and I am fortunate enough to be taking a class that centers around online learning. Supposedly, four billion people in the world still do not have internet access (Luxton, 2016). I realize that means a large number of people in the world actually have internet access, but I'm concerned that those people without internet access will just keep falling farther and farther behind, especially since, as the readings discussed, our literacies and competencies in education are changing with this technological revolution. The ability to learn online is such a powerful tool, I just wish more people had the opportunity to engage with it. (W.J.1, L- 7-15)

Ren said he would “love to create content for massive open online courses (MOOCs), because he thought that “the MOOC audience would yield an incredible

diversity” and he would also like to see how that experience might differ from traditional higher education online courses (F.R. L- 27-29).

3. Seeking to Create a Caring and Interactive Learning Community in Any

Instructional Context

Ren put paramount importance on creating a learning community in his classes and establishing a positive and caring relationship with students. At first, he was concerned about whether this would be possible to achieve in online courses, but after the course, he became confident that this was possible and identified some strategies to make it happen in his future online teaching.

As mentioned earlier, Ren believed that online education could bring people from different parts of the world together. At the same time, to achieve the highest benefit from this, it was also important to make them be “engaged with a community of learners” (F.R. L-45-47). He contended that “the instructor needs to intentionally put effort forth to build the community” (F.R. L- 65- 67).

At the very beginning of the course, Ren shared his feeling that “lack of community or cohesiveness between the students and instructor in the course is the greatest limitation to online education” (F.R. L- 60- 61). His main concern was whether, as a future online teacher, he would be able to communicate well in an online environment – especially because all his experiences thus far had been in face-to-face contexts: “I know that we can use web-cameras for the face-to-face interaction piece, but I am sure there will be little subtleties that I will need to address to express myself in an unequivocal manner” (I.R. L- 23-28).

Later in a discussion board post, Ren came back to discuss the kind of relationship a teacher and students should have and the kind of interactions that could help create a connection between them, thus contributing to a learning community. He wrote:

Within the conclusion of Pacansky-Brock's (2016) editorial piece, she discusses the necessity of a "present, empathetic and aware instructor" to help students and faculty alike see the learning opportunities that online courses afford. In order to foster online connections between students and instructors, I feel that these instructor qualities are a must. I also think that establishing a connection between student and teacher is fundamentally determined by the pedagogical methods the professor relies upon. Anecdotally, in an online environment, an instructor who just posts lectures and does not interact with the students on a message board or through video chat will be perceived very differently from one who is frequently making a point to engage with the students. Since pedagogy determines the way professors interact, it also determines how the students will perceive the professor, ultimately resulting in connections being made or lost. I keep thinking back to our conversation in class about how "teachers teach how they were taught." I think this can be extended to say "teachers make connections, or not, based on the way they were taught. (DB Module 5.2, L- 60-72)

As the course progressed, Ren developed a much more positive view of how a learning community could be developed online, as well as some concrete strategies to make this happen as a future online teacher. From his personal experience he saw that if the teacher takes the time "to personally engage everyone" students become "more active" (F.R. L- 64- 65). He also stated that online teachers could use "multiple modalities" for the students to interact with the teacher as well as with each other to build a community (W.J.7, L- 386-387), and that they could also utilize assessments that promote cooperative work (F.R. L- 65- 67).

Most importantly, to build a learning community, Ren wanted to ensure his online presence as an instructor, for which he would like to utilize "video overview" of himself

to put a face on his name as well as to allow his students to “get a sense of his personality” and to show them that he was “relatable” (F.R. L- 118-120). While reflecting on the importance of this practice, he said that the educators who influenced his “development” allowed their students “to see their genuine self, and they were not afraid to be themselves when they were instructing” (F.R. L- 120-122). He believed that by doing this the educators were able to support “the educational process since they established a relatable, and genuine, teaching presence” (F.R. L- 122- 123).

On a personal level, Ren thought he was “personable” and had a “decent sense of humor” which he liked to “integrate” in teaching (Interview 1, L-116-117). He believed this would help him build a relationship with his students and would break down the “power differentiation,” so he could be a guide to his students who was just “a little bit more experienced in the field” (Interview 1, L- 119-121). He wanted to break down the “student-professor dynamic” and wanted to have conversations with his students about how they wanted to learn and if he was teaching it “the best way” (Interview 1, L- 126-127). From his previous experience he saw that when he did this his students became “more receptive” and “more open” (Interview 1, L- 127-129).

4. Seeking to Enhance Students' Engagement and Motivation by Capitalizing on the Many Affordances of Digital Technologies

Ren wanted to be a teacher that motivates and engages students, and believed that online teaching could provide him with some valuable tools to do that – especially as it would enable him to present materials in new and more engaging ways:

I want to be the kind of teacher that instills intrinsic motivation in my students to be able to do well and to have the confidence to go out and do well in their

counseling courses, and again when they get out into the field.... an instructor can have an incredible influence on students and can really impact their trajectory in their profession, and if I'm an instructor and I'm just kind of going through the motions and telling people just to read things in classes or I'm using one pedagogical method you're just missing a lot of opportunities to help people develop. (Interview 2, L- 200-208)

In a weekly journal early in the course, Ren recognized that it is imperative for teachers to foster "intrinsic motivation," and to explicate to their students "how learning skills in a course can be applicable to any career path, even if the course isn't necessarily related to the interests of certain individuals in the course" (W.J. L- 66-68). He further elaborated on this point in his final interview:

When I'm shaping syllabi for courses I'm teaching next year and thinking about okay how can I word this assignment, how can I word this in the syllabus, how can I present this assignment in class to have that intrinsic motivation piece and how can I sell it to them that it's actually going to be really important for them to get involved with this assignment and how it can positively affect them as they move forward in their career, just like getting people excited to be able to do course work. (Interview 2, L- 219-225)

To motivate and engage students as a teacher, Ren would like to try to present things differently, introduce topics in a different way that "students may not traditionally have been exposed to" (Interview 1, L-176). He believed that online teaching could provide him with ways to be more creative and willing to take risks that would help motivate and engage his students in activities. As an example, in his final interview he referred back to their Group Project, where they created a video game to teach some content:

Something that I really strive to do is just to help people see something or present material in a different way so it's a little bit more memorable than just some of the standard pedagogical tools that we use, that's what I strive to do to help people engaged. Usually people remember something if it's the first time they're seeing it or if it's presented in a different way. I definitely had the opportunity to do that

in the course ... creating a video game theme for the module and then having the video that explained everything that we were doing and just creating elements into that just to keep people alert and attentive to the actual content of what was important in that module. (Interview 2, L- 31-40)

Ren also thought that if a course is graded in the “satisfactory/unsatisfactory continuum” it “takes away the motivation to be performance oriented, and makes the course learning focused” (W.J.2, L- 68-71).

5. Seeking to Promote Deep Learning and Understanding by Capitalizing on Appropriate Digital Tools and Resources

Ren wanted to be a teacher that fosters deep learning and understanding. As a result of the course readings and reflections and discussions around them – since he did not receive any teacher training prior to this course – he seemed to have adopted a constructivist approach to learning, and to value eliciting and building on students' prior knowledge, engaging students in critical inquiry about the content and helping students deal with conceptual barriers. He also identified online tools like discussion boards and chats as valuable to achieve these goals.

In a discussion board, Ren articulated some of his views on learning and pedagogy, as he referred to research on a learner-centered approach:

In my estimation, a major factor that determines student-to-student interactions, and building those connections, is the teaching philosophy of the instructor. The instructor can ultimately influence the amount that students interact, and how they interact, particularly in an online environment. Thorman and Zimmerman (2012) reiterate the constructivist/student-centered learning approach, and describe the constructivist approach as one that involves “learning by doing,” engaging with one another, and engaging with the instructor(s). The instructor(s) is/are essentially a guide(s) on the side. Apart from the philosophy, the pedagogical methods that are employed also can hinder/help student interactions. In an online environment, the use of threaded discussions and video chats, in conjunction with project-based learning and authentic learning can help students make those

essential social connections that facilitate learning. Also, after reading Janssen's et al.'s (2009) work, I would argue that a level of familiarity would be necessary for students to foster meaningful social connections in a learning environment, but not the type of familiarity that can lead to complacency. (DB Module 5.3, L- 4-16)

Ren's appreciation for constructivist principles and practices was also revealed in this reflection after experiencing the "Fish activity" early in the course, captured in a discussion board:

Boettcher (2010) discusses several principles that are essential to learning which were present in the "fish-area" activity. For instance, [the instructor] encouraged us to bring our own personalized knowledge and skills to solve for the area of the fish. Additionally, [the instructor] directed the learning experience. The tools that were available to us certainly shaped the outcome of our learning, and we each uniquely approached the situation in response to the tools that we had available to us. Lastly, we were encouraged to connect knowledge clusters when we discussed our different approaches to finding area (DB Module 3.1, L- 6-12).

I felt [the instructor] encouraged us to find personal relevance that aided in our learning by asking us to figure out how to solve for the area based on our prior knowledge. By doing so, she was fostering intrinsic motivation throughout the activity. The activity itself also focused on the process of how we found the area, not finding the area the "correct way." In this way, [the instructor] created a challenging activity that was competency based, and could have application in real world settings, which also aides in the development of intrinsic motivation. Lenburg (1999), as cited in Stavredes (2011), discusses how competency based learning should include various principles. These principles were reflected in the fish-area activity, especially since the activity was learner-oriented, worded in succinct and clear language, could have real-world applications, and catered to numerous abilities of the students in the classroom. (DB Module 3.1, L- 14-23)

Ren also explicitly stated that, to reach the "learning objectives" of the courses he would teach, he would like to "expand upon the prior knowledge" of the students (W.J. L- 96- 97). However, he thought that eliciting students' prior knowledge is challenging in his field of counseling, which he thought is "a little restricted" with accreditation and other standards (Interview 1, L- 147-149). He contended that these standards do not

“touch on students’ prior knowledge;” however, he did not think that it is impossible to elicit students’ prior knowledge and to provide them with meaning-making opportunities (Interview 1, L- 153-155). But he thought he needed to “grow” on the area of building on students’ prior knowledge.

Ren said, “Providing students with opportunities to engage in critical inquiry online is an absolute necessity” (DB Module 5.3, L- 252-253). He also believed that promoting deep learning and engaging students in critical inquiry requires a teacher to be knowledgeable about content, as well as about deep learning and about ways to ensure it.

Another thing Ren talked about related to deep learning was the idea of “conceptual barriers,” which he found fascinating. He explained in a discussion board, in response to a peer:

I’m interested in how a particular conceptually-based pedagogy can resonate with one student, but hinder the learning of another. I think having a grasp on pedagogy, teaching principles, and the unique issues that face a discipline are important to break through any conceptual barriers or cognitive dissonance ... I also think that to overcome conceptual barriers for a student, the teacher or environment needs to foster creative problem solving. (DB Module 5.1, L- 70-76)

6. Seeking to Promote Collaborative Learning in Any Instructional Context

Ren recognized the importance of having students learn with and from each other, and wanted to be a teacher that could provide his students with multiple opportunities to do so. While personally he was not a fan of group work, he recognized its value – especially if carefully orchestrated as he experienced in EDE 484. He also believed that an online course could provide unique opportunities for collaborative learning.

Ren believed that for the development of the students it is important for them to “work together to construct their own meaning” (DB Module 5.3, L- 249- 250), and he

specifically stated that “interactive activities” are fundamental for students to achieve their “learning goals” (W.J. L- 152-153).

Recognizing the challenge to engage his students in active participation in discussion boards, Ren planned to encourage them to “return to it after multiple posts” by combining a “written post with a video response,” because he thought “someone may be more likely to revisit a post if another classmate took the time to post a video response” (W.J.3, L- 144-148).

Ren thought group projects could enable collaborative work among students. Even if he stated “typically I hate group projects” (Interview 2, L- 63), he recognized the value of the Group Project in the course. For collaboration to be meaningful in a group project, he believed the teacher should “frame” it well so that the students understand that each of them could and has to contribute in the project. A teacher should also make sure that the students define the roles each of them has to play in the project, especially if it is “a content area that they’re still trying to grow in” (Interview 1, L- 471-479). This might be especially important when working online, as he said,

Group projects online are great if you can frame it in a way and you can get people to work together, for everybody to be able to do their part, or to leave anybody out and to not have like one person do all of the work. (Interview 1, L- 471-479)

Regarding how collaborative learning could be promoted in an online class in his field, Ren gave an example of a practice called peer supervision “where counselors can work together to develop solutions to difficult counseling situations” (W.J. L- 204-205).

He contended that peer supervision could be done using a Zoom meeting, about creating discussion board so that the counselors could review “their case study conclusions” (W.J.4, L- 208).

7. Seeking to Provide Students With Choices and Differentiated Learning

Opportunities, Leveraging Technology Whenever Possible

As a teacher, Ren certainly valued meeting students' individual needs and he appreciated that online education offers flexibility and brings in diversity to a class – as shown by the top rating he gave to this dimension of teaching in his survey responses. However, he did not discuss this aspect much in his reflections and interviews, nor did he include anything in this regard in the list of main take-aways from the course listed in his last journal.

To meet students' individual needs and preferences, Ren would like to design some informal assessment in the course for students to give feedback to their teacher. He wanted to create an environment where his students could “feel comfortable enough” to say when they think something is not working for them (Interview 1, L- 162-165). He would like to keep the door open for students to give feedback to their teacher more than once during the semester. He contended that because multiple modalities can be used in an online class, OTL allows a teacher to deliver the contents in various ways to meet the needs of students with different learning styles.

8. Appreciating the Need for Goal-driven and Meticulous Instructional Design –

Especially When Planning Online Learning Experiences

Ren gave utmost importance to the design of an online course as part of the kind of online teacher he aspired to be, as evident in the fact that the first five items in his last journal “take aways from the course” dealt with course design:

1. Make sure the online module is organized.
2. Make sure design of module keeps the student's attention and is aesthetically pleasing.
3. Make sure that you are not continuously redesigning while the course is in progress, or moving course materials around.
4. Give clear and explicit directions.
5. Set clear and explicit deadlines/timelines for assignments. (W.J.7, L- 372-377)

In his more detailed final reflection, Ren identified several practices related to instructional design that he considered critical to be an effective online teacher. First of all, since he thought online “activities lend themselves better to certain topics than others” (F.R. L- 149-150), he would decide what activity to use based on his goals and he would like “to try to integrate an activity into the course that students have not seen before as well” (F.R. L- 155-156).

Ren also gave considerable weight to how to give students directions for their online work, to make sure that expectations are clear and students can attain them. More specifically, he said that he would give “clear and explicit directions” which he considered crucial “for the attainment of learning goals in a course, and for each student to know what is expected of them” (F.R. L- 124-126). He would like to use “concise directions” because he thought “not all students will read all directions or utilize support materials, even if it is in front of them and clearly labeled” (F.R. L-134-136). He shared his personal teaching experience about this:

After co-teaching a counseling course, I know the importance of this practice, since I felt the final presentations in that course were not as strong as I would

have liked. The presentation assignment was intentionally left open-ended to allow students to harness their creativity, but that only led to what I felt was a lack of effort. In the future version of that course, and in any online course I teach, I will lay out my expectations in an unequivocal manner. (F.R. L- 126-131)

Most importantly, Ren believed that teachers could design the “online environment” the way they want which he thought they cannot always do in a traditional classroom. He thought that “The instructor is really only limited to the current technological knowledge that they possess and their creativity” (F.R. L- 58-59).

9. Seeking to Enhance Student Assessment Practices Through the Use of Digital Technologies, so as to Better Support Learning and Inform Instruction

Ren was concerned about the use of high-stakes assessments and the negative impact they might have on student learning, and recognized instead the value of informal assessment. He wanted to be a teacher who would provide his students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning, in a caring and supportive environment – regardless of whether he taught face-to-face or online.

Ren preferred “low stakes” assessments (Interview 1, L- 226) and would like his students to get multiple opportunities to take a quiz. He said, “I don’t want anybody in my classroom to feel overly anxious or to put pressure on just two marker points throughout a semester” (Interview 1, L- 240- 241). Consistently, he favored multiple assessments because he believed a single paper of a single exam puts a lot of pressure on the students.

Ren would like to have “informal” assessments like small group discussions, and presentations, as well as tasks that create opportunities for students to bring in their own “outside knowledge” (Interview 1, L- 236-239). Talking about designing activities for

students to informally demonstrate their learning, Ren emphasizes the importance of conveying to students that there is not just one correct answer:

I think every time students come into a classroom they have the opportunity to demonstrate some sort of learning whether it is lecture based or small discussion based, or whether you're using a whole host of pedagogical methods ... I think that probably relates to how a professor is engaging with their students. So if an instructor is willing to maybe take a more constructivist position sometimes to say this is a factor, this is an opinion, tell me what you guys think about this and how does that impact your lens about how you see a particular topic. I think that's important. I think I've done a decent job with that throughout the course I've taught. I think that's important especially in the field of counseling because there's so many situations where that just requires your own clinical judgment but also if you put 15 counselors in a room given the same situation all of them can react differently to that situation and none of them are necessarily wrong, they're just different. Many of them may come to the same conclusion but it might just be a different way of how they got there. (Interview 1, L- 210-224)

10. Seeing the Use of Digital Technologies as a Tool Rather Than a Goal in Itself

Ren's view of the role of technology and technological expertise for the kind of online teacher he aspired to be seemed to have changed as a result of his experience in the course. He started the semester by identifying technological issues as one the biggest challenges ahead of him as an online teacher, but by the end of the course he seemed to have found strategies to manage those technical challenges and to feel strongly that the use of technology in an online course should be instrumental to one's goal. Finally, at the time of the interview he rated "being knowledgeable about latest technology" and being "knowledgeable about digital resources" as the least important items in the pre-interview survey.

In his initial reflections at the beginning of the semester, one of his main concerns as a future online teacher was that he would "spend a fair amount of time instructing students on basic computer commands that take away from the overall class content"

(W.J.1, L- 30-32). He did not consider it as a problem for himself, but he was concerned about his students “to become frustrated and give up on online learning all together because of this complication” (W.J.1, L- 33-34). He was also concerned about connections and speed of the Internet.

An initial concern for Ren as a student in EDE 484 was if he was “missing a piece of information” because of his “carelessness” or because it was “hidden in an online space” that he was not sure how to navigate (W.J.1, L- 27- 29). When engaging as an online teacher in the projects, Ren found “troubleshooting a Blackboard page” to be challenging and he was frustrated while designing the individual module. He “had to sacrifice” his “vision” of building his module to submit the assignments on time (F.R. L- 78-85). Yet he was beginning to find strategies to overcome these technical challenges, as illustrated by the following quote from his final reflection: “[The] most logical way to overcome this (type of) challenge is to use my strengths to hide my weaknesses. I can create video or audio content to supplant my lack of design and coding skills while still engaging students aesthetically” (F.R. L- 85- 87).

In his final reflection, Ren also said that he wanted to be “thoughtful” in using technology because in the past he was “very tempted to integrate cutting edge applications into a course” which would “take away class time from other more important topics” (F.R. L- 141-144), but now he did not “want to sacrifice course content for the use of technology” (F.R. L- 144-145). He said he sometimes found himself “caught in a trap” of finding some cool technology which might not be as useful as he expected (Interview 1, L- 95-98). He contended that being able to do something does not mean that

one has to do it, but rather a teacher should consider the “benefit of bringing the new technology in” and whether it increases student participation and “level of comprehension” (Interview 1, L- 98-101). Additionally, he started to realize that the continuous use of new technology could be “confusing and cumbersome to students if it is not properly explained or appropriately used in the course” (F.R. L- 145-147). This new position was reflected in three of the items Ren chose to report in his final journal as main take-aways from the course:

- Provide resources for troubleshooting technology.
- Do not be limited by your own technological capacities; look up how to do new things on the internet, ask other technologically inclined individuals for ideas.
- Thoughtfully use technology, don't just use it because it is a new tool or an arbitrary reason (W.J.7, L- 378-381).

Ren gave a rating of 2 to both “being knowledgeable about latest technology” and being “knowledgeable about digital resources” in the pre-interview survey. Indeed, at the end of the course he started to believe that one does not need to be a tech expert or a programmer to be a good online teacher; rather, some knowledge of “standard video conferencing software” and knowledge of computer together with care for the students would suffice to be able to teach online (Interview 1, L- 361-363). He further explained that, while he had fair knowledge of technology and he was good with computers, it was “really difficult to stay current on available technology” and he thought he would not have that much time to always be up to date on the latest technology (Interview 1, L-88-89).

Additional Aspects of the Kind of Online Teacher Ren Wanted to be

In this section I will discuss some of the other aspects of the kind of online teacher Ren aspired to be besides the ten components explicitly targeted by the course.

Professional Components of Teaching. As a professional, Ren saw himself as a teacher who strived to be innovative and a life-long learner, and he believed that teaching online would push his creativity and risk-taking. As a result of the course, he also came to the appreciation of the value of collaborating with colleagues in the design of instruction, as well as the importance of content expertise.

Ren wanted to be “more familiar with the content” so that he could feel comfortable to teach a course “efficiently” and be able “to describe the purpose and meaning of why they are learning what they’re learning” (F.R. L- 88-92).

Based on his experience, Ren thought that “people teach the way they were taught” and he said he was not sure if “people want to go outside of a comfort zone and try to explore different pedagogical methods” (Interview 1, L- 70-72). But as an online teacher he wanted to “encourage everybody to try different pedagogical methods just to try it out and see how students respond and make a course more engaging” (Interview 1, L- 74-76). He believed creativity also relates to bringing innovations into the class that better serve the students.

Ren believed that being a teacher meant to be a life-long learner because everything changes and teachers need to keep updated and find new ideas and better ways to teach. Teachers have to be always willing to learn new things and “put that knowledge out there” for their students (Interview 1, L-203). He would like to “continuously grow

and investigate new ways of learning” to ensure better “delivery of learning activities” (F.R. L- 156-157).

As for the teachers, Ren believed that “engaging in online teaching presents the opportunity to reach students in a new medium, and to enhance current teaching skills” (I.R. L- 10-11). He contended that technological skills could help teachers “feel an enhanced sense of creativity,” which could also enable them to adopt “pedagogical methods” which are not lecture based (I.R. L- 11-13). He held the view that online allows teachers to “transform the educational experience of the students in potentially more meaningful ways” (I.R. L- 10-14). He contended: “A professor is only limited by the ‘do something different’ mantra if they are unwilling to tap into their creativity, or if they simply do not want to put in the effort to investigate new teaching methods” (F.R. L- 106-116).

One of Ren’s major lessons from the course and from the Group Project in particular, was a new appreciation for the value of collaborating with other teachers in designing instruction:

In terms of what kind of teacher I want to be, I definitely don’t want to be somebody that’s isolated but somebody who’s willing to go out and talk to other people and get feedback on things and get their ideas so I can make adjustments before I can actually present the material whether it’s online or offline. (Interview 2, 81-84)

“When you’re building an online course you should absolutely be talking to people throughout that entire process and just getting different perspectives” (Interview 1, L- 450-452).

Field-Specific Considerations. Ren discussed several issues that were specific to counseling with respect to the kind of online teacher he wanted to be, as well as how he

might be perceived by others in his profession. While he was convinced that online learning and teaching could be very valuable for his field, he also recognized some limitations of online spaces that might make hybrid-online counseling courses preferable to fully-online counseling courses. He also saw the persisting negative perceptions about online learning in the field of counseling as a significant obstacle for him to overcome to be accepted as an online teacher.

As a major obstacle for him to teaching online courses in counseling, Ren identified the fact that “many counselor-educators do not believe that online education has a place within the field of counseling” (F.R. L- 69-70). He reported that counselor educators argue that “it is quite difficult to make a connection with another person through a computer” (F.R. L- 70-71).

Ren recognized that it is challenging to create a “fostering and caring, vibrant environment” in counseling courses. A counselor can “read people’s body language” and understand things from seeing their expression which builds relations between them (Interview 1, L- 270-271), but this aspect would be missing in an online class since the teachers would not be able to see the “full personality of somebody online” (Interview 1, L- 273). However, Ren thought that “certainly...it is possible for people to make connections online” (F.R. L- 71-72), as he gave the example of the “online dating industry (which) depends on fostering online connections between two people with text-based messaging and video chatting” (F.R. L- 72-73). He argued that the success of the online dating industry indicated that the field of counseling could also implement online teaching. He held the view that “this limitation [of missing body language] is just a way

to hide some counselor-educator's unfamiliarity with software and lack of desire to learn more about technological advances that can help students or clients" (F.R. L- 75-77). He contended that this kind of "mindset really does the field a disservice" (F.R. L- 77).

Ren thought that it is possible to overcome many of the challenges he mentioned, and he had "seen it done well" (Interview 1, L- 276). Among the strategies he planned to employ to manage these limitations of online spaces, he mentioned being available, "checking in with people" and encouraging students to reach out – would help build an online community (Interview 1, L- 284-285). However, Ren concluded that hybrid classes might be best in counseling because in a hybrid class one would be able to "get the best of both worlds that way" (Interview 1, L- 300). He said,

I am not totally sold that you can do a counseling session online yet, but I know that there are a lot of places that do that but just fostering those relationships with your students and having students foster those relationships with each other because when they get out in the field those are the people they're going to turn to when they have a question or need support from one another it's their cohort who they graduated with. (Interview 1, L- 292-297)

Ren discussed several things that he would do for an online course in counseling. He would like to "find java applets that could work within the realm of counseling" (W.J. L- 151-152). He thought that the "role-playing method" in traditional counseling curriculum often "fall flat for a number of reasons" (W.J.3, L- 154-155). He believed "a java-app may help overcome that shortcoming" (W.J.3, L-155). Ren also presented a detailed example of how he would address supervision – a key practice in counseling courses – in an online environment:

Within the field of counseling exists the practice of peer supervision. Peer supervision is essentially a venue where counselors can work together to develop solutions to difficult counseling situations. When I think of the social presence

element (student-to-student) of the community of inquiry, I am reminded of peer supervision. I can include a Zoom meeting, or create a discussion board, that would allow these developing counselors to engage in some peer supervision when reviewing their case study conclusions. Outside of peer supervision exists the practice of traditional supervision, where a senior counselor mentors and guides junior counselors. In terms of a teaching presence (student-to-teacher), I can act as a supervisor, and make myself available via email, zoom, and discussion boards to establish a teaching/senior counselor presence. This material demands a cognitive presence, particularly since a counselor is ultimately dealing with the livelihood of their individual clients. To ensure there is a cognitive presence, perhaps I could add an online multiple choice assessment of some sort (student-to-content). However, I feel that engaging in a message board discussion could also be used to establish a cognitive presence. (W.J.5, L- 203- 216)

In his final reflection, Ren also shared a concern about policies regarding privacy of online contents that might be especially impactful for the field of counseling:

On March 28, 2017, the Senate resolution to allow internet service providers to sell their consumer's private Internet data without their knowledge or consent was approved by the House of Representatives (Shepardson, 2017)... When *S.J.Res.34* becomes law, what will happen to online education? I wonder to what extent an online student's privacy will be maintained in counselor education. Confidentiality is held in the highest regard by the counseling profession, but a counseling program that utilizes online education will no longer be able to state with confidence that their students' information is protected. The counseling profession also utilizes reflections as a method of counselor development, and it is feasible that a counseling student's reflections could be accessed, bought, and sold to potential employers. It is my hope that the Department of Education will have some positive influence on how this bill will be applied to online education, but seeing as how other recent bills sought to abolish that department, I am less than optimistic. (F.R. L- 186-194)

One of the challenges that Ren anticipated to face in the process of being the online teacher he wanted to be was the limited number of online courses in the field of counseling. He had already applied to teach courses outside the Warner School but did not get any "positive responses" (Interview 1, L- 585). He thought that presenting himself as somebody who has an Advanced Certificate in Online Teaching, and making them understand what it means or "being able to convey the worth of (himself) as an online

teacher” would be the biggest challenge for him (Interview 1, L-587-588). However, he believed that once he achieves a PhD, “the three magical letters” after his name, things will be different (Interview 1, L- 591).

Acknowledged Changes in Views on Online Teaching and Online Teachers

Ren frankly shared that when he took the course first, his “outlook of online education was somewhat jaded” (F.R. L- 158-159). He also added, “My vision of online learning prior coming here and learning about it was kind of skewed, I did not think it was a great option” (Interview 1, L-15-16). He was aware that online education was becoming prevalent but his previous negative experience with online classes made him doubt “its utility or validity as an educational tool” (F.R. L- 160). Moreover, he was influenced by the fact that the field of counseling “is somewhat unsure of how to integrate online education into their curriculum, despite accrediting bodies now mandating students to get some technological training” (F.R. L- 163-165). After taking the course, he concluded that his “main takeaway” was that “online education can be utilized in the counseling curriculum” (F.R. L- 165-166). He pledged to be an advocate for OTL in his future career as a counselor educator.

Impacts of the Course Activities on Ren’s Identity Development

In this section I will discuss how different learning experiences in the course impacted Ren’s identity development as an online teacher, so as to address my second research question: *How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?* I will first talk about the impacts of participation (both as an online learner and as an online teacher)

on Ren's identity development as a certain type of online teacher, and then I will talk about the effects of recognition by self and by others on his identity development. I will also discuss some other factors that influenced his identity development.

Overall Impact of the Course

Ren acknowledged that his perceptions about online teaching changed significantly after taking EDE 484: "I had gone into class with one online learning experience that wasn't great and after going through and learning how to set up modules and how to teach online just really opened up my mind" (Interview 2, L- 234-245).

Ren stated that he was "happy" to have taken the online teaching courses (EDE 484, EDE486) at Warner School, as these experiences allowed him to have "much more insight in pedagogy and how to be an effective instructor whether that's online or offline and that is so valuable for me as somebody who wants to be a faculty member and to be able to teach counselors or developing counselors" (Interview 1, L- 598-600). He contended that taking these courses had made him realize what he was "good at" as a teacher and what he needed to "work on" further. He said, "Had I not taken these courses, I don't think I would have come to those conclusions" (Interview 1, L- 606-607). When asked in his first interview more specifically about what components of the course most impacted him, Ren was not able to fully address the question:

Obviously the readings and being able to talk about it with my classmates, being able to interact with people such as yourself who were knowledgeable about it and then just again being able to experience everything - but I can't pinpoint one specific this was the turning point kind of deal. (Interview 1, L- 338-341)

From this response, it is clear that the opportunities for “participation” and “recognition” offered by the course were both influential for Ren, and often inseparable. In what follows, I will try to examine how he engaged in each of these opportunities.

Participation: Experience as an Online Learner

Ren's experience as a learner in this hybrid online course was very influential in changing his perceptions about online teaching, because he was “able to see how powerful online learning could possibly be” (Interview 1, L- 317). This was especially important given his previous negative experiences in an online course. He also intended to take what he learned in the course “forward” to his “next online endeavor” (F.R. L- 172).

Ren said the course was a pleasant surprise for him and he “was relieved to see how smoothly an online course, or hybrid course, can operate” (F.R. L- 168-169), and that the course itself would “serve as a model” for him “for what an online or hybrid course can actually become” (F.R. L- 170- 171). In a discussion board Ren talked elaborately about his experience of taking the course, and in particular the instructional practices he experienced as a learner and the intentionality behind them, which he thought was influential for the development of his own teaching practices:

From the onset of this course, I have felt that the expectations for each learning module have been clearly spelled out for us as students, and that each module's formatting and organization has helped with defining those expectations. The checklists also have helped give me a clear idea of what is expected, and has served as very valuable reference point for me.

I have been able to decipher the intentionality of completing readings or assignments in a certain order, and an explanation as to why those readings or assignments are part of the module has always been offered. The roles of the instructors and students have always been explained, and when there have been

questions about those expectations, the instructors have answered them in a straightforward manner. The amount of time that we should be spending on certain assignments has also been communicated effectively through the guidelines of each assignment.

In terms of communication, the instructors have been available via email, and have encouraged students to reach out if there were questions. The syllabus also leaves little doubt about how the class will be communicating with one another throughout the week, whether it is in a face-to-face session, a session on zoom, or simply through the use of message boards. (DB Module 8, L- 191-207)

He also commented in another discussion board that “These subtle pedagogical approaches will most likely serve us well as we engage in more challenging and complex content moving forward” (DB Module 3.3, L- 48-50).

Some specific experiences as a learner in this hybrid online course seemed to have been especially influential for Ren in terms of developing his own identity as an online teacher. One of those instances was his experience in the “Fish activity,” which illustrated for him the power of constructivist learning - as already mentioned in a previous section.

It is worth noting that his positive experience in the Group Project affected his view of how he could use group work as a teacher – despite his own previous dislike for this kind of activity:

Typically I hate group projects ... This experience was different just because I think we all communicated with each other and we all wanted to do well in the course and we all were onboard with making the module interactive and fun, so working in that group was kind of a change of pace for me because it was a very positive experience. (Interview 2, L- 63-67)

I do have group projects and individual projects in my courses that are face-to-face but I try to implement the same principles that I learned in the online course. Just making sure everybody is communicating with each other in the group and making sure that I'm available and always checking those students when they're working on their individual projects just so they know that even though the work

is going to be challenging they're not going through it alone. (Interview 2, L- 104-109)

The opportunity to engage with readings and to reflect on them in private journals as well as discussion boards also seemed to be important experience for Ren. Since these activities were designed as opportunities for "recognition by self and others," I will report on them in a later section.

Ren explicitly recognized the importance of *experiences as learners* on the kind of teacher one wants to be by saying, "I think people teach how they were taught and I don't necessarily know that people want to get outside of a comfort zone and try to explore different pedagogical methods" (Interview 1, L- 70-72).

Participation: Experience as an Online Teacher

Ren said participation in the Individual Project and Group Project allowed him to have "hands on experience" and the opportunity to put the things he learned to practice (Interview 1, L- 375). These experiences were very important to give him the confidence that he was capable of teaching online and also reinforced some of his beliefs about what matters most to be an effective online teacher and what it would take to do that. Doing the Group Project before the Individual Project was very helpful for him, as he was able to benefit from the distributed expertise and responsibilities within the group, as well as the exchange of ideas, before attempting to design an online module on his own.

The following two examples illustrate how the Group and Individual Project gave Ren the opportunity to "*experience as teacher*" some aspects of the kind of online teacher he aspired to be:

Something that I really strive to do is just to help people see something or present material in a different way so it's a little bit more memorable.... I definitely had the opportunity to do that in the group online module ... just creating a video game theme for the module and then having the video that explained everything that we were doing and just creating elements into that just to keep people alert and attentive to the actual content of what was important in that module. (Interview 2, L- 31-40)

I think by doing those modules and just making ourselves so available in those modules and getting content information and being encouraging and offering feedback to students when they're in the modules again just solidify it's the right way to go at least for me to create a safe learning environment and to have students behave. (Interview 2, L- 95-100)

Ren expressed multiple times in his interviews his appreciation for the feedback he received from the instructor as well as his peers on his projects. I will return to this point in a later section.

About the feedback he received from his peers, Ren said, it “really brought an awareness to me like if we’re going to have them do something new you absolutely have to provide instructions for them to be able to be successful” (Interview 2, L- 149-151). He added that the feedback from his peers shaped his understanding of how to be supportive to his students. He realized that he needed to make expectations clear, be available for them, help them with technology and “content” and if needed, to direct them to the right person for technological support. He also said the peer feedback in the course was also meant to “bring up” new points, or guide them to the “central message” when someone “got lost” (Interview 2, L- 170-171). He felt that everyone was “supportive” to each other and helped others to “navigate through an issue” (Interview 2, L- 172). The peers would help each other present things “in a way that’s successful for all audiences” (Interview 2, L- 174-175). Comparing the feedback received from peers versus the course

instructor Ren stated, "The feedback I got from the students was more of figuring out how to be more supportive and I'll take the feedback from the instructors as sort of a mentoring experience and use it as I move forward" (Interview 2, L- 190- 192).

Overall, Ren reported that the two projects were very affirmative for him as a novice online teacher, as they made him feel, "I can be creative and I can try to introduce new elements and they can be met with a positive reception from students so I had definitely a sense of accomplishments after I completed those modules" (Interview 2, L- 47-50).

Experience in the Group Project. Participation as a teacher in the Group Project had significant implications for Ren as a future online teacher. He said, the Group Project was a "model" for him "of what (he) could do" if he had the "time and resources" (Interview 1, L- 422-423). It was an ideal situation for him where he had the time to understand the topic, be creative on delivering it "in a way that's going to engage students and then given time to implement that content after having thought about the best way to deliver it and then get feedback on that content" (Interview 1, L- 428-430). It was also very significant for him to have the opportunity to actually implement the module and see how the students (i.e., the classmates that participated in the module as students) reacted to it. He said, "It was great to see the kind of the vision that we had come together and work well" (Interview 1, L- 417-419).

Ren contended that the ability to discuss with his teammates greatly contributed to making the Group Project "easier and more effective" (Interview 1, L- 457), showing the

power of participation in scaffolded situations when one can benefit from distributed expertise:

Having other people around to divide not only the workload but just coming up with ideas of how to create a successful module so you weren't working in isolation, it wasn't like you were doing something new for the first time but you had resources, you had group members that you could turn to.... I had two people from teaching and curriculum and another one from human development there, just because of their disciplines they're going to look at situations differently ... so it's helpful to have those different perspectives especially when your shaping content, because sometimes I might miss something when I'm creating a lesson and somebody else would be able to pick it up and adjust it so the audience is getting what they need and it's not just this myopic view of okay this guy is a counselor, you're getting everything through a counselor kind of deal. (Interview 2, L-112-131)

Experience in the Individual Project. Ren reported to have missed the opportunity to work with others in the Individual Project. Although he always preferred to “work alone,” while working in the Individual Project he felt that he had “a ton more stuff to do and especially trying to find ways to make the content interactive and memorable” (Interview 2, L- 67). He missed not having anyone to discuss his ideas:

Since I'm the only counselor in the course if I needed to go to somebody about the online module it wasn't necessarily going to be somebody in the course who could validate that what I'm putting forward is something useful for addiction counselors, you know what I mean, so that was a little challenging. (Interview 2, L- 71-74)

Ren also commented that if they had done the Individual Project before the Group Project, “I'm fairly sure the individual project would not have been as strong just because we wouldn't have had the resources that we did in the group setting” (Interview 2, L- 117-120).

Opportunities for Recognition

While the previous section showed how the *experiences as an online learner* and *experiences as an online teacher* provided in the course were critical to the development of Ren's identity as an online teacher, Ren's reflections on these experiences – as they occurred in discussion boards, journals, and final paper – were also very significant to help him make sense of those experiences and connect them with readings assigned in the course.

Recognition by Self. The reflections on the *fish activity* reported earlier provided a good example of how Ren used the opportunities offered by journals and discussion boards for reflection and meaning making. Another example is provided by the following quote from another discussion board, where Ren talked about his experience of reviewing some sample online courses:

I certainly had my own preconceived notions of what an online module was supposed to look like before reviewing those samples. By working through those preconceived notions, I was given an idea of what those modules could look like within my own frame of reference, and how I could go about expand beyond my own personal ideas to create a well-rounded module that meets learning objectives ... after reviewing multiple modules, I was able to gather a more sophisticated viewpoint of what an online module could become. I hadn't thought of a discussion surrounding weakness and strengths as being an opportunity for assessment, but after consideration of the experience, I would agree that it did give our instructors insight into how we may be thinking about crafting a module as instructors. (DB Module 3.3, L- 36-44)

In several occasions Ren reflected on the readings and discussed their implications for his own teaching practices. For example, in a discussion board Ren wrote:

In Bransford et al.'s (2000) chapter on the design of learning environments, the idea of diagnostic teaching is discussed, as well as how to start a learning

experience from the structure of a child's knowledge. When I think of establishing a student's cognitive presence, I feel that beginning from the student's structure of knowledge is essential. An understanding of the student's knowledge structures gives insight into where a student can be challenged in certain necessary growth areas. To cultivate this growth, as Bransford et al. (2000) mentions, an instructor can engage students in "cognitive conflict" (p. 134). Cognitive conflict involves being presented with opposing viewpoints, discussing those opposing viewpoints, and deciding if they do or do not fit into the student's worldview. By introducing new material in this lens of conflict, the student could likely experience a form of cognitive dissonance, and then assimilate new knowledge into their worldview. An example of creating conflict is having a student of a certain political stance explore the opposing side's arguments, and examining similarities and differences. (DB Module 5.1, L- 41-53)

While Ren made good use of the journals and final reflections to "make sense" of the course readings and activities, explicit recognition of himself as a certain kind of online teacher were rare; there were, however, some notable examples:

"While I still strongly identify as a counselor, my professional identity is shifting to that of a *counselor-educator*, or one who prepares developing counselors to begin their clinical work" (F.R. L- 10-11).

I really enjoyed the interactive e-Assessment article, and I'm hoping to find java applets that could work within the realm of counseling. I'm very much practitioner oriented when I teach, and those interactive activities are crucial for helping students accomplish learning goals. (W.J. 4, L- 151-153)

I recall the feedback my group received because of the *video overview* and *posting a video message* assignment quite vividly. I know that feedback solidified, for me, the importance of stretching the boundaries of what instructional pedagogy should look like, whether a course is online or not. (F.R. L- 106-109)

Ren also explicitly recognized that the opportunities for reflection provided throughout the course allowed him to look back to see what worked and what did not and what areas to grow on. At the same time, he wanted to make sure that writing reflections was not "overdone": "I think that's always an effective and useful tool to put into any

kind of course whether it's mathematics, counseling, or whatever, but I also think that a reflection doesn't necessarily have to be done every week" (Interview 1, L- 484-493).

Recognition by Others. Throughout the course, there were many occasions when Ren received recognition about his participation in online activities as well as his reflections on those activities, from both his classmates and the instructor, in the form of comments in class, replies to his posts in discussion boards, and most notably in the feedback received on his Group and Individual Projects. He explicitly recognized the importance of these affirmations – although in the interviews he most often seemed to focus on the content of the feedback received. He also seemed to be affected by the negative perceptions of online teaching in his field.

In his interviews Ren expressed multiple times his appreciation for the feedback he received from the instructor as well as his peers on his projects. He also mentioned that it was “reassuring” for him to know that what they did in the Group Project was “appreciated” and that they were able to facilitate learning and capture “students’ attention” (Interview 2, L- 50-52). He shared that the feedback he received from his classmates who participated in the Group Project as students “solidified, for me, the importance of stretching the boundaries of what instructional pedagogy should look like, whether a course is online or not” (F.R. L- 107-109), as a result, he would continue “doing those things” and he would make effort to “introduce content in new ways” (Interview 2, L- 56).

He also received affirmation about his ideas and work from his peer's responses to some of his posts in discussion boards. For example, Ren's post about the in-class fish

activity, where he pointed out that the students were “encouraged to connect knowledge clusters when we discussed our different approaches to finding area” (DB Module 3.1, L- 11-12), received the following comment from a peer: “I like your point that class discussion on presenting our different approaches is a good way of connecting knowledge clusters, which can enrich students' concepts and would not feel isolated” (DB Module 3.1, L- 31-33). This shows how Ren was recognized as a future online teacher who values specific teaching practices.

Ren thought the feedback he received after finishing the Group Project and Individual Project was “pretty critical” for him and it got him to think about designing and teaching online courses the same way as he and his team designed and taught the Group Project and the way he designed the Individual Project (Interview 2, L- 56). He said, “Doing those things and being creative are very representative of the person that I am ... it just kind of solidified everything for me” (Interview 2, L- 57-58).

Regarding the feedback he received from the course instructor, Ren said in the second interview,

Instructor feedback for the most part was pretty validating for me because I didn't get too much feedback that was like hey I need you to think about this in a different way or you're missing the point of this reading. It just really seemed to be encouraging, like this is the idea you have, you know, you're supporting your arguments from the readings that we've supplied you with in the course and you're making decisions based on the course content and what would work well for the students that you have and so **it's encouraging and reassuring that I was on the right track.** (Interview 2, L- 178- 185)

Indeed, the comments the teacher left on his journals were also quite affirmative, as illustrated by the following examples:

“You are right to be concerned about your audience and whether they have access to internet. You cannot create an online course for a group of students that don't have steady, reliable access” (W.J.1, L- 45-47).

“Your comment about exhaustion and time limits - that is also a good one” (W.J.2, L- 114).

I do think that your video assignment was a great one and it was quite powerful, but I did warn you that it would have its technical challenges. I am glad that you went ahead and did it anyway though. As you said in class, you sometimes have to take the risk. And you clearly were not afraid to do that here - and it may help you when you decide to do this in a real course. (W.J.5, L- 279-283)

While Ren appreciated receiving feedback from his teachers and peers, he also said that “The difficult part for me is how do I take that feedback and make it work for me in what I’m trying to do” (Interview 1, L- 500-501). He contended that though the feedback he receives from others “definitely” have some impacts on him, he would always try to “fit it” into his own “framework” and if it does not fit in, he would feel “disingenuous” and he thinks it would not be “authentic” to who he is (Interview 1, L- 524-526). Thus, though he appreciates feedback and discussion, and tries to “integrate” those in his teaching, he has to “put” them through his “own lens... to be able to make it useful and helpful” (Interview 1, L- 531-532).

Other Factors That Affected Ren’s Identity Development

Ren was clearly affected by what the people in his field of counseling thought about online teaching learning. As mentioned earlier, he was aware that counselor educators believe that there is no “place” for online education in counseling. As he reported in one of his early journals: “For the majority of my high school, undergraduate, and master-level graduate training, the use of the internet for anything outside of research was typically frowned upon by my professors” (W.J.1, L- 17-19).

Ren added that still today some of his teachers are “even hesitant to use their Blackboard spaces for furthering education” (W.J. L- 22). As a result, in his final reflection he still stated: “I feel as though a stigma continues to surround online education. This stigma is essentially the idea that an online education cannot compare to that of a brick and mortar education” (F.R. L- 175-177). So, he found some of the course readings especially validating as they showed “how educators are actually interested in pursuing online learning as a way to enhance education” (W.J. L- 16-17) and confirmed his own experiences and changing perspectives. He stated,

Honestly, the most surprising thing for me was to read about how educators are actually interested in pursuing online learning as a way to enhance education.... To see it actually written about and valued was a little shocking to me since it has been the opposite of my schooling experience.... I was blown away and also delighted to read in Thormann and Zimmerman (2012) about the school who attached a wi-fi router to a bus to encourage learning in what was typically a raucous space. I'm happy to see educators, schools, and universities are seemingly serious about improving online learning and their technology acumen overall. (W.J.1, L- 16-26)

Ren's position after the course was that if one has the ability to transform their teaching, or they “take a pedagogical method and present it in a different way” or they are able to engage more students in an online course or make them interact, then he does not care about the “negativity of somebody else saying that this isn't the way to go” (Interview 1, L- 568-571). He believed that the negativity about OTL in the field of counseling is often connected with “unfamiliarity” or “unwillingness to be reflective or push (oneself) to learn something new” (Interview 1, L- 573-574). He held the view that the negativity stem from people not wanting to change or “invest in a new tool,” which he thought is not “a great way to go about teaching in general” (Interview 1, L-576).

Summary

Ren came to the class with some negative experience from an online course he previously took, as well as reservations about the quality of online education given that in his field of counseling people still do not believe that online can be an option for teaching; therefore, he was clearly in need for some “repair work.” However, he was curious to know more about online teaching learning, and after taking the course he reported his perceptions to have changed to a positive one. Based mostly on his own experience as a learner in the course, he realized that online learning has great possibilities with respect to offering access to more people, including people with disabilities and other constraints to take classes on campus, and he also realized that it could be equally effective.

As a counselor and future counselor educator, the course was the first training Ren ever had as a teacher; it was a transformative experience for him not just for developing his online teacher identity, but also his teacher identity more generally. After his experience in EDE 484, Ren decided to be an advocate for online teaching and learning in his field and beyond. Though there is negativity surrounding online in general, and especially in his field, and though there are very limited opportunities for him at this moment to teach online courses in counseling, Ren developed an identity as an online teacher who believes in the values, affordances and quality of online teaching learning if done well.

Ren made great use of the opportunities offered by the course to introduce him to theories of motivation, learning and teaching. This helped him to realize that there were

ways to create the kind of learning community he cared about as a teacher also in online courses – using strategies such as using multimodality for students to interact with their peers and with him, using humor, being available to his students, being personable and genuine. Ren thought the qualities of a teacher listed in the pre- interview survey were all “hallmarks of a great instructor,” whether teaching online or in traditional courses. He greatly appreciated learning in the course what he considered as best practices for teaching. He recognized the potential of online learning to increase access to education and, thus, building a connection to his personal commitment to social justice.

Like most of the other students in the course, Ren also came to the class with significant doubts about the effectiveness of online education which were caused by his prior negative experiences with online learning as well as by the fact that in his field of counseling online education is not much valued. But after he attended the course, his perception of online learning changed to a positive one and he started to believe that online education could be an option for counseling too, and he vowed to be an advocate for online education in his field.

Ren's participation in online learning experiences as well as online teaching experiences in the course was very influential for him. Because Ren believed “people teach the way they were taught” (Interview 1, L- 70), the course became a model for him of what online teaching should look like and how powerful it could be. The course readings, class activities, discussions, the two projects, the feedback from the teacher and the peers, all contributed to his understanding of the kind of online teacher he wanted to be in future and the kind of instructional design and teaching principles he would follow.

His participation in designing and teaching online modules in the two big projects allowed him to experience success, and he realized that he had developed the capability to teach an online course.

While the *experiences as an online learner* and *experiences as an online teacher* provided in the course were critical to the development of Ren's identity as an online teacher, it is also important to note that Ren's reflections on these experiences – as they occurred in discussion boards, journals, and final paper – were also very significant to help him make sense of those experiences and connect them with readings assigned in the course. Throughout the course, there were also many occasions when Ren received recognition about his participation from both his classmates and the instructor in the form of comments in class, in discussion boards, and most notably in the feedback received on his Group Project and Individual Project. He explicitly recognized the importance of these affirmations – although in the interviews he most often seemed to focus on the content of the feedback received.

Ren also discussed some challenges that he anticipated to face in the future as an aspiring online teacher, the biggest one of which is the limited number of online courses offered in the field of counseling.

5B.The Case of Lupin – A College Administrator Specialized in Human**Development****Background**

Lupin, a white male from Rochester, New York, was pursuing a PhD in Human Development at the Warner School. He held an administrative position at a local college where he worked closely with students. He aspired to secure a full-time faculty position or a faculty-administrator position.

Teaching Training and Experience

Lupin had about 8 years of teaching experience at two higher education institutions. Most of his teaching experience involved teaching a “first year experience” course at his college. He did not have any prior teacher preparation but received some in-service teacher training attending workshops once or twice a year focusing on best teaching practices and principles.

Online Experience

Lupin took a couple of online courses which were “several years apart” before taking EDE 484 (Interview 1, L- 5). Since taking EDE 484, he also enrolled in the second course in the sequence (EDE 486: Designing Online Courses) and also co-taught an online course in his subject area at Warner School. Lupin shared the following reason for taking EDE 484:

I was inspired to take the course through my experience with teaching and my interest in learning how to become a better teacher, especially through the integration of technology, which I believe is the future of teaching and learning in higher education. (Lupin, personal communication, November 12, 2018)

What Kind of Online Teacher Lupin Aspired to Be

In this section, I will address my first research question by describing what Lupin aspired to be with respect to each of the ten components identified by the course designers as characterizing the “kind of online teacher” the course aimed to prepare, and then report on other elements that emerged from my analysis of the data. I will conclude this section by discussing the changes Lupin reported to have experienced as a result of the course. I will start with Lupin’s own take-aways at the end of the course, as reflected in his last journal entry.

In his own words – main take-aways at the end of the course:

1. Plan ahead and plan backwards! Start with what learning goals you want to accomplish and then design activities and assessments that support those goals.
2. Be intentional! This applies to learning goals, activities, assessments, instructions, and expectations.
3. Consider where all students are starting from and what they bring with them to make the learning environment relevant and conducive.
4. Keep student motivation in mind! Offer opportunities for choice, promote self-efficacy, be creative and fun, and build community of inquiry to keep students engaged.
5. Get help! I can’t imagine building an online course now without having an opportunity to review with colleagues and get their input on how to improve the course. (W.J.7, L- 243-252)

1. Seeing Online Learning as a Complement, Rather Than an Alternative, to Traditional/Face-to-Face Learning

For Lupin, there was no difference between the online teacher and face-to-face teacher he wanted to be. He did not consider any of the two modes of learning – online and face-to-face – to be “inherently better or worse than the other,” rather he recognized

that the “optimal delivery method depends on the focus and learning goals for the course” (W.J.1, L- 11-13).

In response to what kind of online teacher he wanted to be, Lupin wrote, “A caring and knowledgeable teacher who situates learning in the lives of individual students to foster engagement and the co-construction of knowledge” (Pre-interview survey). In the first interview he further said,

Being caring and engaging were important to me and a focus on situating learning within the lives of the students in the class for some relevancy for them but also so that they are active participants in the co-construction of knowledge. I really believe in the co-constructivist approach and I think those really are the biggest things for me in thinking about online learning. (Interview 1, L- 23-27)

Lupin contended that many of the online teaching and learning (OTL) practices learned in the course were “informed by good teaching principles that can apply to traditional and online environments” (F.R. L- 96-97). He believed “Theories and principles that promote effective teaching and learning transcend delivery mode ... the same principles that should be considered when designing an in-person lesson should also be considered when designing an online lesson” (W.J.2, L- 43-46).

In the first interview Lupin explicitly recognized the impact the course had on him as a teacher more generally:

I think it made me a better teacher overall and that applied to online in terms of again some of the specific content we were getting in the course, but overall thinking about the theory and the design those were elements that I could apply to both the online format and my face-to-face format. (Interview 1, L- 198-202)

Lupin believed that both face-to-face and online modes of instruction could appeal to different learning styles. Furthermore, he thought it depends on the teachers what choices they make and there will always be the possibility that a choice that suits

some students will not be the preferred option for others. He doubted if a “true universal design is achievable” (W.J.1, L- 17).

2. Seeking to Increase Students' Access to Learning Opportunities by Leveraging Online Spaces

Lupin identified increasing students' access to education as critical for him as a teacher. He believed he could make a difference in people's lives by contributing to increasing access through online learning.

While talking about increasing access to education as an online teacher, Lupin said the reason he “got into higher education” was because of its “social justice component” (Interview 1, L- 90-91). He discussed how his internship experience at a college after his undergraduate studies changed his perspectives, as he witnessed diversity in the students' “socio economic backgrounds, their ethnic identities, racial identities, religious identities,” which he considered to be a “great exposure” for him. He was proud of what he was doing, because that community college was “their access point to higher education ... because it really was providing access to students that may not have otherwise had it” (Interview 1, L- 99-101). Since then access had been “really important” to him and whatever he did; and as a teacher he wanted “to do something, because I feel like it's something deeper than a paycheck just in terms of a paycheck and teaching, I like to feel like I'm making a difference in people's lives” (Interview 1, L- 105-107).

3. Seeking to Create a Caring and Interactive Learning Community in Any Instructional Context

As an aspiring online teacher who identified “being caring” as very important to him, creating a learning community for his students was critical for Lupin. He believed that building a learning community is a very useful way to create “a student centered learning environment,” which in his opinion is the best approach to learning both online and in a traditional setting (F.R. L- 174-175). He would like to create a learning community by being available to his students, by responding to their queries on time, by supporting those who need extra support with technology and by offering clear instructions via diverse media. Lupin also believed that synchronous sessions might be critical to create a rapport with students in an online course.

For Lupin, meeting students' individual needs and preferences, promoting deep learning, building on students prior knowledge, providing students with meaning making opportunities, and creating a personal relationship with the students, were all “related through the concept of the relationship with the students” (Interview 1, L- 47-48). He contended,

One of my guiding principles in teaching in general and definitely online is the concept of unconditional regard ... my initial approach with students is honoring them, valuing their perspective, trying to as much as possible check my own biases and assumptions and really again make them active participants in the learning process. (Interview 1, L- 48-52)

He believed that following this approach would always help him build “good rapport and trust” and make the learning process “a little easier and more productive” (Interview 1, L- 54-56).

To create a learning community in his online classes, Lupin would strive to ensure teacher's “availability and timely response” to students' questions and to support “less

techno-savvy students” (F.R. L- 65-66). Lupin also wanted to ensure teacher presence through “providing clear instructions” and “offering instructions in multiple formats to help students with different learning preferences” (F.R. L- 66-67).

One of the course readings also seemed to have provided Lupin with additional strategies to achieve the learning environment he strived for as a teacher, as articulated in this journal entry:

One of the things that stood out to me in the articles on community of inquiry is the importance of developing a collaborative environment through attention to social presence. As Garrison and Anderson (2000) put it, “Collaborative inquiry provides for a qualitative dimension beyond acquiring specific content of a discipline” (p. 95). Especially for a topic so personal and complex as identity development, fostering collaboration seems crucial in establishing deep understanding by sharing perspectives that can help elucidate points students may not have considered due to socio-cultural norms. Using positive/deep indicators in each phase of the critical thinking model would also be important in fostering cognitive presence that goes beyond surface learning. Finally, in addition to the strategies already mentioned, to address instructor presence, I would focus on appropriate amount of content that leaves room for reflection and analysis. (W.J.4, L- 116- 126)

From his own experiences in EDE 484, to build rapport between the teacher and students Lupin would also like to make use of synchronous online sessions and teacher-created videos. In his final reflection he stated:

I think the synchronous sessions are critical, you know, that opportunity to have some face time with people in real time I think is really important in building rapport and then that's a way for not only through written materials or videos posted asynchronously but for the instructors to really present themselves and again give students the opportunity to build rapport with one or more of the instructors. So the online activities I would really want to keep in mind the video aspects, so recording a video overview or do a video introduction, you know, those kinds of things are important too especially if you have multiple instructors to help get the different voices out there. (Interview 2, L- 152-160)

4. Seeking to Enhance Students' Engagement and Motivation by Capitalizing on the Many Affordances of Digital Technologies

Enhancing students' motivation was extremely important to Lupin and he identified "being engaging" as very important to him as a teacher. Consistent with strategies to motivate students suggested by Stavredes (2011), to motivate and engage students Lupin would like to offer choices to them, increase their self-efficacy through providing appropriate levels of challenge and encouraging feedback, and create an environment for students to connect with each other – while also taking students' perspectives into consideration when designing a course.

Consistent with self-determination theory, Lupin recognized that student autonomy, sense of competence and connections with each other may increase their motivation to engage in learning. In his list of take-aways as an online teacher he wrote in the end of the semester weekly journal: "Keep student motivation in mind! Offer opportunities for choice, promote self-efficacy, be creative and fun, and build community of inquiry to keep students engaged" (W.J.7, L- 249-250). He wrote in a discussion board early in the course, after reading about motivation,

In order to increase motivation, you must create an environment that supports peoples' need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Providing choice supports autonomy, presenting material that is not too difficult or too easy supports competence, and offering opportunities to connect supports relatedness. (DB Module 3.2, L- 50-53)

Furthermore, Lupin believed that while offering choices to students could be challenging, teachers can have more options to do so online, as they can select texts to read and videos to watch or "choose from a range of activities in a module that all

achieve the same learning goals but allow students to go with their preferences” (F.R. L- 109-111).

With respect to competence, Lupin contended that to build students' self-efficacy instructors should provide clear instructions and offer “manageable level of challenge” (F.R. L- 82). Additionally, providing “positive feedback,” “encouraging students to be collegial in their discussion responses” and providing “positive verbal persuasion” can help build self-efficacy (F.R. L- 83-85).

Lupin also held the view that it is crucial to analyze the course from a student's point of view to ensure motivation and engagement. From his experience of designing online modules in the course and being a student in the module taught by his classmates in EDE 484, he realized the importance of this practice and became determined to “make it a more central component” when he plans for his own teaching “regardless of format” (F.R. L- 168-174).

5. Seeking to Promote Deep Learning and Understanding by Capitalizing on Appropriate Digital Tools and Resources

Consistent with a constructivist approach to learning and teaching, as an online teacher Lupin would like to build on students' prior knowledge and offer them opportunities to synthesize their learning in an online environment, in a way that is culturally relevant and ensures equal opportunity to the students. Moreover, he would like to promote deep learning by being knowledgeable about the content.

While reflecting on teaching presence in a discussion board in module 5, Lupin discussed research on project based learning and connected it with how he experienced it in the context of the Group Project as a learner in EDE 484:

Thormann and Zimmerman (2012) discuss the use of project based learning and authentic learning to support a constructivist approach to learning. In project based learning, students develop a project in a cooperative and interactive way to address a fundamental question. In authentic learning, students grapple with real-world problems and contribute to the assignment structure and process in order to make the learning relevant and interesting. Although these are certainly learner-centered approaches, the authors point out that this “does not mean that the instructor is absent” (p. 21). Instead, the instructor plays a vital role in creating an effective learning environment by carefully planning the assignment and providing guidance to students as they work through the project. The group project in this course seems to be a great example of project based learning that is also authentic. (DB, Module 5.2, L- 77-86)

In his list of take-aways as an online teacher at the end of the course, Lupin suggested: “Consider where all students are starting from and what they bring with them to make the learning environment relevant and conducive” (W.J. L- 247-248). He stated that it is important to identify students’ “preconceived notions and understanding” of a given topic, which he thought could be done online through surveys or discussion boards at the beginning of the semester (F.R. L- 75-76). This would help instructors take the students’ point of view and experience into consideration when designing the “learning module content, activities and assessments” (F.R. L- 77). He argued that giving students opportunities to express their own points of view regardless of right or wrong answers would also allow them to experience success (F.R. L- 80-82).

To promote deep learning and understanding, Lupin believed it is important to create opportunities for students to synthesize and share their learning. He stated:

Opportunities to synthesize concepts and share student work are also important in any learning environment. The former can be achieved online in a number of ways. Instructors can impart the desired synthesis themselves at the end of an activity or module, either in writing or verbally in a video or audio message. Instructors can also give students the chance to craft their own synthesis through discussion boards, journals, work sharing apps, or through creative assignments like making a video or photo essays. These same venues exist for students to share other kinds of work and levels of learning. (F.R. L- 86-92)

For promoting deep learning and understanding, Lupin also recognized the “importance of starting with informal and culturally defined ideas and meanings in order to provide an inclusive learning environment in which everyone has equal opportunity to achieve the learning goals for the course” (DB Module 5.1, L- 141-143).

According to Lupin, one of the greatest affordances of online learning for the students is to have “the ability to contemplate their position before posting, which hopefully results in improved quality” (I.R. L- 11-12). Being an introvert, he valued the opportunity in online classes “to carefully reflect on questions and comments” before offering one’s own viewpoint in a discussion board and to “review and edit” how that viewpoint is “framed” (I.R. L- 4-5). He also appreciated the opportunity to ponder over his views and “craft a measured comment or response” (I.R. L- 6).

Finally, Lupin stated that “being knowledgeable about the content really is important” for him as a teacher because it brings confidence and respect from the students (Interview 1, L- 33). He said that as a teacher he wanted to “know the material” so that he “can anticipate questions...in thoughtful ways that really get at what is the content and then how might it imply to individual lives and then how might interpretations and perspectives differ on this particular content” (Interview 1, L- 36-39).

6. Seeking to Promote Collaborative Learning in Any Instructional Context

Having embraced a constructivist approach to learning, Lupin strongly advocated for creating opportunities for students to “share and collaborate on work,” (F.R. L- 93). He also contended that “Fostering collaboration seems crucial in establishing deep understanding by sharing perspectives” (W.J.4, L- 120-121).

While talking about social presence, Lupin said that “Pacansky-Brock (2016) suggests that by designing activities that encourage student collaborations, teachers can ‘empower students to inspire one another’” (DB Module 5.3, L- 95-96). Referring to Stavredes’ (2011) discussion on self-efficacy and its connection with collaboration, he said, “One of the ways students' self-efficacy can be improved is through encouragement offered by peers. Another way peers can impact students' self-efficacy is through the examples (vicarious experiences) they set for” (DB Module 5.3, L- 97-100). He also provided the following example, “if a student sees another student in their class struggling with a problem or concept but eventually find success through effort and perseverance that can serve as a powerful engine of motivation/inspiration for the observing student” (DB Module 5.3, L- 100-102).

Furthermore, Lupin believed that “the principles of self-determination theory (supporting autonomy, competence, and relatedness) can help foster positive student-student interaction” (DB Module 5.3, L- 24-25). He contended that if we can create a learning atmosphere where “these basic psychological needs” of students are met, they will feel more motivated and “in turn, can create interactions based on mutual interest for

the task at hand, as opposed to interactions that are seen as forced and resented” (DB Module 5.3, L- 26-28).

While reflecting on his own experience engaging in the Group Project in EDE 484, Lupin said about collaborative projects:

I think definitely giving the opportunity for collaborative projects it would be crucial, so I can't imagine doing a class without some sort of group project so that they've got that same opportunity to again get in and test their understandings with others and move to applying that in some concrete way ... anything from doing a shared presentation on some readings and doing some critical analysis of those readings is one way to actually have done it in one of the courses that I teach. (Interview 2, L- 178-185)

7. Seeking to Provide Students with Choices and Differentiated Learning

Opportunities, Leveraging Technology Whenever Possible

Lupin did not explicitly identify differentiation in instruction as one of his goals, although he did highlight the importance of providing students with choices as discussed in the context of enhancing students' motivation and he also commented on the importance of meeting students' individual needs and preferences for him as a teacher.

Lupin stated that the concept of meeting students' individual needs and preferences for him was connected to “the concept of honoring each person in the class, understanding that they all have ideally an active part to play in the learning process, that I really wanted to be a bi-directional process” (Interview 1, L- 78-80). He said that while teaching he learns things as well, and he believed that trying to meet the students' individual needs and preferences supports his “learning in the process” (Interview 1, L- 81-82). He contended that meeting students' individual needs and preferences would allow him to put his constructivist beliefs into practice (Interview 1, L- 83-86).

As mentioned earlier, Lupin would like to provide his students with choices, as he thought this would increase his students' motivation. He would offer them "options" to select their own readings and the videos to watch. He would also allow them to "choose from a range of activities in a module that all achieve the same learning goals but allow students to go with their preferences" (F.R. L- 109-111).

Lupin also mentioned that all instructors could benefit from the various technologies available to "enhance the learning experience and accommodate a range of learning styles" (I.R. L- 113-114), and they should plan on incorporating technology when they design their courses.

8. Appreciating the Need for Goal-driven Instructional Design and Thoughtful

Instructional Choices – Especially When Planning Online Learning Experiences

His approach to instructional design is a critical element of the kind of online teacher Lupin wanted to be, as illustrated by the first two items in his end of semester list of take-aways:

- Plan ahead and plan backwards! Start with what learning goals you want to accomplish and then design activities and assessments that support those goals.
- Be intentional! This applies to learning goals, activities, assessments, instructions, and expectations (W.J.7, L- 243-246).

As evident from what is reported in the previous sections, as an online teacher Lupin wanted to plan his courses carefully, analyze each course from the perspective of the students, provide choices to the students, and make his course student-centered. He would also like to scaffold in new tools for learning to avoid making students "overwhelmed" (F.R. L- 69).

At the beginning of the course, Lupin identified “how carefully the instructor designed the course” as his biggest concern as an online student, because he thought it is challenging for instructors “to be consistently intentional and give adequate attention to detail as they design and maintain an online learning environment” (I.R. L-18-20). This concern seemed to have been addressed by the end of the course, since in his final reflection Lupin mentioned backward design as “a very effective way to ensure intentionality by starting with desired learning outcomes and working backwards to design specific learning activities that best support those objectives” (F.R. L- 115-117).

Lupin believed that backward design is “critical in creating an effective learning environment in traditional and online modes” (DB Module 3.1, L- 162-163). While he wondered “if backwards design is more critical in one mode or the other” (DB Module 3.1, L- 163-164), he also stated that backward design helps the instructor in any of those two modes to “have a clear idea of the learning objectives” (DB Module 3.1, L- 165). He said,

The more you step back from specific learning activities, the more you realize just how much work it takes to put together a thoroughly thoughtful plan with intentional design in not only the activities but in how technology and online learning can best be incorporated. (DB Module 3.1, L- 166-169)

9. Seeking to Enhance Student Assessment Practices Through the Use of Digital Technologies, so as to Better Support Learning and Inform Instruction

As an online teacher, Lupin would like to offer multiple low-stake assessment opportunities to his students. He also greatly valued providing useful feedback to students, and believed that if he could create “genuine” relationship with students it would help them receive that feedback well.

In the second interview Lupin talked in detail about the kind of online teacher he wanted to be with respect to assessment:

It's something that I do try to be mindful of **since taking the course**, and any other teaching experiences that I've had, and I just do think that those multiple opportunities to assess work it's a fairer way to really understand the knowledge that a student might have, more accurate way to do that when over the course of a full semester you're offering multiple opportunities and kinds of assessments. Then I think it also just enhances the learning even if you have frequent low stakes as opposed to one or two high stakes assessments, then there's that opportunity for the ongoing learning between those, as opposed to the very little feedback you can offer personally to somebody with let's say just a final paper or an interim or final exam. (Interview 2, L- 258-267)

Regarding teacher presence and the importance of providing meaningful feedback in an online setting, Lupin said,

Providing feedback can be a tricky road to navigate, in terms of the feedback accomplishing its intended purpose – and that is why I think teaching can sometimes be as much of an art as it is a science. It seems to me that teachers who are really successful in providing feedback develop a feel for what works best in different situations and with different kinds of students. To me, the feedback loop is really an extension and embodiment of the fundamental relationship that exists between student and teacher. When that relationship is based on the teacher having a genuine interest in the student and the student respecting the authority and expertise of the teacher, I think there is a better chance that feedback will be framed well and well received (DB Module 5.2, L- 47-55).

Lupin reported the influence of his own experience as learner with the assessments embedded in EDE 484, as he wrote in a journal:

The multiple assessment methods used in module 3 and in the course in general have helped to get a learner's perspective on more creative approaches and the assignment to create our own assessment was a great way to get practice as a teacher. (W.J.3, L- 88- 90)

10. Seeing the Use of Digital Technologies as a Tool Rather Than a Goal in Itself

Lupin appreciated the contributions that technology could make to the kind of online teacher he wanted to be, and identified a few specific tools as especially valuable.

At the same time, he also recognized the instrumental role that technology should have in service of a teacher's goals, and cautioned against letting technology rule instructional decisions.

Lupin believed that technology plays a "really important" role in online teaching and he benefitted from EDE 484 as he learned about specific tools and "how those can be used" (Interview 1, L- 111-112). In particular, Lupin valued the affordances that online technology could bring to a class in the forms of videos and social media. He also believed that smartphones have made it easy to "record and upload video and audio content" apart from the already available videos through platforms like YouTube (F.R. L- 39-40). Moreover, he contended that "Modern learning management systems give instructors the flexibility to adapt and embed all of this content in visually appealing ways" (F.R. L- 40-41). Ultimately, "this improves motivation and advances learning goals by offering multimedia formats to appeal to different learning styles and by creating a rich and engaging learning environment" (F.R. L- 41-43).

Lupin also learned about research "that shows the **intentional use of technology** really ... can make a difference in the learning experience for the students" (Interview 1, L- 114-116). So, as an online teacher, he recognized the importance not only of knowing about available online tools and resources, but also about when and how to use them most appropriately.

About technology Lupin also stated, "I don't know that it's an absolute necessity for as much as some of those other pieces" (other teaching practices mentioned in the survey) (Interview 1, L- 117-118). He believed that technology could be very helpful for

him, if used “wisely;” however, he thought as a teacher he could “still create that constructivist approach” – which is “central” in his teaching – without technology (Interview 1, L- 118-119). Without technology he would use his “own knowledge about the course and the ability to just create through dialogue some of the learning” (Interview 1, L- 130-131). He believed, though technology is important, a teacher can “get by without” it, whereas, if a teacher does not know “anything about the topic,” it would be “hard to get by without that” (Interview 1, L- 133-134).

Lupin also pointed out that technology skills are important for students to be engaged in online learning and a lack of familiarity and skill with technology can present challenges to online learning.

Additional Aspects of the Kind of Online Teacher Lupin Wanted to be

In this section I will discuss some of the other aspects of the kind of online teacher Lupin aspired to be besides the ten components explicitly targeted by the course.

Professional Components of Teaching. In discussing the kind of online teacher he wanted to be Lupin also noted that he wanted to collaborate with his colleagues in designing courses and he also recognized the importance of having strong content knowledge of the topic to be taught.

After taking the course Lupin started to value collaboration with colleagues even more, as in his last journal he identified one of his main take-aways from the course: “Get help! I can’t imagine building an online course now without having an opportunity to review with colleagues and get their input on how to improve the course” (W.J.7, L- 250-252). In his second interview he further talked about how as a learner he himself

benefitted from the collaborative work in EDE 484 leading him to value collaboration as a teacher and said:

I cannot imagine teaching a course without the opportunity of going back and forth with others and having them check your work or ask you questions and provide feedback because it certainly, you know, at least in my experience I remember things being caught that I had just sort of looked at 100 times and stopped sort of being cognizant of so that was very helpful. (Interview 2, L- 86-109)

Lupin also recognized the importance of developing content knowledge as an online teacher. Talking about cognitive presence in Module 5 discussion board, Lupin stated:

Bransford et al. note that there are ‘conceptual barriers’ in every discipline that impede students’ ability to grasp essential knowledge in the discipline. They suggest that in order for teachers to be effective, they not only need to know about good teaching principles in general, but also need to know what is uniquely challenging in their discipline that is likely to trip students up. By combining good teaching practices with attention and creativity directed at common disciplinary learning challenges, teachers can be particularly effective at helping students connect with content. (DB Module 5.1, L- 58-64)

One of Lupin’s concerns as an online teacher was not letting himself “take shortcuts or be otherwise lazy in interacting with an online environment” (I.R. L-23-24). He shared his experience of seeing online teachers’ losing “energy and focus” as the semester flowed (I.R. L-25). He thought this could be a challenge for online teaching because online teachers “may not feel the same sense of direct accountability” since they do not receive direct feedback from students (I.R. L-28).

Lupin anticipated that the biggest challenges for him as an online teacher would be – “time and competing priorities and responsibilities” (Interview 1, L- 372-373). He had various roles as a doctoral student, full time employee, husband, father, son, brother, and

friend – and these were roles he had to play and “struggle” with “on a weekly and a daily basis” (Interview 1, L- 376). He identified, designing an online course, and then maintaining “instructor presence,” reading the discussion boards, setting “expectations of certain timeliness of feedback on assignments” and living “up to the expectations” that he sets for himself, as all important to him (Interview 1, L- 379-380). Yet, as a teacher, “wearing so many hats and having so many different responsibilities” would be challenging for him (Interview 1, L- 381-382). Therefore, he said,

The biggest struggle for me overall in balancing the personal and professional is the feeling that I've spread myself a little thin and so that may mean I don't always get to do every role or fulfill every role to the level of excellence that I would ideally like to. (Interview 1, L- 382-385)

Field-Specific Considerations. Lupin discussed some issues about the kind of online teacher he wanted to be that were specific to his field of human development and higher education. He also discussed the type of courses in his field that he thought could benefit most from an online format.

First of all, Lupin stated that as a teacher, he always wanted to “come across as authentic” (Interview 1, L- 62). He used to teach a “first year experience course” in his college, where they talked about “the importance of learning” (Interview 1, L- 61-63). He said,

For me to talk about learning to the students and the importance of it, if I wasn't practicing that myself I felt like a hypocrite and that authenticity wouldn't be there and that ability to establish that genuine relationship and rapport with students and so that's sort of one of the things that I wanted to talk to them about, I knew then that I wanted and needed to sort of live that and not just kind of speak it. (Interview 1, L- 65-70)

From that intention to be authentic, Lupin got enrolled in a PhD program in Human Development. He remembered clearly when he decided to go for a Ph.D. He was teaching a class, where they were talking about the “difference between personality and identity” (Interview 1, L-73). He thought he provided “a surface level answer to it” which made him think that he did not have a “really good grasp” of the topic (Interview 1, L-74). This thought “got stuck” with him and at that point he wanted to get a Ph.D. and conduct his research on “identity development” (Interview 1, L-75).

Not surprisingly given the focus of his own research, Lupin found my research topic to be interesting. In his first interview she shared the following observations:

I had a chance to think about applying the content and theory to my own life and my approach to learning. But now since then I've had a chance to teach a couple of courses especially through the practicum, having that opportunity to go through and talk a little bit about how it was going while I was the lead instructor on a course, it was really interesting to think about who I am relative to that online teacher role that I have, so I think it is very interesting. (Interview 1, L- 440-446)

Lupin thought his field of human development was “variable” in terms of “the different ways to think about development and heterogeneity of development trajectories” (Interview 1, L- 388-389). In human development, it is “important for people to bring their own perspective to discussing development and theories of development and how they do or don't apply to their lives” (Interview 1, L- 390-392). Before taking the course, Lupin believed that “in an online environment we just can't have that richness of dialogue and discussion” (Interview 1, L- 392-393). However, after taking the course his perspective changed:

I honestly believe that that can be accomplished online. I would say that some face-to-face time whether that be through Zoom or whether it be in a hybrid format where you have some face-to-face time is important in getting to that

component. I do think that that richness of dialogue and some of that learning that can take place in the sharing of those perspectives would be difficult to accomplish strictly through asynchronous method, that some synchronous component or just the immediacy of sharing perspectives and making connections is important. (Interview 1, L- 394-401)

Lupin believed that hybrid courses had “real potential” in his field (Interview 1, L-404). Based on his experience of teaching the same course on life studies in a fully online format (which included synchronous sessions) and in a hybrid online format (which happened after he took EDE 484 and before his final interview), he felt that the hybrid version of the course worked “better.” He believed hybrid classes allowed for “face-to-face conversations” for required group works which he thought would have been harder without those face-to-face meetings (Interview 1, L- 408-409). From his experience, he held the view:

In terms of opportunities and developments I would just for my own experience say there's some really exciting ways that hybrid courses could be designed that really leverage both the advantages that we get through the online side of it as well as the face-to-face. (Interview 1, L- 412-415)

Influenced by the experience in EDE 484, Lupin planned to suggest one of the planning teams at his workplace to make the course that he taught a hybrid one as he believed this would create an opportunity for the students to:

Share ideas and reflect on them in an asynchronous way and then after that priming of the engine, so to speak, they can come together and continue discussion face-to-face, building off of what has already been shared and off of the passionate and energetic views students often have on these topics.... By placing content and expectation for initial discussion online, perhaps students will be more motivated to ground themselves in the theory and grapple with the concepts because they feel compelled to post at least something to the discussion board so they are not glaringly absent from the thread. (F.R. L- 125- 128, 132-135)

Acknowledged Changes in Views on Online Teaching and Online Teachers

Lupin recognized that EDE 484 – together with the other two courses in the Online Teaching Certificate sequence that he completed prior to the interviews – made a big difference in his views not only about online teaching, but teaching more generally. He gained a better appreciation of both best teaching practices and the theory behind them, as well as confidence in himself as a teacher.

In the final reflection, Lupin shared how initially he was not so excited about teaching an online course at Warner School in summer (of the following year) because he thought the connection with the students that he enjoyed in face-to-face classes would not be possible in an online class; however, his perspectives changed after he took EDE 484.

He wrote:

I knew that an asynchronous format made this kind of real-time exchange of ideas impossible and so I assumed that the same kind of deep learning that takes place in these discussions was also impossible. However, I learned this semester that online teaching does offer opportunities for deep learning but in some different ways than in traditional classrooms. And just like the immediacy of face-to-face learning can be leveraged to achieve learning goals, the affordances of online learning can be leveraged to do the same (F.R. L- 24-29).

In the first interview, he reflected on the main changes he experienced since taking the course, emphasizing how without this experience he would just have taken as model the online courses he had previously taken. Talking about the survey items he was asked to rank in the pre-interview survey, he said:

Going through the whole experience [of the Online Teaching Certificate] I'm feeling much different about how I would have ranked these things and I think it really gets back to going in I had only had a couple experiences online as a student, neither of which really would have been exemplary instances of online teaching and design, now knowing what those could have looked like had I gone through the course. So I went into the course thinking yeah I know what online

teaching is, I've taken a couple of classes and it's you know to me those learning experiences were more, the learning was not as deep I felt, I missed the discussion component even though there was some discussion board in one of them, it was really surface level, it felt like something you just had to get through every time the prompts weren't great and nobody seemed really engaged in the discussion and I think that was because the overall course design lacked in other pieces that can enhance engagement in the online environment. And so I went into this class thinking alright I'll learn some practical things about how do I interact with Blackboard, you know, how do I use the discussion board or how do I use the different tools to navigate and create in the system but what I didn't know I was going to get was as much of the theoretical background and really the understanding about the design process itself. So those are the pieces that I've definitely learned the most about in the course that I found most valuable in the course and that really helped me see online teaching just as a different format but that the same importance of design in your face-to-face courses applies to the online teaching. This course really in particular - and I am thinking of just 484 here and not overall - helped me really come back to some of the things that I had some familiarity with in terms of just overall learning theory and best practices around course design, you know, the backward design I knew what that was but I really learned a lot more about it in this class. The constructivist approach to learning, I knew what that was but I had a much better handle on how to do that from a process oriented standpoint, both in the online design and just in general in thinking how I created face-to-face courses. (Interview 1, L- 162-194)

When asked if his responses to the pre- interview survey questions would have been different if he was given the survey before the course, Lupin stated, "probably it would have been similar" but he probably would have "a lot more 1's" especially with "technology" and "design components" (Interview 1, L- 149- 150) – which showed his development as an online teacher. He explained the reasons:

I just simply did not have the awareness as much of a sophisticate familiarity with the research and the theory behind those components, just again how technology can help, how the process of collaborating with others can help and had I not had that first-hand experience, yeah I definitely would have said it's all about the relationship with the students and while I still think that's very much fundamental I don't think I would have had as much difficulty saying oh yeah, here's what's most important, here's what's least important, whereas after the class all of these seemed more important to me. (Interview 1, L- 150-158)

Lupin further discussed how the course made him “more confident,” and how it equipped him with ideas to design and teach online courses:

I definitely feel more confident, really if it weren't for this class, if I try to imagine myself going in and just teaching an online class I'm sure I would have sort of replicated the experience that I had which was again really sub-par in the sense that I did not have the appreciation for some of the theory and design processes and best practices and so I would have just said okay here's some basic learning outcomes, here's some tools that I'm familiar with, I'm just going to drop these in would have the intentionality behind it, and that idea of again coming back to backwards design and in particular okay here's the goals that I have and I've always been aware of that and here's the things I've accomplished to do that, I had some sense of that before the class, but through the course I was able to really get more sophisticated in my thinking about that and say okay now I have some very specific ideas of what am I going to design to accomplish these end goals and based on the theory and best practices. (Interview 1, L- 205- 217)

Impacts of the Course Activities on Lupin's Identity Development

In this section I will discuss how different learning experiences in the course impacted Lupin's identity development as an online teacher, so as to address my second research question: *How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?* I will first talk about the impacts of participation (both as an online learner and as an online teacher) on Lupin's identity development as a certain type of online teacher, and then I will talk about the effects of recognition by self and by others on his identity development. I will also discuss some other factors that influenced his identity development.

Overall Impact of the Course

As mentioned earlier, Lupin recognized the significant impact the course had on his views on online teaching particularly, as well as on teaching more generally. In

answer to what specific aspects of the course caused the change of his perspectives,

Lupin said:

I think it was really just the exposure to things that I had previously been unaware of, so it was that deepening of my knowledge and understanding that helped me think about how to apply those things in my own life and again just back to the idea of identity as a teacher that really allowed me to think of myself as a more competent teacher and somebody who could be more effective and so I think it was mostly through the exposure to things I was previously unaware of that enabled me to think a little bit differently about what I was going to do. (Interview 1, L- 219- 225)

Lupin also said that from the experience in the course he held to the concept of “community of inquiry.” He kept thinking about how a teacher would “build a community of inquiry and the idea of instructor presence and the cognitive presence and the community presence” and he felt that those were very well “done in the design of the course” (Interview 1, L- 242-245). He said he reflected on those “first-hand experience” and recognized how he benefitted from the experience (Interview 1, L- 247).

Participation: Experience as an Online Learner

There was multiple evidence in Lupin’s discussion board entries and journals that his experiences as learner in EDE 484 contributed to making him aware of what online learning and teaching could look like – and how different it could be from his previous experiences. In his interviews, he also explicitly reflected on the influence of his experiences as online learner in the course, and how the course instructor emerged as an important model for him.

For an example, in a discussion board while talking about the in-class Fish Activity, Lupin told a peer that the activity had “a lot of implications for how we think

about online teaching” (DB Module 3.1, L- 159-160). In another discussion board Lupin discussed his experience of reviewing several online course modules:

I think the use of the sample online modules reflected several of the learning principles outlined by Bransford et al (2000). For instance, Bransford et al. emphasize the need to engage students' preconceived notions and understanding of the topic. By explicitly instructing students to review a sample module after doing the survey on our thoughts on OTL, it gave us a chance to test those preconceptions. Discussing what was positive and what limitations we saw in the lessons provided an early picture to the instructor on what our understanding of OTL was at the outset of the class. This provided a kind of early assessment opportunity, which Bransford et al. emphasize is important to incorporate beyond the standard testing assessment method. Bransford et al also discuss the importance of teaching subject matter in depth. The repeated use of the sample modules in varied lesson formats offered multiple opportunities to engage with the content and develop more sophisticated perspectives on them.

The use of sample modules also incorporated strategies for building self-efficacy as described by Stavredes. For example, giving students a chance to earn points based largely on their own perspective, in which there were no right or wrong answers, offered built in success at the beginning of the course. By providing clear directions and a manageable challenge, the instructor controlled the content to build self-efficacy. Finally, by offering positive feedback and encouraging students to be collegial in their discussion responses, the instructor offered positive verbal persuasion, which also builds self-efficacy. (DB Module 3.3, L-10-28)

Lupin stated that he did not have the “same rush of excitement” about the online discussions as he felt about face-to-face discussion (F.R. L-155). But he acknowledged that he found himself in the same “deep contemplative state” in this online course “when engaging with the content and discussion boards, most especially those that dealt with motivation and learning theory” in which he was interested (F.R. L-156-159). He recognized that because the “readings, discussion posts and journal prompts” were carefully chosen and well aligned, the students had “to think critically in order to develop

a worthwhile contribution to the discussion board and journal based on the prompts and peer posts” (F.R. L-161-163).

Lupin also appreciated the “multifaceted ways in which we were able to learn about and experience online learning in the first week of class” (W.J. L- 4-5). He found it useful “to discuss everyone's initial thoughts and assumptions” and “being able to explore the sample lessons and to reflect on and discuss their respective pros and cons” (W.J. L- 5-7). He further added:

The multiple assessment methods used in module 3 and in the course in general have helped to get a learner’s perspective on more creative approaches and the assignment to create our own assessment was a great way to get practice as a teacher. (W.J. L- 88- 90)

About his overall experience as a learner in the course and how it impacted his views, Lupin stated:

Having gone through an online experience that was much different than I had previously been familiar with was a great way to sort of just oppose those and okay this feels different from a qualitative kind of standpoint and then as we went through and I learned more about the elements that went into that design in the course as a learner the more I could appreciate okay I knew it felt different and now I can start to realize the things that happen that made it feel different. (Interview 1, L-235-241)

Lupin’s group project experience also helped him get a better appreciation of the challenges and benefits of group work – as mentioned earlier.

Participation: Experience as an Online Teacher

In his interviews, Lupin discussed his experience as a teacher in the two projects (Group Project and Individual Project) and how they impacted the kind of online teacher he wanted to be. He derived several important take-aways from the two projects as an aspiring online teacher. Most notably, from the Group Project he realized the importance

of collaboration when designing and teaching an online course, whereas from the Individual Project he gained the confidence that he could teach an online course.

Experience in the Group Project. Lupin thought the Group Project was “a lot of fun” because the group was “great” and “everybody had different strengths” that added to the experience (Interview 1, L-252-253). Working in a group produced “better” result with more time. While he appreciated “the benefit of multiple perspectives” in a group project, he also would like to keep in mind for designing his own courses that group projects take time (Interview 1, L- 290-291).

In the second interview he further discussed the importance of collaboration in a group project and his take-aways as a future online teacher as follows:

I don't remember any challenges once we got into the course in terms of the group part. I think everybody did their part, were timely, were clear on communications in what they had to do. So in that sense once all the course was built and the design was all there and we agreed on that then we really didn't have any confusion or misunderstandings about who was going to do what when ... But the nice thing about the online is once you've got it built then it's built and it should be pretty clear to everybody what they need to do to run it. So in that sense I actually don't really have any downside that I can think of to teaching collaboratively as opposed to individually. (Interview 2, L- 124-133)

About the collaborative aspects of teaching, he also added:

I'm a collaborative teacher because I do see the value in it because again it is a little different from a design side of things, but in terms of the actual running that I can see the value it adds in terms of getting multiple people involved and creating opportunities for students to connect with more than one person if something style-wise or just rapport-wise isn't clicking with another instructor. So I think from my perspective I'm somebody who's willing and open to learning from others and so I certainly see that opportunity not only in terms of working with students, but absolutely in terms of working with other instructors as well. (Interview 2, L- 139-147)

From the experience in the Group Project Lupin realized that as an online teacher “being present can be a challenge, despite best efforts” (DB Module 8, L- 52). He mentioned how they “neglected to send reminders” to one student in their Group Project “due to some confusion about expectations” (DB, Module 8, L- 53). He said he also realized that another student had “some difficulty getting some help on the video posting” (DB Module 8, L- 54). Based on this, he reflected “even when this is a priority, it is possible for things to slip through the cracks and potentially have negative impact on the students' experience and motivation” (DB Module 8, L- 55-56).

Lupin discussed his take-aways from the feedback they received on the Group Project from their classmates. He thought some of the feedback was “critical,” but some of the “critiques” on their work made him and his team members feel that the critic did not actually read some of the things in their project. This made him realize that they “designed something” that a student or students “didn’t interact with” the way they had “intended,” or they did not achieve the goal that the team wanted them to achieve (Interview 1, L-260-261). This experience made him feel that they could have done those things in a different way. He mentioned that this “led to discussions on ... where is that give and take ... you can lead the horse to water but it’s ultimately up to the student to participate in the process” (Interview 1, L-266-269). The discussion got more “interesting” when they talked about teacher’s expectations:

Does the fact that these few individuals didn’t do something that we had designed that we felt would have cleared up their concerns is that on us as the instructors or is that on them as the students and maybe it’s a little bit of both. (Interview 1, L-270-273)

Considerations Specific to the Individual Project. Talking about the Individual Project, Lupin said, “The biggest thing was just getting to pull it all together” (Interview 1, L- 297). He reflected in the second interview on his experience of doing the Individual Project compared with the Group Project:

I guess that doing it alone might be faster but it probably does not lead to as a high of a quality product just because of that extra set of eyes looking at something and offering a different perspective especially if as I said, one of the things that’s important to me is to make the online environment engaging to a range of learners that I need some other perspectives other than my own to help test that. (Interview 2, L- 112-117)

Completing the individual project made Lupin feel confident because he felt “it came together pretty well” and that experience made him realize that he could design online modules on his own (Interview 1, L- 299). He also thought if he was given “the individual assignment as a week one project it would have looked much, much different than the way that it did turn out after having all that led up to it” (Interview 1, L- 301-302). He believed everything that he learned from the course throughout the semester and everything he reflected on culminated in the Individual Project.

The feeling that he could teach an online course was the biggest take away for Lupin from the Individual Project. Though it was just one module, he could “see how that same approach to that module could apply to a full course design” and this made him feel that he “had the competency and ability to teach an online course and to do it in a way that was not just going to be okay” (Interview 1, L-309-313). He thought he became capable of using theories and tools “in intentional ways to really try to get the most out of that online format” (Interview 1, L-314-315). In the second interview Lupin discussed

more about how the Individual Project impacted the kind of online teacher he wanted to be:

In the individual project I did a kind of mock module for an introductory first year experience course and I think the biggest thing I remember doing there was the opportunity to really be thoughtful of that. Okay we've learned a lot about best practices and theory and now this is my opportunity to put this into practice so it was really helpful.

I think some of the things I'm remembering being really salient were having mixed online activities. So not just all written, not just all readings, so I think I used some video in mine, I think there was a discussion board, some reflection, maybe a quiz in there as well, certainly some video. So that mix of media and activities was something that when I started to get into it realized boy if I want this to be something that is engaging to students that it's considering different learning styles how can I put that into effect and getting to in and play around with Blackboard and the different tools and then going through that backwards design approach of okay here's what I want to accomplish this module and how can I do that with different activities and tools that again it's going to be engaging for students and hopefully appealing for different kinds of learners.

That was probably the biggest takeaway for me was just the actual participation in it and how that really helped me make that leap from okay this isn't just theoretical, this just isn't abstract, you know, I actually know how to do this now and apparently through that process learned how to do that practice. (Interview 2, L- 33-54)

The Individual Project also made him experience a sense of accomplishment, a sense of success which had significant implication for him as a future online teacher:

One of the things that I study in my program is self-efficacy, and so that concept of kind of mastery experience where you've done something and that's evidence to yourself that you can do this and increasing your efficacy for similar kinds of experiences in the future, so that absolutely applied in my experience. Not to say that I mastered it ... [but] this was something I was able to practice, I was pretty pleased with how everything came together, the feedback that I received was positive and the evaluation was positive, so it definitely improved that confidence, that sense of self efficacy, that okay I can translate what I've been reading about other people doing and thinking about to actually something that is constructive, useful for me in a real life setting. (Interview 2, L- 59-68)

Discussing the significance of doing the Group Project first and the Individual Project later, and its implications for him, Lupin said,

It definitely was good to have the group first because I wasn't on my own doing it, it was an opportunity to kind of check my understanding of again that theory and best practice that we've been learning about and kind of have some conversation with folks in applying it and so I felt like there was an opportunity to check my understanding with my peers and have some further dialog if our perspectives maybe didn't fully align on a particular way to apply it or just what we understood as a theory or best practice to mean. So that was very helpful in again kind of building up the confidence in okay now I can do this on my own. (Interview 2, L- 74-82)

Opportunities for Recognition

Apart from experiencing participation, Lupin also had opportunities for recognition in the course that supported his identity development. The discussion boards, weekly journals, final reflection created opportunities for recognition from his own self, from the teacher and from his peers which helped him have an understanding of the kind of online teacher he wanted to be.

Recognition by Self. While Lupin's *experiences as an online learner* and *experiences as an online teacher* in the course impacted the development of his identity as an online teacher, his reflections on those experiences in the discussion boards, journals, and final paper enabled him to understand his experiences and relate those with the course readings (recognition from self) – as illustrated by several of the quotes reported in response to research question 1.

The following quote is another good example of how Lupin took advantage of the opportunities for reflection offered in the course to make connections between readings, experiences as a learner/teacher and his developing identity as an online teacher:

I appreciated the quote from Ramakishnan and Ramados used by Crisp (2009) to describe what is involved in designing good assessment, which includes 'planning, discussion, consensus building, reflection, measuring, analyzing, and improving based on the data and artefacts gathered about a learning objective' (p. 1). This quote holds true to my experience in the group module design project. That was not a simple linear path but rather a cycle that involved more than simply thinking about things on your own and then writing up your plans. It requires multiple iterations that incorporate multiple perspectives and available information. (F.R. L- 163-170)

Lupin also recognized that the opportunities for reflections offered in the course allowed him to "process" what he learned as an aspiring online teacher. He believed that reflection is a "key part" of students' "learning process" that allows the "individual to synthesize" things from their own perspectives:

I've been exposed to these things, maybe had some conversations with others about them, how am I making sense of this, how is it that I'm really incorporating this into my overall kind of world view and other things that I know are related to it in terms of who I am (Interview 1, L- 322-326).

Lupin also thought the reflections improved his learning for the following reasons:

Learning was more deeply internalized, if it was something that was going to stay with me over time and not something that I had just kind of memorized for a test kind of thing, but it allowed me to really think about okay, how does this apply to me, how do I see this as relevant or why do I and then that kind of sort of kept it in my brain I feel like a little bit on a longer term basis. (Interview 1, L- 329-334)

It is interesting to note that Lupin also appreciated participating in the interview for my study because he saw "the value" in this kind of reflection that would help him "think about what kind of teacher" he would like to be and he believed it "really does make you a better teacher the more intentionally you think about it" (Interview 1, L- 19-22).

Recognition from Others. While Lupin mostly expressed his appreciation for the feedback he received from his peers and from the instructor for the group and individual

projects as opportunities to improve his product, he also explicitly recognized how the positive feedback received were important to bolster his confidence as a novice online teacher.

Here are some examples of recognition that Lupin received from the course teacher in his weekly journals:

Lupin - great comments here. I like your comments about preferences and learning styles - what one person finds helpful another might find distracting. I also like your focus on how the optimal delivery method might depend on the focus and learning goals... keep these in mind as we move forward (W.J.1, L- 30-35).

Lupin, continue to think this through. You will need more than this one identified activity to get to your learning outcome - which is well articulated. It is possible that much of your face-to-face course transfers easily into online? But that is not obvious here. You are correct that COI will play a large role in your course due to its nature (W.J.4, L- 131-134).

"I was impressed with the higher-level thinking types of questions. It wasn't just regurgitation of the reading. You have a knack for good multiple choice!" (W.J.6, L- 234-238).

Here are some examples of recognition that Lupin received from his peers in discussion boards:

As you mentioned, after reviewing multiple modules, I was able to gather a more sophisticated viewpoint of what an online module could become. I hadn't thought of a discussion surrounding weakness and strengths as being an opportunity for assessment, but after consideration of the of experience, I would agree that it did give our instructors insight into how we may be thinking about crafting a module as instructors.... Thanks for sharing your thoughts. (Ren to Lupin, DB Module 3.3, L- 40-50)

You touched on creativity, and I also think that to overcome conceptual barriers for a student, the teacher or environment needs to foster creative problem solving. You've given me much to think about. (Ren to Lupin, DB Module 5.2, L- 73-76)

The power of peer to peer learning cannot be understated. I agree with the points you brought out regarding peer encouragement that leads to improved self-

efficacy. While I believe instructors can certainly impact that as well, we as humans tend to "pull up our bootstraps" when we see others struggle and grow as a result. It is a perfect model of self-empowerment. (Lilac to Lupin, DB Module 5.3, L- 107-110)

While talking about feedback as a way of recognition, Lupin reported to have felt that the feedback he received were "always constructive" (Interview 1, L- 340-341). Sometimes he received feedback from classmates where they would say what he did well, how he made "connections," or sometimes they would say he could think about something in a different way. He said his group received "some critical feedback" on the Group Project. Talking about his take away from the experience of receiving feedback, he stated:

It probably goes back to that confidence piece that it was something that I felt like okay through this process of feedback some pointers here but no tearing down of who I am and do I have the ability to do this, which I have to say I've come to expect in higher education but that I don't want to take for granted either that if it were the opposite and it was feedback that was not as constructive in its nature, it was more just sort of negative or malicious in any way, which I've heard from folks in other programs can happen I think that that would have at least made me second guess myself a little bit. (Interview 1, L- 348-356)

Discussing the differences between the teacher feedback and peer feedback, Lupin stated in the second interview,

The only difference I can think of was the peers were, you know, had some questions and some insights but maybe not quite as substantive than the instructors, and so I felt like the instructors were maybe a little more comfortable pushing a little bit more or bringing up explicit comments, ideas, that's the only thing I can think of. (Interview 2, L- 210-214)

However, in another point in the interview he recognized the importance of the positive feedback received from the "students" in the module he created in his Group Project, as he said, "We got feedback from the students which was really very helpful and

this is where kind of the identity, the ego stuff gets wrapped up in some of the things that we do” (Interview 1, L-255-256).

On being asked how the feedback from the teacher and the peers shaped how he saw himself as an online teacher, Lupin further said:

Again [I received] generally positive feedback so **it helped me feel like okay I’m growing into this** and getting the gist of it and feeling comfortable, but then also the notion that in each case, or at least in most cases, that there was at least something that I didn’t think of or some other way to look at it than I did, and so that was motivating for me because I mean that’s what I enjoy is that intellectual curiosity, that exchange of ideas, that opportunity to grow in that co-construction of knowledge. So that for me it was motivating, that okay there’s actually a lot that I can get out of this in addition to just the opportunity to teach, that there’s opportunity to learn as well. (Interview 2, L- 217-225)

Other Factors that Affected Lupin’s Identity Development

Lupin very frequently made references to the reading in his weekly and final reflections, implicitly showing that he found recognition to the ideas he was developing in the course from experts in the field. He also recognized the negativity surrounding online teaching in his field, but he was ready to use it as a motivation to be an “advocate” for online teaching in future.

Lupin said the readings grew “awareness” in him. The readings exposed him to many theories, “best practices,” topics like “backward design,” “community of inquiry” and the uses of different tools (Interview 1, L- 363-364). He thought those were “really impactful” because he “felt more knowledgeable afterwards” and thus the readings acted as the “fundamental foundation” for him on which he would reflect more and “think about the application” (Interview 1, L- 365-367).

The following quote from the second interview illustrates how experts in the field, through readings, supported his developing aspirations as an online teacher:

I think the article that talked about cognitive presence, social presence, instructor presence, that just really helped me, it gave me a framework that was really helpful in thinking about okay have I accounted for each of those things in whatever it is that I'm designing and as it progresses am I making sure that I'm being attentive to those pieces and doing what I need to do week to week to make sure those pieces are being accounted for. Then the other piece that really has stood out to me is the concept of situated learning for the learners in the classroom and so really being attentive to and valuing different forms of knowledge, different experiences, not assuming anybody had a particular experience or understanding coming into a particular topic and actually that is something that I have used both in face-to-face and in my classes since and that's been really helpful, at least it's felt that way for me in terms of feeling like okay the ideas are flowing, you know, I felt like when I do that that opportunity to check perspectives before making assumptions, I'm not sure if students feel more safe or if there's a genuine interest, or some combination or something else, I feel like their willingness to participate in those discussions is greater than if you just make some assumptions and don't give students that opportunity. (Interview 2, L-232-248)

Lupin also discussed how the negativity surrounding online education impacted the kind of online teacher he wanted to be. He said that "Given some of the negative connotations that do still seem to be out there" (Interview 1, L- 446-447), he started to think of how to "react" to those and realized that now he wanted to play another role – "to be an advocate and to help increase awareness of what can be accomplished online" because it was something of value to him (Interview 1, L- 448-449).

Summary

Lupin started the class with limited prior experience of online learning, which he thought was "sub-par." This course provided him critical experiences to build an identity of an online teacher. His experiences as a learner, his experiences as a teacher, the course readings, recognition from the peers and others, as well as specific activities in the

course, all helped him develop an idea of the kind of online teacher he wanted to be in future. He also realized that there was not much difference between the kind of online teacher and face-to-face teacher he wanted to be, since he recognized from his experiences in the course that none of the two modes of teaching were better or worse than the other and “theories and principles that promote effective teaching and learning transcend delivery mode” (W.J.2, L- 43-44).

From his experiences throughout the course, Lupin gradually developed specific understanding of the kind of online teacher he wanted to be, and what he wanted to promote, achieve and advocate for. One of the things he mentioned several times in his posts and in the interviews was the concept of “being caring.” As a future online teacher, Lupin would be mindful about the issues of access and social justice. He would like to create a learning community by being available, by building trust and rapport. He would motivate students by providing them choices and taking their perspectives into consideration in designing course activities. He would promote students’ deep learning by eliciting their prior knowledge, by being mindful of their culture, by having adequate knowledge of the content and by providing opportunities for synthesis. Having embraced a constructivist approach to learning, Lupin would create opportunities for his students to collaborate with each other by designing collaborative projects activity; he would also create an environment conducive to social presence. Lupin would also use multiple low-stake assessments and provide timely and meaningful feedback to his students. As an aspiring online teacher, Lupin valued the affordances of technology for an online class; therefore, he would like to use different online tools and social media as most appropriate

for his classes. He would also provide scaffolding for technology for students who might need extra help.

From his experiences in the course, Lupin also developed an appreciation for collaborating with colleagues, therefore, he planned to get his colleagues' input when designing and teaching an online course in future.

Participation in the course as an online learner impacted Lupin's understanding of the kind of online teacher wanted to be. He talked in detail about his experiences as a learner in the in-class fish activity, reviewing online modules, participating in online discussions, engaging with the content, discussing prior experiences, and experiencing the varied assessments used in the course. All these experiences presented a clear contrast with his previous experience of online education; therefore, he had a clearer idea of what he could aspire to as an online teacher.

Lupin's experiences as an online teacher in the Group Project and Individual Project greatly impacted his identity as an online teacher. From the Group Project he acknowledged the value of collaboration, the importance of distributed expertise and learning from each other; and later used that knowledge in his Individual Project. He learned from the Group Project that ensuring teacher presence was challenging. In his Individual Project he missed the extra eyes that he had in the Group Project. Yet as a result of completing the Individual Project, where he incorporated all that he learned in the course – the theories, the best practices, the use of different tools etc. – he felt confident. From the two projects he had the feeling that he could teach online – he was able to put the theories into practice.

Throughout the course, Lupin made good use of the many opportunities for recognition from his own self, from his teacher and from his peers which also significantly impacted his identity development as an online teacher. Unlike most of the other participants, because of his own research interests, he explicitly recognized the importance of identity development and the value of reflections. He also acknowledged how the recognition received from others contributed to his self-esteem and self-efficacy as an aspiring online teacher.

In particular, Lupin's interactions with his classmates in the discussion boards allowed for recognition from his peers – which made him feel connected as well as made him think critically and differently, and helped him improve his own practices. His peers recognized his practices as an online teacher in several occasions through the discussion boards by agreeing to and or adding more to a discussion. The impacts of the teacher feedback were also similar leading him to improve his practices; sometimes the teacher would push him further with critical questions. He could see how he was growing from all the feedback. There were instances as discussed in the recognition section where the teacher recognized him as an aspiring online teacher who was making meaning of his experience. The recognition from his teacher and peers made him feel he was going in the right direction as a future online teacher.

The main challenges Lupin identified as a future online teacher were – his concerns not to get lazy and take “short-cuts,” maintaining his teacher presence, and living to the expectations he set for himself. He thought these would be challenging to face given his many other responsibilities and competing demands on his time.

5C. The Case of Tulip- an International Student Learning to Be a TESOL Teacher

Background

Tulip was a full time international student from China enrolled in a master's degree in TESOL at Warner School of Education at the time she took the course. At the time of the interview she had just completed her master's program.

Teaching Training and Experience

Tulip taught in what she called “a traditional Chinese classroom” at a high school for four months (Interview 1, L- 3-4). She also taught TOEFL and GRE preparation classes at a language institute in China for about 3 months. In both of these teaching experiences, everything was focused on exams. Additionally, she also worked with the International Student Office at the University of Rochester where she taught oral English informally to international students for two semesters. She planned to teach English to teenage students in her country. She took EDE 484 “to have a new experience on learning online and find out how to improve and change online courses in China” and because she wanted to “know various types of teaching tools, strategies and designing methods” (Tulip, Intro post).

Online Experience

Tulip took three online courses in her college in China and had a disappointing experience, as she reported that those courses were “boring” and had “lower effectiveness” (Tulip, Intro post). Tulip's previous experience of online courses was more like self-learning where she watched videos, and reflected on her own; those experiences set the bar for her expectations and views about online teaching prior to taking EDE 484.

What Kind of Online Teacher Tulip Aspired to Be

In this section, I will address my first research question by describing what Tulip aspired to be with respect to each of the ten components identified by the course designers as characterizing the “kind of online teacher” the course aimed to prepare, and then report on other elements that emerged from my analysis of the data. I will conclude this section by discussing the changes Tulip reported to have experienced as a result of the course. I will start with Tulip’s own take-aways at the end of the course, as reflected in her last journal entry.

In her own words – main take-aways at the end of the course:

1. Online teaching and learning is not easy.
2. Online class is not easy to design.
3. Make students know each other in online context.
4. Instructions and directions should be concise and clear.
5. Effective feedback and responses from the instructor and classmates are very important, and it will motivate students to learn and communicate more.
6. The content and workload of a module should be proper.
7. Make connections between the readings and synchronous activities.
8. The goal and purpose of a lesson should be clear, and we should follow it.
9. Ask students to share their online resources.
10. Make activities to be fun and motivating.
11. Always answer the questions from students in time.
12. Never assume students know how to use the online software and application. (W.J.7, L- 261-274).

1. Seeing Online Learning as a Complement, Rather Than an Alternative, to Traditional/Face-to-Face Learning

Tulip recognized that there are differences between online and face-to-face teaching that teachers need to take into consideration, as well as students’ preferences for

one modality over the other. However, she also believed that there are more similarities than differences and teachers can make online and face-to-face courses equally good.

Tulip shared that after taking the course she realized that being an online versus traditional teacher is not so much different, as she said, "I think the goals maybe different but it's the same theory you have to focus on goals and design which related materials, all those pedagogies are the same for an online teacher" (Interview 2, L- 207-210). However, she also said, "One thing I have to remember, offline and online are different so we have to design different lessons and we have to set different expectations and I think that is really important" (Interview 2, L- 161-163). Tulip believed that it is up to the teacher to take advantage of the available technology so online and face-to-face courses are equally good, "online teachers ... need to improve to let everyone feel that there is no difference between online session and face-to-face session" Interview, 1, 385- 387).

Based on her personal experience, Tulip thought that online classes are "proper for learners who can motivate themselves ... this person should be self-determined (Interview, 1, 376- 378). She also recognized that there might be students who prefer traditional face-to-face classes:

But for the people who really like the face-to-face connections, or they really want someone to supervise them, I think online learning probably should not be their first choice. Because now I think face-to-face one is more popular than online. Most people still do not want only online meetings. A lot of my Chinese friends here will avoid taking the online class because they prefer to take the face-to-face session. (Interview, 1, 379- 384)

Tulip also realized that online learning is a "trend" and "it is a faster happening thing, no one can change this" (Interview 2, L- 398-399). Therefore, she wanted to be

able to teach both online and face-to-face classes, although personally she would prefer hybrid courses to teach.

2. Seeking to Increase Students' Access to Learning Opportunities by Leveraging Online Spaces

As an aspiring online teacher, Tulip recognized the opportunities for increasing access that online learning can bring. She believed that online learning can not only provide more convenience and flexibility for students, but even more importantly it can offer access to quality education to students across the world through Massive Open Online Course (MOOCs) – thus contributing towards social justice. Yet Tulip also recognized that just giving access was not enough.

Overall, Tulip considered online teaching learning (OTL) to be “very convenient for both the instructor and students,” because she thought it allows “people more possibility and flexibility to learn what they really want and need” (F.R. L- 45-46) as well as “time and place” flexibility for both teachers and students (F.R. L- 47). For examples, those who work during the day can have evening classes online.

“Geographic restrictions” do not limit online education (F.R. L- 55). Students across the globe can take the same course and those who had dropped out can have the chance to “go back to ‘classroom’ again” because of online education (F.R. L- 49). She shared her experience of taking an open online course at Harvard University during her undergraduate years which allowed her to share “ideas and views” with people across the world (F.R. L- 61-62). Citing the example of having a classmate from Mexico in one of

her Warner online courses, Tulip also said that OTL makes the “circle of learning bigger and wider, which is good for diversity and education equality” (F.R. L- 52).

Tulip held the view that OTL “makes education fairer” (F.R. L- 59) as more ordinary students can get good education through online, and “not only a few top students can take courses from well-known professors in the best schools” (F.R. L- 57-58). She contended that, even though MOOCs are video based teaching, “at least it gives learners resources to choose” (F.R. L- 60).

Nonetheless, Tulip rated increasing access only 2 out of 3 in her pre-interview survey response. Explaining this rating, she said:

I think of course every online teacher wants to increase the student's access but it's like sometimes they just cannot change the situation nowadays, so I think the problem is not about access but it's about how can you use the access you have. So I think of course it's important but it's not the most important thing. (Interview 1, L- 162-166)

3. Seeking to Create a Caring and Interactive Learning Community in Any

Instructional Context

For the kind of online teacher Tulip wanted to be, it was very important to build a close relationship with her students, and to know each student especially in online classes. She was concerned that this can be very challenging to achieve in a completely asynchronous online class, but as a result of the course she learned some strategies to minimize this concern.

Tulip also had concerns initially related to trust in an online class. Reflecting on her previous experiences in online courses she said:

From my learning experience in online class I think it's really hard for me to 100% trust my online teacher because we don't see each other, we don't know

each other, even if the teacher gives me feedback I still feel like I don't know this person. I don't know what kind of question is okay for me to ask. I really want to know what the teacher thinks about me, I know maybe from a teacher's position the teacher will have the same feeling like the students, they want to know how to answer the students properly, how to give the response to let the students know that they really support the students. (Interview 1, L- 89- 97)

Tulip thought that the age of the students might make a difference, as the teacher-student relationship may be more critical with younger students than adults:

Probably because most of my students are teenagers, so I feel that the relationship is very important. You should have your students trust you. But I think if it is adult students maybe it is different because adults are more self determined, they have more strong purpose, more strong goals for their course, they only need to pass a course to get a certificate, or they need this course. (Interview 1, L- 97-102)

However, Tulip did not want teachers to become friends with the students especially when teaching young learners. Based on her experience she shared the concern that this might lead the students not follow the teacher's "instructions." She said:

I don't want to use the word control, but that is your class, you are the teacher or the instructor... after class students and teacher can be friends but still in the classroom you should be the leader to guide them and the students should know that. In the classroom even if it's online class you are a student, you are not friend, or other things, I think that is really important. (Interview 1, L- 144- 149)

Tulip embraced the concept of creating a "community of learner" in the class introduced in some of the course readings. She commented:

I like the community of practice in situated learning in which people can be involved naturally because they share a common interest. Students in this community share similar prior knowledge and experience and learn from each other. I really love this theory. In my mind, it is a very natural learning process among students. Students in this community have more self-learning motivation and can be more effective in learning. (DB Module 5.3, L- 213-218)

Tulip believed that a community of learners can be created in an online class, but she also realized that it could be challenging to maintain the community and to decide

“what’s the role of the teacher in the community” (Interview 1, L- 258). She identified a number of activities that can help create a learning community in the class – like sharing via Padlets or Blackboard, creating Facebook groups, and assigning group work to help the students to connect with each other. She also believed it is important to give clear instructions for the students “to know what you can do in this community” (Interview 1, L- 268-269).

Tulip believed that building relationship with students is easier in a hybrid class because the teacher and the students get to see each other sometimes, and this increases their “bonding” (F.R. L- 35). It is a bit easier also in an online class with synchronous sessions, so students and teachers can see each other “at least through the screen” (Interview 1, L- 115). She contended, though, that when people meet in person it creates “physical connections” which is important to her personally (Interview 1, L- 116-117).

Tulip reported that when she had classes via Zoom for EDE 484, at first she felt a bit uncomfortable, but later she felt relaxed. From her experience in the class she believed it takes time for people to get used to online classes. Tulip also shared her prior experience of taking a fully online class at Warner School, where some of the students were from Mexico and she never saw them face-to-face. She said that it took her 4-5 weeks to feel relaxed and feel connected, to understand other student’s accent and communicate directly. Therefore, Tulip decided that she would be “more patient if I want to build a relationship with my students and also give students more time to adjust to the teacher’s style” (Interview 1, L- 126-127).

To create a learning community, Tulip thought that it is very important for the teacher to ask students for feedback about the class, using questions such as: “How do you think this class this week or do you have any suggestions for it, do you like the materials, do you like the activities?” (Interview 1, L- 128-129). She discussed the importance of following up on the feedback received:

I think teachers can always ask this kind of questions and I think we should pay attention to students' feedback ... You should take action. If they think the reading materials are a lot you should try to find a way to help them.... or to reduce their workload. Maybe the reading amount will be the same but you can try to find other ways to encourage them to read like in groups, or do some reading activities, or jigsaws, a lot of different strategies to encourage them but I think through your feedback you have to let them know that you care about their ideas and you value their ideas not only because they are students but you really think their opinions are important, I think that is very important to build a close relationship. (Interview 1, L- 129-139)

4. Seeking to Enhance Students' Engagement and Motivation by Capitalizing on the Many Affordances of Digital Technologies

As an aspiring online teacher, enhancing students' engagement and motivation was critical for Tulip. She believed the core learning principles that she learned in the course would help her motivate and engage her students in an online course. She discussed several strategies that she would adopt to enhance her students' motivation and to engage them, especially in the context of an online course. She would like to learn more about technologies and create fun activities and games to motivate her students.

Tulip held the view that “motivation and engagement are very important in one's class” (DB Module 3.2, L- 61). In particular, she believed that “self-learning is a key factor in an online course” and, therefore, teachers should take into consideration how they can design and teach the course so that it can “motivate people to learn by

themselves” (DB Module 3.2, L- 62-63). She referred to Stavredes (2011) who proposed, “By using effective strategies, teachers/ instructors can help students develop their intrinsic motivation, high self-efficacy and an internal locus of control” (DB Module 3.2, L- 63-65). Tulip contended, the core learning principles she learned from the course readings “are really helpful for the teacher to use in their online courses to inspire and motivate students” (DB Module 3.2, L- 65-67).

Tulip thought it is sometimes hard for the teacher to create engaging and motivating activities for an online class. She believed teachers should try to create activities or design a course in a way that feels “new” to the students because “everyone likes new things” (Interview 1, L- 295). Tulip observed that “Technology can be a very useful and powerful tool for informal learning,” and therefore teachers should take advantage of technology to encourage and motivate learners from all ages (F.R. L- 93).

While Tulip would like her students to be intrinsically interested in what she teaches, she shared her concern that there are some topics that are important, yet not naturally engaging for some students:

I really want them to be attracted to my class or my materials or the content I create ... I think the best way for me is to combine both the teacher's goals and students interest but sometimes ... students will not like the course, like mathematics or physics, the really hard subject, they don't like but I think they have to learn it.... We have to know history, know how to do mathematics or literature... So I think the teacher's job is to find the connection between their interest or preference in the class, but it's hard. (Interview 1, L- 184-196)

To motivate students and to engage them in an online environment, Tulip planned to choose contents and activities that would motivate the students to learn. For example, she said, “I will design some games, or some activities like the fish activity, to motivate

my students to engage in the online environment” (W.J.3, L- 103-104). She also thought that to motivate students in online classes it is very important to give “feedback on time” (W.J.3, L- 105), a point that will be elaborated in a later section.

5. Seeking to Promote Deep Learning and Understanding by Capitalizing on Appropriate Digital Tools and Resources

As an aspiring online teacher, Tulip recognized the importance of promoting deep learning and understanding. She emphasized eliciting prior knowledge as a means to promote deep learning. She discussed elaborately the importance of eliciting and connecting prior knowledge to enable new learning, and also provided examples of how this could be done taking advantage of technology. She also commented on the value of assuming an “inductive approach” to promote deeper understanding.

Tulip contended that teachers “need to find a proper way to stimulate students to think about the problem, the challenge or the task deeply” and teachers should “trigger their curiosity” so that students would become more interested “to explore more” (DB Module 5.1, L- 192-194). She would like to “guide” her students to “form a habit to think deeply” (DB Module 5.1, L- 194-195).

Tulip held the view that “Prior knowledge is very important for students to connect to the new content” (DB Module 5.1, L- 98-99):

As a language teacher, I am always worried about if I do not know the background of my students or their prior knowledge. The same happens in online course that the instructor sometimes cannot understand each student very well. How can I teach them the content knowledge without knowing them? One solution in this article is, shared experience among students and inductive learning. At the beginning of the class, students can talk about their own experience on this topic/concept. The benefit is that no one will feel excluded in this situation although they have different cultural background, language barriers

or prior knowledge. Because students can share common experiences, they will have an interest in learning the content knowledge together. By using the common experiences, the teacher can lead group activities and everyone can fully engage in it. Therefore, it can increase the effectiveness, motivation and enjoyment of a class. (DB Module 5.1, L- 12-22)

In the same post, Tulip also reflected on the value of using an “inductive approach” to foster learning and understanding – as introduced in a reading about the 5E learning cycle (Settlage and Southerland, 2012) – while also sharing some concerns about how it could be applied in a fully online asynchronous course:

The 5E learning cycle model definitely combines inductive approach and shared experience together. For example, the first step (Engage) allows students to share common experiences to a topic/concept and then they move to the second step (Explore) to investigate a question with classmates together. In each step, the teacher will guide and observe them and give help if necessary. Then students move to the third and fourth steps to have a class discussion about the question, and what the teacher wants to teach can be introduced this time. Finally, students can apply this concept to another new field. (DB Module 5.1, L- 23-29)

I think this cycle can be used in the hybrid online course, but it is difficult to apply to the asynchronous online course. The reason is that it needs plenty of collaborative activities in groups and the entire class. Both the instructor and students need a lot of time to communicate with each other. Also, it is time-consuming to understand a concept totally. In addition, it requires learners to have high motivation and self-control in the learning process. Still, I think it is a good approach for teachers to try this cycle learning mode. Once students have learned the concept, they can completely comprehend it and apply it to another field. (DB Module 5.1, L- 30-36)

6. Seeking to Promote Collaborative Learning in Any Instructional Context

It was very important for Tulip to create the opportunity for students to work together. She also recognized that teachers need to proactively work at creating a classroom climate that is conducive to collaborative work in general, and productive group work in particular, and that it may be more challenging to do so in an online course.

Tulip contended that “in a constructivist approach” it is crucial for the teacher to create “a positive and effective environment for students” to work together (DB Module 5.2, L- 104-106). She expressed the value of collaborative learning experiences as follows: “when team members interact and engage in the group activities and practices, they can learn by themselves. Actually, they can be strongly motivated by group members and the shared interest” (DB Module 5.2, L- 107-109). In her first interview, Tulip also explained why promoting collaborative learning is important to her as a teacher, as well as identified some challenges presented by an online course:

If I work with my partners it's really different from what I learn with professors or the instructors, because I hope students can learn from each other and because they are not professionals in the field, they're just learners, maybe they will be more relaxed or they can solve problems together. Of course teachers need to guide them to work together. I know there are some problems with how they divide the task or how the teacher evaluates their performance because when we have group work, sometimes students feel it's unfair because some did more, some did less, it is very hard for teachers to evaluate this. I think for online teachers it's more difficult for them because you cannot supervise each student. (Interview 1, L- 67-76)

In a discussion board, Tulip discussed some strategies to minimize the challenges of promoting collaborative work in an online environment based on some of the course readings:

Garrison et al. (2001) said that there are three categories in social presence; they are- “emotional expression, open communication and group cohesion” (p. 99)... In my opinion, each of the factors is very important in group work. In a group, students need to be confident to express themselves. For example, participants in a group can use humor and self-disclosure (p. 100). Humor can be an icebreaker when beginning a conversation with a group. Also, self-disclosure can help students build a trust relationship quickly. The more personal information you share with your partners, the more you are familiar with each other. According to Janssen et al. (2009), higher familiarity in a group can increase critical and exploratory norm perceptions in the group (p. 168). The familiar group might be

more comfortable when the team members express themselves. (DB Module 5.3, L- 47-57)

As a future online teacher Tulip anticipated that it would be challenging for her to have the students communicate and collaborate with their classmates. She held the view that because students do not have the opportunities “to have direct physical contact” in an online setting, it is important to have a “harmonious environment and good peer relation” to build “good peer connection” (DB Module 5.3, L- 162-164). She considered it to be more difficult to “create this kind of environment for fully online students,” but once it is created “students in this environment can build a positive relationship together” (DB Module 5.3, L- 164-167).

7. Seeking to Provide Students with Choices and Differentiated Learning

Opportunities, Leveraging Technology Whenever Possible

Tulip did not talk much about differentiation in her posts or interviews; however, she recognized and discussed the value of giving choices and the importance of understanding the needs of the students. She also discussed the challenges of knowing and meeting students' individual needs in China.

In her first interview Tulip shared her belief that “online teachers can teach all kinds of different types of students, but they should really know their students... their needs” and they should help them achieve their goals (Interview 1, L- 105-107). But because classes are large in China, with 40-50 students in each class, she realized it would be “really hard” for her to “pay attention to every student’s preferences” and if she would try to “focus on everybody’s interest” she would be “very tired” and she would not have time for herself (Interview 1, L- 182-184).

In her second interview, Tulip discussed the value of having some face-to-face meetings to better get to know her students' needs, and discussed some other things that she would like to do to ensure differentiation in her class:

I hope I can have some not only online but face-to-face teaching experience to know students' needs, what are their difficulties when they are in an English class, for example, like some students are afraid to tell the teacher their needs or they just don't want to practice speaking the English. I want to know more what is their needs and connect to the piece to my design so I think that is logical because when I do the individual project I just imagine who is my student, who are my students and what probably they need but I don't know in the real life do they have the same questions, the same problem that is important for me to know more about the students. (Interview 2, L- 96- 105)

Tulip believed that online technology can offer more choices of resources for teachers to use in their classes:

We already have a lot of different resources, even if it's just the open class or just the video class you can choose the speakers or their interest or if their speeches are interesting, or if the topics are related to your goals (Interview 1, L- 166-169).

8. Appreciating the Need for Goal-driven Instructional Design and Thoughtful

Instructional Choices – Especially When Planning Online Learning Experiences

Being effective at designing instruction is central to the kind of online teacher Tulip wanted to be. She discussed several design principles she would like to adopt in the future as an online teacher as well as the importance of adopting a backward design approach. She also planned to use students' feedback to improve her instruction.

The importance of instructional design for Tulip as an online teacher was first of all evident in her choice of listing several items related to designing online instruction as her key take-aways in her last journal entry, which included:

- Instructions and directions should be concise and clear.
- The content and workload of a module should be proper.

- Make connections between the readings and synchronous activities.
- The goal and purpose of a lesson should be clear, and we should follow it.
- Ask students to share their online resources.
- Make activities fun and motivating (W.J.7, L- 264-271).

Consistent with the backward design approach emphasized in the course, Tulip believed that setting clear learning goals should be the first step to design a course. She identified “what I want my students to learn and how to know that they have learned it” as two things she would consider first in her planning (W.J.5, L- 168-170).

When she would design courses in future, Tulip would like to “consider the connections between the theory from the reading and the activities” (W.J.5, L- 165-166). She considered it important because “by doing the activities, students can apply the theory they learned” (W.J.5, L- 166-167). Tulip also said that she preferred simple instructions and “a lot of activities” for her online classed (Interview 1, L- 417).

Tulip would like to choose readings for her students carefully, especially in the beginning because she would not know their reading ability or their interests. She did not want her students to be bored with the readings. She would like to provide “some leading questions” to help the students read the texts (Interview 1, L- 530-532), as this would allow the students to know what the teacher wants them to learn from the readings. One problem she identified with this approach is that the students might just find answers to the questions; she did not discuss how she would solve this problem.

Another important thing for Tulip as an online teacher was to get feedback from her students about the course during the semester. She planned to use reflective journals for students to write about their readings and observations – both as a way for the

instructor to get to know their students better in asynchronous online courses, and as a valuable learning activity for the students.

9. Seeking to Enhance Student Assessment Practices Through the Use of Digital Technologies, so as to Better Support Learning and Inform Instruction

To become the kind of online teacher she wanted to be, Tulip emphasized the importance of using multiple assessments, including formative assessment. She also discussed her preferences for certain types of assessments, and talked about the importance of timely and meaningful feedback from both teachers and peers.

As an Asian student, Tulip pointed out the value given to grades and, therefore, her dislike for “only one chance quiz;” she said:

My personal experience as a student is, we cannot give a grade only on one quiz or one examination. The more important thing is how the students' experience, how they learned from this class. Because some students like me really care about the grade like even just one point ... Asian students really care about their grades because of culture, so if the student only takes one chance grades which will make me feel nervous. (Interview 1, L- 461- 467)

For assessing her online students, Tulip planned to use journal entries, discussion boards, and quizzes. She would take advantage of various “features and functions” these assessment tools offer (F.R.L- 181). She preferred journal entries and quizzes that could be taken several times. However, she believed that “If all the quizzes can be taken for many times, the students will not take it seriously and try several times only for the correct answer” (F.R. L- 183-184). She also said that though she preferred Facebook to discuss readings, more academic platforms are needed; and she also thought that the Blackboard discussion boards are easier for teachers to “evaluate” (F.R. L- 185-187).

Tulip suggested offering on time and to the point feedback to students, both in synchronous and asynchronous classes. Peer feedback was also crucial for her. She believed that feedback allows teachers and students to establish a relationship of “trust,” as “good and effective feedback can be a bridge between the instructor and the students” (F.R. L- 106), as the teacher can “guide and direct students through feedback” and students will learn where to improve (F.R. L- 102-108). Tulip also thought that because in a fully online course the students and the teacher do not meet each other, feedback also acts as a means “to make connections with each other” (F.R. L- 112). According to her, this can build a sense of belonging. Providing feedback late can disappoint the students and make them less motivated (F.R. L- 114-115). She further elaborated on the importance and challenges of providing timely feedback in an online course:

As a teacher in the future, if my students ask me a question I will answer it as soon as possible and I think that is very, very important especially in the online settings because compared to face-to-face session the teacher can immediately give the response even if you can't answer his question you can just tell the student you will find the answer for them. But in an online session sometimes truly as a student you have an expectation for how long the professor will give feedback ... for the online session you just threw e-mails I think it will have some communicative misunderstanding sometimes, so not only students but professor should try to avoid it I think. Especially, English is my second language, sometimes I will read people's feedback more carefully. (Interview 1, L- 610-621)

10. Seeing the Use of Digital Technologies as a Tool Rather Than a Goal in Itself

As an aspiring online teacher, Tulip recognized the importance of mastering the use of technology, especially to create and curate useful online materials for students and to make lessons more engaging. Tulip also discussed how online learning, technology and the Internet can bring global resources to learners and bring people together. She also

recognized some challenges related to technology she would have to overcome – such as, students' and teachers' familiarity with technology, as well as limited availability of specific technologies in China.

As a student in both online and face-to-face classes Tulip saw her teachers using “different materials” (Interview 1, L- 153). From these experiences, she believed that the use of technology can make activities and classes in an online context more interesting:

If the teacher uses really good materials the students will be attracted, I mean they will spend more time reading the materials or they will use or like that. Even a quiz, if a quiz is very interesting they will like to take it. Students are easy to get bored, I think, they are picky sometimes but you should use different kind of materials, I think that is really important. (Interview 1, L- 154-159)

Tulip planned to use a diverse set of online “teaching tools and strategies,” and she would keep herself updated about online tools and resources (F.R. L- 118). She would like to use tools that her classmates talked about in class, like Mindmap.com, Prezi, Ted Talk (F.R. L- 117-123). She would also like to use Facebook for her online class, because she felt relaxed when using Facebook as part of her classmates' Group Project. She also thought a teacher might be able to give more immediate feedback on Facebook discussions (F.R. L- 124-132).

Tulip believed students, especially the young ones, now-a-days already know about the Internet, they are aware of interesting online activities, they know about Facebook, and are used to communicating with people online, using cell phones, sending messages – while she felt that she was rather new to this. At the same time, she cautioned, “never assume that students know how to use the online software and

applications" (W.J.7, L- 273); therefore, she would like to make sure to provide appropriate technological support to her students.

Tulip also discussed some challenges related to technology that she anticipated facing in her country:

In China we don't have Blackboard, we have similar chat applications as Facebook or Twitter, we have similar applications but I don't know, we don't have a special hard focus on education only for students' use or teachers' use, so I think when I go back to China that is a very important problem I would need to fix. (Interview 2, L- 108-112)

Additional Aspects of the Kind of Online Teacher Tulip Wanted to be

In this section I will discuss some of the other aspects of the kind of online teacher Tulip aspired to be besides the ten components explicitly targeted by the course.

Professional Components of Teaching. There were several professional aspects of teaching that Tulip thought were critical for her as an online teacher. Most importantly, she would like to have knowledge about the content and she would like to collaborate with her colleagues. She also expressed some concern about time-commitment and demands on her personal time as an online teacher.

It was very important for Tulip to have knowledge of the content, because she believed students come to the class with the goal of learning about a specific subject (Interview 1, L- 43-45). For example, as a TESOL student she took a course on second language acquisition because she wanted to learn about it. She thought having knowledge of the content is important for both traditional teachers and online teachers.

Tulip realized that, while designing an online course, it is very important to talk about it with colleagues to get feedback on the activities, readings etc. There should to be

people to “pre-read” the course plan to see if it is “good or not” (Interview 1, L- 545-547). Her positive experience in the Group Project seemed to have impacted this realization. She also connected the value of designing instruction with other teachers with the more general value of collaboration in the workplace. In one of her interviews she stated:

The environment for the workplace is very important and your colleagues, supervisors stay with you everyday ... It's important to keep a good relationship with your colleagues. I don't know how in real life the online designers work together ... I think still for an online teacher they need to communicate with each other to share group ideas ... Just like book editors.... you have to talk about your lesson and make other people understand and really work together and cooperate with each other, I think that is really important. (Interview 2, L- 517-532)

One of Tulip's biggest take-aways as an aspiring online teacher was the realization that teaching online is “not easy” (F.R. L- 170) and she expressed some concerns about the time commitment required and the potential impact on her personal life. Having taken two online courses in that same semester made her feel that the workload was heavy since she had many assignments to complete, and had several deadlines each week. This made her wonder about the workload of an online instructor as she said, “If I am going to teach online, I need to prepare myself mentally, because every week I have to read journals of my students, reply on the discussion board, answer unexpected technical questions, do the maintenance of the online system” (F.R. L- 174-176). She thought this might make her feel “crazy,” yet keeping in touch with the students would make both of them “know each other quickly” and they would not “feel isolated” (F.R. L- 177-178).

Field-Specific Considerations. As a TESOL teacher, Tulip recognized both the unique opportunities and challenges for online teachers in her field. On the one hand, she believed language learners might find it difficult to practice communication skills in an online environment – unless synchronous sessions are included. On the other hand, online courses might provide unique ways for learners to interact with other students across the world, yielding great benefits.

Tulip wanted to use online learning in the future when she teaches English language, because she thought it would benefit students learning English. She stated that she would “prefer” teaching hybrid TESOL classes if her situation allows it. She would design her classes the way she designed her individual project for EDE 484. She would teach all the four skills of English language – reading, listening, writing and speaking – online; in the synchronous sessions the students would be able to talk and listen to their peers, and they would utilize the discussion board to improve their writing. However, Tulip thought teaching skills like speaking can be challenging for online classes, so, she discussed some alternatives:

I find it rather hard sometimes especially for a language learner because, for example, if you want to practice your speaking you have to speak, but if it's online class I think how can you just look at the screen and practice without other people.... writing a discussion board or reflection practices your writing, but ... maybe we need Zoom meetings with the classmates, so they can practice and record their conversation and teachers can read and look. (Interview, 2, L- 66-75)

In the second interview Tulip discussed an interesting issue of connecting with people globally and having access to diverse resources that technology affords to learners:

I've become more confident [about] the promising future of online teaching and learning because we want more resources, want to communicate with people around the world ... I think especially for language teaching we should use this technology because ...if we can talk to people from outside your country, talk to native speakers or speakers who speak English just like us as the second language, we can communicate with them, I think that is really, really important for language learners ... in the face-to-face course I cannot imagine how we can invite people from different countries to get together in a real [traditional] class but online class can do that. That is why I think I really want to bring this back to China, because I think for learning English or other languages we really need this technology and the teachers need to learn how to teach students online at home. I think that is the most important thing I learned from this class. (Interview 1, L-339-355)

Acknowledged Changes in One's View of Online Teaching and Online Teachers

Tulip's views about online courses as well as what it means and what it takes to be an effective online teacher changed significantly as a result of the course – as she explicitly acknowledged in her final reflection, as well as during her interviews.

In her final reflection Tulip acknowledged that she had “negative impression” about OTL before taking the course (F.R. L -1). She said the course “Actually changed my attitude toward online teaching and learning” (F.R. L -18). Her perspectives changed to a positive one, as she stated: “I was attracted by the activities and multiple ways of sharing ideas, collecting resources and doing a cooperative project with different people. I will recommend my friends to try one online course to experience the convenience brought by the technology” (F.R. 189-192).

Regarding how her perspectives changed, in her first interview Tulip explained why after her experience in the course led her to believe that online classes were not completely different than face-to-face:

I thought face-to-face was more effective and helped me learn more but after I took ED 484 I think probably online teaching could be the same like the face-to-

face one because teachers and students they interact with each other, they communicate with each other although it's through the screen but I can feel the relationship ... with (my) classmates, I think that is why I changed the attitude to positive one and I feel like I really learned something from the class. (Interview 1, L- 321-326)

In the second interview, Tulip talked about her greater appreciation for the complex roles played by online teachers:

Before I took this class, I would think of the online teacher maybe their jobs are less than a face-to-face teacher because the only thing they have to do is to design the class and to use the technologies to show the class to the students and then just ask students questions and answer students questions, that's all. After I took this class I understand that for an online teacher they actually will do more things compared to a face-to-face teacher ... it's not just to look at the screen to see the discussion board but you have to notice a lot of things behind the discussion board or how to find what kind of questions I haven't ask. I think that is very different compared to my previous thoughts about an online teacher. (Interview 2, L- 202-213)

In the second interview, Tulip also said that she had a specific image of a traditional teacher and an online teacher in her mind before taking the course, and that image changed not only for an online teacher but for a traditional teacher as well. She stated:

(In my mind I had) the image of a teacher just like my elementary or my middle school teacher – they always bring a book with them or a PowerPoint, reading materials, exercise materials and they send it to students, go through the reading discussion and just like teach you what they have and just the knowledge, the content that they have and then they have a task an exercise this study to make sure they understand the content, that is a teacher in my mind. But for this class ... **I feel like for online teacher or even for a face-to-face teacher a teacher should be more like a facilitator.** In the beginning they have to know how to learn and then they can learn by themselves, I mean like for this class 484 we have a lot of reading materials. The teacher like you ... let the students know what we want to read more or what questions we have from the readings. I really like that, **teacher is just like I said an organizer.** You have a lot of teaching materials, you organized all the materials for us, you arranged activities.... I mean you created an environment for us ... it's a very new experience for me to ... understand it by myself, and nobody teach me what is this, but I can gradually ...

understand it differently deeper and deeper ... it's very different compared to previous image of teacher and this online teacher ... I read the transcript you gave me and I realized that I really talked a lot about my experience in this class and that it what I learned from this class. (Interview 2, L- 220-247)

Impacts of the Course Activities on Tulip's Identity Development

In this section I will discuss how different learning experiences in the course impacted Tulip's identity development as an online teacher, so as to address my second research question: *How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?* I will first talk about the impacts of participation (both as an online learner and as an online teacher) on Tulip's identity development as a certain type of online teacher, and then I will talk about the effects of recognition by self and by others on her identity development. I will also discuss some other factors that influenced her identity development.

Overall Impact of the Course

In her posts on Blackboard and in the interviews, Tulip reflected on her experiences in the course and said that for her it was like a travel to a "different world for teaching and learning" (F.R. L- 196-197). Tulip said, in contrast to her past OTL experience, in EDE 484:

We had a lot of activities, different kind of materials and I felt like I was not learning by myself, I think that is the most important thing I find that changed, that will motivate me to learn more because I'm the kind of people that if I learn it by myself I'll feel lonely, but here I can find the support from professors like from you or from my classmates and I think that is why I changed my attitude. (Interview 1, L- 328-334)

Tulip had "really high expectations" about online classes before she took the first online course in China and "it let (her) down" (Interview 1, L- 425-426). But after experiencing

EDE 484 she better understood online teaching and the responsibilities of the designer of an online course.

When asked what changed her perspectives about online teaching and online teachers, Tulip said it was first of all the design of the course as a whole. She said at first seeing the syllabus of the course she thought there were “a lot of activities and things” (Interview 1, L- 359-360) and she worried about how she would be able to do all them; she also thought there were a “lot of instructions” for her to follow (Interview 1, L- 360). But she gradually understood the importance of these structured activities.

Participation: Experience as an Online Learner

Tulip had very positive experiences as an online learner in EDE 484 that significantly affected the kind of online teacher she wanted to be. She elaborately talked about her experiences as a student in the course – she liked the combination of synchronous and asynchronous classes and activities, the real time interactions in the Zoom sessions, and the flexibility of asynchronous activities. She also discussed how the experiences in the course made her compare it with her previous experiences online and led her to realize that perhaps the previous teachers did not know how to teach online. She also discussed how she would use specific activities she enjoyed, like weekly journals, in her future online classes.

In a discussion board, Tulip said about her overall experience as a learner in the course: “I think this course is the best example for using both synchronous and asynchronous activities” (DB Module 8, L- 71). She also added, “I really like the

curriculum of this class because it provides me an opportunity to experience different ways of online teaching and learning” (DB Module 8, L- 74-75). She contended:

I like the combination of synchronous and asynchronous activities. For example, we use the Zoom meeting to discuss the case study which is more direct and in time. I can get the point of my partner directly and immediately, and share my ideas in the same way. By the real-time interaction, both of us can reflect the information given by the instructor at the same time. We can share the emotion or feeling for the activities sometimes, which I think is really important for synchronous activities. (DB Module 8, L- 77-82)

Tulip believed that “asynchronous activities are also necessary for an online course” (DB Module 8, L- 84). She gave the example of module 3 of the course:

It includes several asynchronous activities, such as journal entry, discussion board, Padlet and so on. It takes time to finish and digest all the readings and reflect on what we have learned from the reading. This time we need asynchronous activities which have more flexible time for everyone to work on his or her own pace. (DB Module 8, L- 85-88)

In the second interview, Tulip mentioned again “I had a very negative impression about online teachers because I thought they try to be responsible, but sometimes it doesn’t work, but now I think maybe they just don’t know how to do it” (Interview 2, L- 383-386). As a learner in EDE 484 she experienced what a good online class could look like, which changed her perspectives. She acknowledged that the class was a “very good example for us to know what is online teacher like – you care about students, you design the class very well and always hear, always give us feedback immediately or timely and of course make the class very interesting” (Interview 2, L- 388-391). As an aspiring online teacher she wanted to have those qualities as well.

Participation: Experience as an Online Teacher

Tulip reflected in detail on her experiences as a teacher in the two course projects and discussed the implications of those experiences for her as an online teacher. Both experiences helped her gain confidence in herself as an online teacher, as she said in the second interview: “Just like I said before, after the project I have a sense of what is an online teacher or what is the thing they have to do” (Interview 2, L- 263-265).

The two projects also challenged her previous image of a teacher. She said: For both of the projects, individual and group project, I feel I’m not a teacher like the teacher in my mind, I’m more like a facilitator, organizer ... is a very, very different part compared with the face-to-face teacher. (Interview 2, L- 145-150)

What follows are considerations that are more specific to the Group Project and Individual Project, respectively.

Experience in the Group Project. While designing the Group Project, her very first experience as an online teacher, Tulip realized that “teachers really have a lot of things to think about” (Interview 1, L- 419-420). She also realized how time consuming online teaching and giving feedback to students is, and as a result she stopped blaming her online teacher back in China (Interview 1, L- 485-486). As part of her group work, she found it challenging to design useful activities that matched the module’s “goals and length” (F.R. L- 147-148).

Tulip said that she learned many things and had “an amazing experience from the group project” (W.J.5, L- 164). For example, when designing courses in future, she would “consider the connections between the theory from the reading and the activities” (W.J.5, L- 165-166). From the Group Project she also understood that “on time feedback is really important” (Interview 1, L- 445-446). She wanted to reply to students’ questions immediately, but she could not do so because of technology problems.

Tulip also recognized the value of collaborating with other teachers from her experience of the Group Project:

In the group project, because we had four members, there's less pressure on each of us like maybe replied to your reflections or just answered e-mails, I didn't have to focus on every part of my project.... it's better for us to make it in a group to design a lesson. Because sometimes I maybe sit here to think about what I want, I just lock myself here, I need different opinions. I think that is really important because not only the feedback from your student but also maybe feedback from your supervisor, your colleagues, I think that is more important. (Interview 2, L-133-145)

Tulip says that while they were working on the Group Project, her groupmates helped reduce her anxiety by correcting her grammar errors and by making her sentences "more concise and clear" (F.R. L- 144-146). Tulip talked about how she learned things from others and how she felt valued in the group:

I really liked the group project because you put different people (in the group), I had Peony and we are from China, and the gentlemen are American, and we have a different culture and different way to think. I really liked it because we were really a good team and ... all of us had responsibilities to the group and we used everyone's advantages ... for example, like Lupin and Ren they are native speakers they are good at writing, so they wrote the instructions or the quiz, Peony and I were more like learners, we had a lot of good ideas about activities and sometimes I feel like we had different jobs in the group and I think that is why I felt happy in that group, because I was participating in each step, not like other experience in some group in other class, maybe they have native speakers and international students but some of the native speakers may [think] international students you can write ... but in this group everyone valued everyone's ideas or work. (Interview 2, L- 470-483)

Tulip continued to talk about her learnings and her bonding as a community with her group members and its importance to her:

You feel that you are useful ... you are really the member of the group and ... I think for me that is why I feel like I learned a lot from this group. After this group project we are still friends I mean we talk about our lives ... I think that is also very valuable. (Interview 2, L- 509-514)

Tulip discussed how she felt accomplished after completing the Group Project and the implications for her as an aspiring online teacher:

I feel that I really did something good for this group ... I mean I did actual things, I could see what part I contributed to this group, not only like some ideas but I can see what actually is there on Blackboard, I designed activity together, we really liked the questions we wrote on Blackboard, that makes me feel I really participated in this project not just give some ideas and that's it ... we had several meetings together and so I think it's very important to feel that when you are participating in a project. (Interview 2, L- 500-507)

Tulip's experience in the Group Project showed that she felt less stressed while collaborating with others, she learned things from her group members, she felt like a facilitator. It also showed how she felt that others valued her ideas and how she felt accomplished. All these experiences contributed to her understanding of the kind of online teacher she wanted to be; in particular, her appreciation for collaborating with colleagues, led her to want to promote collaborative work in her own classes.

Experience in the Individual Project. The other significant experience that Tulip had as an online teacher in the course was designing a second online module on her own. She felt "amazing" after being able to design her own online module as part of the course and was very "excited to 'show off' her module to her friends" (F.R. L- 192-193).

Tulip also talked about the challenges she experienced while designing a module on her own. While designing the individual module, Tulip felt that, first of all she had to be clear about her "perspectives" and her "goals" (Interview 2, L- 44-45), and to "know the content" she was going to teach. She found the planning template provided by the course instructor valuable, as it helped her to "have a clear understanding" of what she was going to do in terms of designing the module (Interview 2, L- 52- 55). She also

found connecting the goals and activities was difficult for her. Based on this experience,

Tulip said:

I think compared with the face-to-face lesson plan it's more difficult to design an online class because you just look at your screen and you have to be familiar with maybe Blackboard or other software and then I think I do the lesson plan and find the reading materials and activities for the class (Interview 2, L- 55- 59).

Tulip appreciated having had the experience of the Group Project before engaging in the Individual Project. Comparing the two projects Tulip said:

I think the first thing that came in my mind was the workload. In the group project like you just had some of the part but for the individual project you had to design the whole class, you have a lot of things to do and I think that is one thing group project is better than the individual one because you just share the risks, share the challenges with your members ... I think both of them have pros and cons. For the individual project.... you make every decision in that class. So I think there will be more argument or more different opinions in the group project than for the individual project. (Interview 2, L- 287-297)

It's very good to put the group project first because I think for individuals it's really a lot of work.... from the group project I learned what I should pay attention to in my individual [lesson] or we collected a lot of great ideas and I used the ideas later in my individual project. I think also during the group project we got to know each other and we all got familiar with online tools. (Interview 2, L- 308-319)

Opportunities for Recognition

The course created several opportunities for the participants to get recognition as an online teacher, both from their own self through reflections and from the instructor and peers via the discussion boards and feedback on the projects. In this section I will discuss the recognition Tulip received within the course and how this impacted her identity development as a specific kind of online teacher.

Recognition by Self. Tulip took great advantage of the opportunities of reflecting on her practices as an online learner and teacher offered in the weekly journals and final

reflections. In the interviews, she also clearly recognized the importance and impact of these reflections.

Based on her own experience in the course, Tulip thought self-reflection is important in online learning. Regarding her weekly reflections Tulip said, "I like the weekly reflection because that is very significant for teachers and students to make a connection, it's like a personal diary between you and the teacher because no other people can see it just you and the teacher" (Interview 2, L- 544-547). She also said:

I think it's a record for my learning process ... it doesn't require me to write academically, it's like a journal.... If I will teach online in the future I think I will continue to use the personal reflection or the weekly reflection. (Interview 1, L- 560-566)

Because weekly journals are a "private zone," Tulip considered her reflections in the weekly journals to be a record of her "true as feeling and personal perspective on OTL" (W.J.3, L- 87-88). She also added, "I do not know what other people's journals look like, but I am not very academic here" (W.J.3, L- 88-89). It was a place for her where she was not afraid of what others would think, and this made her feel "relaxed." She believed a teacher could "know more about the students individually and can differentiate" them from the journal entries (W.J.3, L- 92-93). She contended, "The student and the instructor are two interlocutors, using the journal as a media to communicate" which allows each student to have "the opportunity to express his or her feeling freely" and get feedback from the teacher (W.J.3 L- 93-96). She also recognized the value of reading through her journals at the end of the course.

While Tulip preferred the weekly reflections written only for herself and the teacher, she recognized that "it's necessary to have the reading discussion [in discussion

boards] because sometime when I see other people's posts I learn from them" (Interview 1, L- 579-580). She said when she did not understand a text clearly, reading other people's posts helped her; at other times posts by others would help her confirm her understanding of the texts.

In the second weekly journal Tulip discussed some implications of the first week of class, for her as an online teacher,

I have started to think about the workload of the online instructor. If I am going to teach online, I need to prepare myself mentally, because every week I have to read journals of my students, reply on the discussion board, answer unexpected technical questions, do the maintenance of the online system, etc. (W.J.2, L- 41-45)

Like Lupin, Tulip also appreciated the additional opportunity for reflection she got from participating in my study, as the interviews helped her think more deeply about the kind of online teacher she wanted to be. She said in the second interview:

You helped me to reflect on this class again today ... I appreciate it and I think for an online teacher we have to be a lifelong learner because the world changes so quickly and the technologies change every day, so for an online teacher and also for a face-to-face teacher we have to keep our pace to those kind of new things. I hope after you finish this project you would share your research (Interview 2, L- 581-586).

Recognition from others. The course created multiple opportunities for Tulip to get recognition from her teacher and peers on her beliefs and practices, to help support her identity development as an online teacher. In the interviews Tulip talked about the feedback she received from others in the course, which worked as "recognition" as it helped her understand best practices as an online teacher as well as helped her to create better products. She also discussed how the feedback she received from others impacted her.

The followings are examples of the recognition Tulip received in the course from her teacher, who validated the insights shared by Tulip as well as asked additional questions to promote her thinking:

I do like your points about the videos being too long, the PowerPoint slides being too wordy, and there were not any interesting triggers or activities. Do you think that there are ways around that? With the exact same content (and non-charismatic professor speaking)? I think that there are. (W.J.2, L- 73-76)

I hope that your thoughts on the Facebook module help you in your journey to being an online teacher. I think that what you learned is that videos need to be truly helpful and appropriate to the content you want to deliver. And that clear instructions are super important! (W.J.2, L- 204-206)

About the feedback she received from the teacher in her weekly journals, Tulip said, “Every time I saw the feedback from the teacher I knew it’s just like a small talk between teacher and the student” (Interview 1, L- 561-562). The feedback from the course teacher on Tulip’s Individual Project helped her see that she had issues with connecting her activities with the goals; Tulip changed some of her activities based on this feedback. In the first interview she further elaborated on the feedback she received:

I think most of them or all of them are very good suggestions, ideas that can help me improve myself in that class and I think just like I said before I think the feedback and getting the feedback in time is very important and I will always pay attention to this. (Interview 1, L- 606-610)

I think what I have learned from the feedback is I should always keep the goals in my mind.... even if I know students will like it, just like the video games, if it’s not my goal I shouldn’t use it. Some time I forget about my goal but want to find something interesting but I think as an online teacher I cannot do that. (Interview 1, L- 626-632)

While recognizing that “feedback from instructor is very important in online learning both synchronous and asynchronous” (DB Module 5.2, L- 4-5), Tulip also thought that “we cannot ignore the necessity of peer feedback” (DB Module 5.2, L- 5).

She believed that feedback contributes to building a relationship of “trust” among the students and instructor by enabling “exchange of ideas and views” (DB Module 5.2, L- 5-7).

Other Factors that Affected Tulip's Identity Development

There were other elements that affected Tulip's identity development as a result of the course. She talked about the impacts of the course readings as well as the negativity surrounding online education in her identity development.

In the second interview Tulip discussed how the course readings helped her understand what an online teacher should look like, what an online teacher should do, and what kind of materials they should use. Reading about the theories allowed her to better understand what constitutes best online teaching practices. She said:

When I am back to China I really want to bring to the Chinese teachers those kind of theories or the basic things about online teaching and learning because we already have a lot of technology companies, they have online courses, but sometime we feel the courses are not very effective, probably because the teachers don't really understand what is online community, what is online teaching. So I think we always need the readings to help us understand what we are doing, what can we do. These are just like guide books. (Interview 1, L- 646-661)

About the negativity surrounding online education Tulip contended that people – especially parents – in her country were not used to it yet, however she was very hopeful that things would change. She stated:

I don't have any experience to communicate with students' parents who have their ideas about online teaching and learning but I told my parents about my own experience in that class. I told them that I could never imagine we can use online technologies same as face-to-face meeting ... My parents just asked me do we have this kind of thing in China. So I think from their feedback.... it will take time for my friends and my parents to accept it. But now I'm very optimistic

about it because I know I really enjoyed the time in that class. (Interview 1, L-719-730)

Summary

Tulips' prior negative experiences with online courses in China made her doubt the effectiveness of online education, but her perspective changed to a positive one as a result of the course. She learned about best online teaching practices, experienced a hybrid online course that she thought was very effective, and as a result she recognized the values and affordances that online education can offer. She started to see online courses not as an alternative rather as a complement to traditional courses. She also developed a better understanding of the kind of online teacher she wanted to be after taking the course.

Tulip wanted to be an online teacher who recognizes the opportunities for access brought by online education, and the flexibility it offers. Because building close relationship with students was important to her, Tulip would make efforts to create a learning community and follow a situated learning approach in her online courses. She would provide on time feedback and ask for student feedback on her classes to help build community. She would motivate and engage her students by creating fun activities that would trigger their curiosity using technology and tools like games, and by offering timely feedback. She would promote deep learning by eliciting students' prior knowledge and connect that with the new learning. Tulip valued collaborative learning, because she believed students can learn valuable things from each other and might feel more relaxed solving problems together. Therefore, she would create an environment for collaboration and provide students with opportunities to work together in her online courses. She would

like to utilize technology to offer choices to her students, but she was also concerned about meeting students' individual needs in large online classes in China. While designing instruction, Tulip would use backward design principles, starting with the goals first. She would provide clear directions, choose readings carefully to connect theory and practice, and create opportunities for students to provide feedback to the teacher. She would have multiple assessments and multiple attempts for quizzes, and she would use journals as well for assessment. She would like to utilize technology in her class to make classes engaging, to create resources and to connect people globally, using tools like Facebook and Prezi.

Tulip's identities as a TESOL teacher and an international student also played a role in her identity development as an online teacher. As noted earlier, she saw unique opportunities and limitations of online learning vis – a – vis the learning of another language. Several times she also referred to expectations about teaching and learning specific to her culture (like the importance of grades and parents' perceptions about online education) and limitations due to the technology available in her country.

The participation in the course both as a learner and as a teacher was crucial for the identity development of Tulip as an online teacher. Because she had had prior experience with online courses, her experiences in EDE 484 allowed her to see and understand what an online class should look like. She saw the course as a model for her future teaching. She picked up online teaching practices to utilize in her future classes based on her experiences as a learner. Based on her experiences, she grew a preference for a combination of synchronous and asynchronous activities and hybrid classes.

Tulip's experiences as an online teacher in the course helped her gain confidence. She felt anxiety-free working in the Group Project because of the support she received from her group members. She also learned to value collaborative work, like several other participants in the study. She learned significant things from her group members because of the distributed expertise within the group and got ideas from them that she later used in her Individual Project. She had a sense of accomplishment after completing the Group Project. She found the Individual Project more challenging as she did the project alone, but she was very proud of her final product.

The recognition opportunities created by the course helped develop Tulip's online teacher identity as well. She made very good use of the opportunities offered in the course to reflect on her experiences and practices as a learner and as a teacher, which allowed her to think deeper about implications for her future teaching. The feedback she received from her teacher and peers helped her improve her practices and better understand the kind of online teacher she wanted to be.

Additionally, the readings on theories in the course helped her understand the principles informing specific online teaching practices and their implications. Thinking about the stigma surrounding online education, Tulip realized that it would take time to change but she felt optimistic.

Among the challenges identified by Tulip as a future online teacher were: keeping up with technology, giving clear directions, enabling students to communicate and collaborate with classmates, and providing immediate feedback. She was still concerned that the "digital distance" never disappears in an online context. She thought this feeling

of distance is “why face-to-face class will never be replaced by online class” (F.R. L- 72-74), hence her preference for hybrid online classes.

Tulip also talked about challenges that she anticipated to face in the future as an online teacher in China. She believed it will be challenging to interact with parents and convince them about online education, and she was also concerned about the effectiveness of large synchronous online classes.

5D. The Case of Peony – A Novice International TESOL Teacher

Background

Peony was an international student from China who completed her Master's degree in TESOL from Warner School and then started her PhD studies in another state. She aspired to be an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher and teach online courses.

Teaching Training and Experience

Peony did not have any formal teacher training prior to coming to the Warner School for her MS in TESOL. She worked at a training institute in China as an English teacher for two years before she joined Warner School. Her students were from age 9 to 60.

Online Experience

Peony had some experience of online learning as a student from taking an online course at Warner School before she took EDE 484, but she did not have any experience of teaching online. Peony's had negative perceptions about online teaching learning as a result of the online course she took, which she said "didn't go very well" (W.J.1, L- 5). She thought that it was "very tedious and boring ... though the lecturer was an experienced teacher, he didn't know how to teach online" (W.J.1, L- 5-7).

What Kind of Online Teacher Peony Aspired to Be

In this section, I will address my first research question by describing what Peony aspired to be with respect to each of the ten components identified by the course designers as characterizing the "kind of online teacher" the course aimed to prepare, and

then report on other elements that emerged from my analysis of the data. I will conclude this section by discussing the changes Peony reported to have experienced as a result of the course. I will start with Peony's own take-aways at the end of the course, as reflected in her last journal entry.

In her own words – main take-aways at the end of the course:

1. Multiple content conveying
2. Specific introduction
3. Create a supportive online community
4. Get to know your students' population and their needs (W.J.7)

1. Seeing Online Learning as a Complement, Rather Than an Alternative, to Traditional/Face-to-Face Learning

From her experience in EDE 484, Peony realized that there was not much difference in the “instructional approach” when teaching a class online versus face-to-face. She started to recognize the similarities between the two modes of teaching. She said that through the course she gained more strategies, approaches and tools to utilize not just in her online classes but for her traditional classes as well. While talking about the two modes of teaching, Peony stated:

Though there are many differences between online learning and face-to-face learning, the instructional approaches are similar and even the same. Student centered learning, project based learning and authentic learning are the most prevalent and dominant approaches. And the instructors and teachers' role are not only the lecturer, but also the guide or supporter. (F.R. L-156-159)

Peony believed that “OTL practices can not only be applied in online environment, but also can be used in face-to-face teaching” (F. R. L- 167-168). For example, she realized the knowledge she gained in EDE 484 about motivation theory,

and about ways to increase self efficacy, had equipped her with strategies to motivate her learners and she would like to use it not only in her online classes, but also in her face-to-face classes.

Peony was “impressed” to learn about the “pedagogies for online teaching” (W.J.2, L-54-55). She realized she was introduced to “most of those pedagogies” already from the previous TESOL methods courses she took, that focused on traditional classrooms. She contended that she “never thought that those pedagogical approaches could also be adopted by the online courses,” citing as an example situated learning theory (W.J.2, L- 56-57).

Peony believed what works and does not work in the two modes of teaching (F2F and online) depend “on the course goals” and “what students are expected” to do – and even more specifically how these two issues are addressed “when designing instruction” (F.R. L- 152-153). She argued that “the choice to use one over the other depends on student, instructor, and school needs and interests, and the appropriateness of course content for the format” (F.R. L-153-155).

2. Seeking to Increase Students' Access to Learning Opportunities by Leveraging Online Spaces

Peony believed online education has great potentials for increasing access to learning. She discussed the access to resources that online brings for students. She thought it also allows students to connect with and learn from people around the world.

Peony held the view that as online learning is developing, and more students are taking online courses, developers are also creating new online resources and

opportunities for people to learn more and better. As an online teacher she would like to take advantage of this when she teaches online. She said,

Another potential is that, as I said before, because students can find a lot of resources, very concrete resources, for example, if they don't know an item they can Google, they can know the definition of these items from Wikipedia so they can find different aspects of this item and learn from it. Also they can have an opportunity to share with the people around the world, not only their close community but also a very huge and worldwide community. (Interview 2, L- 236-241)

She also added in her second interview:

As an online teacher, I want to give students opportunities to access the content and resources because you know the Internet is very huge, like you can find many materials, many content that you want to learn but you have to choose the most effective content. So I want students to have such ability for them, not only to give them the knowledge but also to train them the ability of learning, the ability to find the resource they need to learn, they want to learn, the ability to give them opportunity of learning. (Interview 2, L- 220- 228)

3. Seeking to Create a Caring and Interactive Learning Community in Any

Instructional Context

As an aspiring online teacher, Peony put special emphasis on the importance of creating a learning community, as indicated by the fact that she identified this as one of the four items in her final take-aways from the course (as reproduced earlier). She thought that by building a learning community she could help lessen the feeling of isolation among online learners. There were several strategies that she would like to follow to help create a learning community; including: creating a supportive community, ensuring dialogues, posting personal introductions, creating student groups and forums, and adopting a collaborative and situated learning approach.

Peony stated that she would strive to “foster an interactive environment and build a comfortable community for students” (F.R. L- 182-183). She wanted “to create a supportive course community” where she wanted to ensure dialogues between “faculty to student, student to student and student to content” (F.R. L- 56- 57). She believed that “these dialogues promote effective communication and learning” (F.R. L- 58) and that can be especially important in an online environment. In one of her journals, Peony explained:

In an environment where instructors do not necessarily meet students face-to-face and where students may never have an opportunity to meet their peers in a physical classroom, developing a sense of supportive community can be particularly challenging. Instructors should build an online learning environment which will motivate students to do their best. (W.J.7, L- 250-253)

In her final reflection, she came back to this point by saying, “Online courses may create a sense of isolation. Studying alone with only the computer as your companion can be terrifying” because there is “no applause when classmates have a wonderful presentation or speech” (F.R. L-32-35). In response to a post from a peer on creating learning communities, Peony also wrote:

I think the theory of Community of Practice is the better way to explain how students connect with each other. And I think online instructors should build an online community so that students won't be isolated and learning happens through interaction with peers (DB Module 5.2, L- 224-227).

Informed by the course readings, in another discussion board Peony further discussed the concept of building communities in an online class:

I believe that an online harmonious environment and good peer relationship is very important to build connections among peers, as Thormann and Zimmerman states, “online, students are not able to saunter out of the classroom or turn to a classmate and ask if he or she understands the course material.” Thus, it is important to create opportunities for students to support each other and encourage

appropriate participation. I appreciated Thormann and Zimmerman's techniques that can foster peer relationships and keep a good online communication environment, for example, group work, peer mentoring, leaders and followers, and especially creating a "Coffee Shop Forum" on discussion board. I also believe that learning happens in social community, which means students learn effectively in interaction with peers in the community. So, a positive and harmonious community allows more peer interaction and effective learning practice. (DB Module 5.3, L- 146-155)

In order to create a supportive online learning community in her online courses, Peony planned to start her course with "a personal introduction posting so that students can get to know one another" and the teacher gets to know where her students are – as done in EDE 484 (F.R. L- 59). She would also like to send quick e-mails to her students "to help them feel better connected if the sense of community" they "seek is missing" (F.R. L- 47-50).

Peony also wanted to create "an online community or study group for students to seek help" if needed. She would like to create and use a "general open student forum for students to post and request help and assistance from each other through the various student-to-student tools, such as discussions, help areas, etc." (F.R. L- 61-63).

Additionally, she wanted to create small student groups "where students can assume responsibility for supportive mentoring of fellow students and summarizing key points of a class assignment" (F.R. L- 63-64).

Peony recognized the connection between the pedagogical approach adopted and building connections with students, as she wrote in a discussion board:

I believe that teacher's pedagogies are the keys to build connections of student to student. Because instructors play an important role in the interaction with students, instructors' pedagogies determine how they interact with students. For example, if the instructor adopts traditional lecturing teaching method, it increase isolation, however, instructors would connect with students more effectively by

adopting collaborative learning or situated learning. Because these pedagogies allow instructors to shift the role as a lecturer or authority to the role of a coach or even a friend or group leader, students feel easy and less stressed to communicate. (DB Module 5.2, L- 142-149)

Though Peony had well equipped herself as an online teacher with strategies to create a learning community, she still contended that “No matter how hard we try to fully transfer human communication to online platforms, no matter how natural it seems to form relationships behind computer screens, a virtual environment is just not human. Nothing can replace human contact” (F.R. L- 36-39).

4. Seeking to Enhance Students' Engagement and Motivation by Capitalizing on the Many Affordances of Digital Technologies

Peony recognized the importance of enhancing students' engagement and motivation as a future online teacher. She believed that “Online teaching and learning has more advantages and potential to sustain students' intrinsic motivation” (W.J.2, L- 45-50). She would like to adopt a few specific tactics to enhance student engagement and motivation for her classes – such as, creating a relation of trust, increasing self-efficacy, and using motivation theory to help enhance student motivation by providing students with choices and opportunities for collaboration.

One thing that influence students' motivation is trust, Peony contended, as she stated in a discussion board: “Teacher and students should trust each other in order to keep a positive cycle. Students would like to be more interactive and motivated if they trust their instructor” (DB Module 5.2, L- 262-264).

Peony was concerned that as an online teacher it would be challenging for her to ensure student motivation and engagement. She believed the first few weeks to be easy,

“because of the novelty of the subject, but it is not easy for learners to keep their interest and be engaged through the whole semester” (F.R. L- 90-92). To overcome this challenge she would like to apply motivation theory to her online teaching and would like to explore “how to implement it effectively and improve my online courses” (F.R. L- 93).

From readings on motivation theory, Peony learned about “various strategies to increase self-efficacy, and how to communicate with students to increase their intrinsic motivation” and she would utilize those in her teaching (W.J.2, L- 46-47). Most notably, Peony believed “Flexibility in choosing tasks and collaboration are important and can make students connect to content” (DB Module 5.1, L- 260-261). She held the view that “These factors aim to increase students’ motivation so that they are willing to interact with the content” (DB Module 5.1, L- 262-263). As a future online teacher, Peony would like to “give more options for students to let them choose what they want to learn” – they would decide what “content” to choose or what they are interested in (Interview 1, L- 494- 496). She would include tasks for her students, for which they would have to find articles themselves. She said, “I will give the power of choosing content to students to make students be more self-motivated” (Interview 1, L- 499-500).

Peony also said she would like to ask for student feedback and would find out the reasons for students’ lack of motivation and she would find “efficient solution,” to address the issue of students’ lack of motivation (F.R. L- 92-95).

5. Seeking to Promote Deep Learning and Understanding by Capitalizing on Appropriate Digital Tools and Resources

To become the kind of online teacher Peony aspired to be, she would like to promote deep learning and understanding for her students. As an online teacher, Peony would choose contents that are relevant for the students' everyday life and present them in different formats; she would also like to elicit students' prior knowledge and connect those with their current learning.

As an online teacher Peony would select "content related to daily life" of her students which she thought would enable them to "easily understand or acquire knowledge base on their real experience, and it is the way to build students' cognition of learning" (DB Module 5.1, L- 264-266). Peony would also like to choose different types of contents for her students – "not only written form" of contents – for example, in her class she would like to include "voice recording, like Zoom, videos, or movies" (Interview 1, L- 507-509).

About the importance of students' prior knowledge in promoting deep learning, Peony said in the first interview, "I've learned that prior knowledge can facilitate students' learning process. There is one hypothesis called $I + 1$ which means students get input based on knowledge they have already learned, that would be more effective and efficient" (Interview 1, L- 115-117). Recognizing the importance of students' prior knowledge, Peony decided to utilize the practice of "eliciting prior knowledge" in her Individual Project, by asking students to start with reflecting on their prior knowledge about the topic she was teaching.

6. Seeking to Promote Collaborative Learning in Any Instructional Context

Peony valued collaborative learning as she believed it to be more effective and motivating for students, and she also believed that online offers better opportunities for fostering collaborative learning. She wanted to create an environment in her class where students would interact with each other and work in groups to learn from their peers. She recognized that enabling group work might be challenging in an online class, but she had thought about some ways to handle it.

Based on her previous online learning experience, which was negative, Peony thought “learning alone” in an online setting “is not effective” (Interview 1, L- 167). Rather she used to think that “Interaction is the essential factor for effective teaching and learning” (F.R. L- 176). She believed knowing that others are learning the “same thing” motivates students to “learn more” about the thing they “want to learn” (Interview 1, L- 167-168). She argued, “I think learning together is more important than learning alone, so if I were an online teacher I would give more opportunity for students to contact each other, learn from each other, share things with each other” (Interview 1, L- 170-172). In her final reflection, she also stated that online students “should be required to interact with one another, with the instructor, with the text, with the peers” (F.R. L- 176-177).

As an online teacher it was most important to Peony to “give students opportunity ... to interact or [participate in] group work” (Interview 1, L- 229-230). She would like to create small student groups “where students can assume responsibility for supportive mentoring of fellow students and summarizing key points of a class assignment” (F.R. L- 63-64).

Interestingly, Peony believed that “online learners ... have more opportunities to learn from each other and ... take greater control of class work” (W.J.1, L- 11-12). She contended that online teaching aligns more with “constructivism” and the concept of “community of practice,” as students learn together and communication is “important” here (Interview 1, L- 156-157). She contended as an aspiring online teacher “It is important to build this kind of community for students, to provide opportunity for students to communicate not only with peers but also with like the specialty in their field or their interests” (Interview 1, L- 159-162). She held the view that it is more challenging to create a collaborative learning environment in traditional classes due to “time constraints” (W.J.1, L- 13).

At the same time, Peony recognized that making people work in groups in an online context can be challenging and can have some limitations. She said when people work in a group, there might be some members who would prefer face-to-face meeting, but those who live in a distant region might not be able to attend the meeting. If necessary she would help schedule a meeting time for each group of students in advance. This way, they would be able to keep their schedule free at the chosen time.

7. Seeking to Provide Students with Choices and Differentiated Learning

Opportunities, Leveraging Technology Whenever Possible

As an aspiring online teacher Peony valued the opportunities online education offers for students to have more choices and differentiated learning. She contended that in an online context a teacher can reach smaller groups of students at a time and can provide differentiated feedback. She believed it to be essential to know the needs of one's

students, and to take these needs into consideration when designing an online class. However, Peony she did not provide details on how she would enact differentiated learning or how she would identify and meet students' individual needs in her online classes by leveraging technology.

In her initial reflection, while talking about the affordances of online education, Peony wrote that OTL offers access to online resources and "free choice to learn" based on learners' "interests" (I.R. L- 4). Later, in her final reflection, Peony came back to this point saying, "Another most valuable affordance of online learning is that it can be individualized, differentiated and personalized" (F.R. L- 12-13) and also stating that OTL allows students to "manage their learning themselves" and schedule their learning according to their needs and at their convenience (F.R. L- 14-15). But she did not explain how she would offer differentiated learning in her own online teaching. In her second interview Peony further said,

Differentiated learning ... I think that's one of the potential of online learning because you can provide a differentiated learning to students, you can communicate or you can like I said instruct the students one person from another, it's not necessary for you to have a very huge classroom but you can have a small classroom for them. So also from the online teaching you can have the differentiated feedback from different students so yes I think online teaching can provide the differentiated learning. (Interview 2, L- 247- 253)

Peony emphasized the importance of understanding students' needs and meeting those needs. She contended, "Understanding the student population allows an instructor to best determine how much or how little help they need. Knowing their needs can help instructors better determine the teaching goals and how to design the modules" (W.J.7, L- 256-258).

About meeting students' individual needs, Peony said that in her childhood the classes in China had 50/60 students each; therefore, teachers were not able to focus on students' "individual interest or their individual preferences" (Interview 1, L- 179-181). Teachers would give "the same instructions" and all the students would learn the "same thing" and teachers would not "care about the kind of level of proficiency" a student was at (Interview 1, L- 182-183). However, she believed "Online teachers can reach this goal, reach this aim because... online teachers can now contact one to one, they can give instructions individually rather than give general instruction" (Interview 1, L- 191-193). She thought focusing on students' individual needs and preferences is "the effective way for students to learn or develop" (Interview 1, L- 193-194).

8. Appreciating the Need for Goal-driven Instructional Design and Thoughtful

Instructional Choices – Especially When Planning Online Learning Experiences

Proficiency in instructional design was a key component of the kind of online teacher Peony wanted to be. There were several practices she would like to follow and several specific strategies she would like to adopt when designing and teaching an online course. Based on what she had learned in the course, she would pay special attention to determining course goals based on students' needs, clarifying her expectations for her students and determining the course outcomes before designing the activities. She would adopt a backward design approach, and follow the principles of learning and the templates for online assignments offered in the course readings.

Peony held the view that "Backward design is really the most effective method for developing online courses" (F.R. L- 133-134). She believed it is not only "convenient

for the teacher, but also for the students” and “It is good for teachers to establish a goal of teaching and for students to clearly understand what they should know and are expected to learn at the beginning of each module” (F.R. 137-139). Therefore, Peony contended that how a teacher addresses the issues of “course goal” and “what students are expected to do” determines the success of a course. She held the view that knowing the needs of the students “can help the instructor to better determine the teaching goals and how to design the modules” (W.J.7, L-257-258).

Peony suggested that before designing activities for online classes, teachers should think about what they want their students to learn and what will be the desired learning outcomes. They should decide what the student should be able to do “as a result of” taking the class (F.R.L- 99). This would allow them to identify how to engage their students in learning and how they would “measure this learning” (F.R.L- 101). After considering all these “learning and assessment activities” teachers should decide which ones would “lend themselves best to online learning” (F.R.L- 101-102). As an example of how learning activities in an online course should be based on “specific teaching goals and challenges” (F.R.L- 103), Peony said,

For example, you want to conduct discussions or debates and want all students, especially shy students, participate or make substantial contributions. Hosting discussions online can accommodate a variety of learning styles, allow you to provide more structure to a discussion, encourage more participation, and result in more thoughtful responses. (F.R. L- 103-107)

Peony added that she would follow the “10 core learning principles” (Boettcher & Conrad, 2016) when she designs her online course (W.J.2, L- 51-52). She would use as many of these principles as possible in designing “an effective and efficient online

course” (W.J.2, L-53-54). Peony was particularly impressed by the several templates offered by Thormann and Zimmerman (2012) for the instructors to use in designing and teaching their courses, and to assess the students. She said,

I selected several templates that are new for me and I think I could use in my future online language teaching, such as compare and contrast case study finding, case study analysis, developing a Podcast, developing a Blog or Website. These templates can be adopted to assess students' ability of reading, writing, listening and speaking (F.R. L- 118-121).

9. Seeking to Enhance Student Assessment Practices Through the Use of Digital Technologies, so as to Better Support Learning and Inform Instruction

Assessment was critical for the kind of online teacher Peony wanted to be, given her adoption of a “backward design” approach. As an English teacher, Peony would utilize some of the assessment templates from the readings in the course as models for her future online classes. She would like to give special emphasis on formative assessment (which she did not employ in the past), and she would also provide multiple and multi-modal opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning leveraging technology.

Consistent with a “backward design” approach, Peony believed it is important for teachers to “determine course goals and think what ability they are going to assess before choosing templates to deliver content” (F.R. L- 123-124).

In the final reflection, Peony discussed Thormann and Zimmerman's (2012) activity and assessment templates for online instructors. She would like to use these as models for herself because “These templates adopt learning principles and theories that build a scientific way of learning and create enthusiasm and interest in online learning”

(F.R. L- 113-115). She would like to use many of these in her “future online language teaching, such as compare and contrast case study finding, case study analysis, developing a Podcast, developing a Blog or Website” (F.R. L- 118-120). Peony would like to adopt these to “assess students’ ability of reading, writing, listening and speaking” (F.R. L- 121). Reviewing Thormann and Zimmerman’s (2012) templates, which offer both summative and formative assessment samples, she realized that in the past she spent more time on summative assessment and neglected the “importance and significance of formative evaluation” (F.R. L- 128). From reading this book and from the discussions with her classmates she now understood that “Adopting only one type of evaluation is not enough and it would be better to combine two types of evaluation in courses to promote students learning process” (F.R. L-130-132).

Peony held the view that providing students with a variety of online tools to demonstrate their learning would allow them to “perform better” and get better “outcome” (Interview 1, L- 211-212). She gave an example, “Online teachers [can] provide multiple options for students to perform- like you can record, you can do a presentation, you can make a movie, video, game, or you can explain on your own or something so students can find a way they prefer” (Interview 1, L- 214-216).

10. Seeing the Use of Digital Technologies as a Tool Rather Than a Goal in Itself

Peony believed that “Technology plays an important role in designing high-quality online learning activities” (F.R. L- 82-83). She recognized her need as an aspiring online teacher to learn more about technology, in particular, how to use “multimedia

resources” and Web 2.0 tools for her classes, but she acknowledged later in the course that knowledge of content and pedagogy is more important than knowledge of the tools.

In her first weekly journal Peony wrote about her surprise seeing the technological and digital resources offered by online education and its ability to connect people with experts:

I was surprised by the power of technology and new literacies. The model of learning powered by technology shows that technology supports learning in various aspects. Technology allows students to be surrounded with teachers, parents, peers and mentors/coaches so that students can have much attention and care; it has increased our ability to both study and enhance all three types of learning—factual knowledge, procedural knowledge, and motivational engagement (National Research Council 2000, 2003, 2007, 2009; National Science Foundation 2008b). Technology supports students to be lifelong learners and provides ways to integrate informal learning into formal learning. (W.J.1, L-16-22)

Peony contended that OTL offers “multimodal resources such as text, media, and sound” that can make learning more interesting and reach out to students with various styles of learning (F.R. L- 9-10). She believed that when content is presented “in multiple ways” students understand “concepts” better; and multimedia is also beneficial for “visual learning” (F.R. L- 10-11). OTL also offers options for learners “to create and submit assignments multi-modally” (F.R. L- 12).

Peony shared her own concerns related to technology as a future online teacher. She believed that “Instructors have to be familiar Web 2.0 tools before designing activities and choose which are the best tools to support students reach their results” (F.R. L- 83-84). She felt that she was not sufficiently familiar with the Web 2.0 tools and wanted to “take advantage of opportunities for training and workshops, speak with colleagues and instructors who are currently teaching online, and request consultations

with an instructional designer” (F.R. L- 87-90). She felt confident about her content knowledge and she thought she was capable of finding resources, but she said “I lack a little bit on technologies” (Interview 1, L- 367-368). Yet, in the interview while discussing technology and its importance for her as an online teacher Peony said,

I think compared to the content technology is less important ... I think students or teachers should have more focus on content or knowledge rather than what kind of technology is cool or the best. So the focus should be on academic rather than technologies. So I think if teachers have enough knowledge about technology, it's okay. (Interview 1, L- 81-85)

Peony also discussed some challenges related to technology in an online class. She said that OTL “requires high speed internet,” so, during an online session students might face technical issues, which might even be “beyond control” (F.R. L- 43-45). She thought if a person faces these issues, sometimes it can create problems for the other students as well, because the class cannot go as planned by the teacher. To minimize this challenge she would ask her students to check their internet capacity and speed before synchronous sessions.

Additional Aspects of the Kind of Online Teacher Peony Wanted to be

In this section I will discuss some of the other aspects of the kind of online teacher Peony aspired to be besides the ten components explicitly targeted by the course.

Professional Components of Teaching. Peony believed that the role of an online teacher is different than a traditional teacher. She said, as far as she understood “online teacher would more be like a designer or an instructor, or a partner, or facilitator” (Interview 1, L- 89-90). She contended that an online teacher might have multiple roles –

the roles of a lecturer, “innovator,” designer, creator (of contents), instructor and above all the role of a life-long learner.

Peony believed it is “important” for teachers to know the content. If teachers are “knowledgeable,” they can select “good contents” and identify “bad contents” or decide on what contents are “effective for students, and what are not effective for students” (Interview 1, L- 62-64). She thought having content knowledge is important for both traditional teachers and online teachers. She believed, “There are more things you need to choose online” ... because internet offers many “sources” for online teachers, there are “articles or activities” to choose from (Interview 1, L- 71-74).

Peony held the view that “We are not only teachers, we’re all lifelong learners” (Interview 1, L- 149). She believed an online teacher has to be a life-long learner because “Technology is changing, teacher methods or teacher activities are changing, everything is changing, you have to keep up with the society, and you have to keep up with the trend because this is important” (Interview 1, L- 150-153).

Field-Specific Considerations. As a TESOL teacher, Peony wanted her students to “have practical knowledge about English rather than ... just focus on books or materials that everybody buys at schools” (Interview 1, L- 102-104). She thought it would be important for her students to be “good communicators” (Interview 1, L- 104-105). She held the view that both traditional and online teachers “should focus more on students’ meaning making rather than just display or present their language knowledge” (Interview 1, L-106-107). She would like to promote “deep learning” and “life-long learning” and she would not want her students to learn “what they don’t have to learn”

(Interview 1, L- 108-111). Therefore, she would like to leverage online learning to offer more resources and various materials and better opportunities for communication for her students.

As a TESOL teacher, at first Peony questioned whether online education could offer opportunities to practice and improve communication skills, as reflected in her first weekly journal:

I believe online learning offers students opportunities practicing communication skills, however, students could only practice in an online setting rather than in a real context. Thus, my question is can online learning help students give speeches in public? (W.J.1, L- 23-26)

Later, though, Peony wrote in her final reflection paper how she would take advantage of technology and multimedia resources to teach English to her students and to interact with them better: “To have an effective English learning experience, I will convey the content not only in traditional ways but in various types of multimedia. I will take advantage of technology to enhance learners’ knowledge and better support and communicate with them” (F.R. L- 24-27).

Acknowledged Changes in Views of Online Teaching and Online Teachers

Peony experienced significant changes in her perception about online education after she took EDE 484. Being new to the field of teaching, the course also helped her to gain confidence as a teacher regardless of the mode of teaching she will use, as she gained a better understanding of teaching in general and she grew in her appreciation of specific teaching practices, theories, approaches.

Based on her previous experience of online learning (which did not “go very well” and which she said was “tedious and boring”) Peony initially “doubted the

effectiveness of teaching online” (F.R. L- 146-147). She thought that, compared to online students, “face-to-face students should perform” better (F.R. L- 148). Her “perception” changed after taking EDE 484 and she came to realize that “There is no evidence that one is better than another” (F.R. L- 149-150), but rather “They are just two different types of teaching, and both have its strengths and limitations” (F.R. L- 150-151). She contended that teachers should compare these “two ways of teaching, list their pros and cons” and then “consider what works and what doesn't work based on the course goals” when they design instruction (F.R. L- 151-153). She held the view that “The choice to use one over the other depends on student, instructor, and school needs and interests, and the appropriateness of course content for the format” (F.R. L- 153-155).

After taking the course, Peony realized that “online teaching can also satisfy students' need or it has the same result as ... face-to-face classes” (Interview 1, L- 284-286). In fact she thought “Online teaching can be even more effective than face-to-face class because online teaching has many advantages” because of technological and online resources (Interview 1, L- 286-288). After taking the course Peony “realized the potential of online learning and realized that a blended form of learning is already central to education today” with supplementing “face-to-face classes” (F.R. L- 160-162). She believed, “Online learning can also be the way of informal learning outside the face-to-face classroom, especially for K-12 education” (F.R. L- 162-163).

Peony also learned that despite the “differences between online learning and face-to-face learning, the instructional approaches are similar” or even the same (F.R. L- 156-157). She believed in an online setting “student centered learning, project based learning

and authentic learning are the most prevalent and dominant approaches” (F.R. L- 157-158).

Peony's perception of the role of an online teacher also changed after taking the course, as she realized that an online teacher plays multiple roles (Interview 1). She believed that an online teacher does not play the role of a lecturer only, rather s/he plays the role of a “guide or supporter” (F.R. L- 159).

The other change of perception Peony experienced was related to “opportunities for students to learn,” while she used to think that online learning meant watching videos and presentations, now she realized that online learning is much more than that. The experiences in the class, she said, “broadened my horizon of how to give students opportunities to access the resources” (Interview 1, L- 272).

Peony said that her change of perceptions about online education was a result of her overall experience in the class. The design of the course, the step by step clear instructions in the class, individual learning as well as the community of learning in the class all contributed to her change of perspectives (Interview 1).

When asked whether her responses would have been different if she was given the pre-interview survey before taking the course, Peony replied that it would have been different. She contended she would rate items like “designs motivating and engaging activities” differently. She did not use to think those were important, because she did not “trust online teaching” and she preferred traditional classes (Interview 1, L- 243-244). She thought traditional classes were more motivating and engaging for students. So, she

would have rated these items differently. She would also not give importance to teachers being life-long learners and innovators, she would think a teacher needs to just lecture.

Impacts of the Course Activities on Peony's Identity Development

In this section I will discuss how different learning experiences in the course impacted Peony's identity development as an online teacher, so as to address my second research question: *How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?* I will first talk about the impacts of participation (both as an online learner and as an online teacher) on Peony's identity development as a certain type of online teacher, and then I will talk about the effects of recognition by self and by others on her identity development. I will also discuss some other factors that influenced her identity development.

Overall Impact of the Course

Peony's perceptions about online education changed substantially because of her experiences in the course overall, as it is evident from what I have discussed so far in the case. From the course she reported to have learned about theories relevant to online teaching learning, as well as some valuable classroom strategies. She said the overall course will influence her future teaching – both online and face-to-face (Interview 1). From what she learned in the course, she would focus more on motivation and she would like to use multiple ways to convey content, and provide clear instructions using lists, “time schedule” (Interview 1, L- 356-357). She would also like to adopt some of the activities she participated in in EDE 484 for her future teaching. She would utilize

surveys, reflections, journals, group and individual projects, teacher feedback and peer feedback that were also used in the course.

Participation: Experience as an Online learner

From Peony's posts on the discussion boards, journals, final reflection, and from what she said in her interviews, it is evident that her experiences as an online learner in EDE 484 influenced greatly her understanding of what online education should look like. She also expressed her desire to adopt some of the activities she participated in as a learner in the class for her future teaching – including online surveys, reflections, journals, group and individual projects, teacher feedback and peer feedback.

In a discussion board in module 3, which was fully asynchronous, Peony discussed her experience as a learner. She connected the design and implementation of the module with the “ten core learning principles” (Boettcher & Conrad, 2016) from one of the readings of the course. She recognized that several of these learning principles were reflected in the module:

Principle 1: Every Structured Learning Experience Has Four Elements with the Learner at the Center. Principle 3: Faculty Mentors Are the Directors of the Learning Experience. In this online module, we can see learners are the center of the teaching and learning process; the instructor is the facilitator to provide support and guide to the learners, rather than lecture. For example, the instructor designs this module and gives directions and supports; the instructor didn't play the role of the person who transmits knowledge, rather, provide various ways for students to gain knowledge by themselves. The content provided by instructors facilitate each students to meet the expectation. This online module can be done anytime anywhere. Principle 7: Concepts Are Not Words But Organized and Interconnected Knowledge Clusters. Discussion board and journal entry are provided to help learners take advantage of new concepts learned in the content and really think these words instead of just focusing on learning the vocabulary or terms. (DB Module 3.2, L- 11-22)

In the same discussion board, Peony also discussed her understanding of how the module engaged and motivated students and how the content was delivered. She said,

In this online learning module, I can see many motivation principles were used. In order to increase learners' self-efficacy, the content is at the proper level of difficulty so that learners do not feel bored nor frustrated. Plus, the content is presented by readings but also by multiple perspective via multimedia, like video and PowerPoint in order to keep students motivated. Moreover, isolation can impact motivation, in order to manage students' isolation, there is an "Ask a question" that allows students to post their questions and problem that occur during the learning process. Plus, students are required to review classmates' posts and reply. Interacting with other learners can create an opportunity for learners to develop relationships in the course. And most impressive is that flexibility is reflected in this module. For example, students are allowed to choose one of the course activities for the discussion board activity. (DB Module 3.2, L-23-33)

In a discussion board on best practices, Peony shared her opinion that the course Group Project and Individual Project well demonstrated the best practice of combining the "core concept of learning with customized and personalized learning" (DB Module 8, L- 114). She contended, "The purpose of the two projects is to apply the concepts that we've learned in the module into practice" (DB Module 8, L- 116-117). She also wrote,

According to the key principle that aids in concept learning from Vygotsky (1962, 1978), we had a couple of case studies and problem solving in face-to-face class which aimed to apply concepts within a context. This is an effective way to cluster learning concepts rather than isolated (learning). Moreover, video recording and journals from group lessons are all good ways for engaging learners in combining concepts together and encouraging cognitive presence. (DB Module 8, L- 120-124)

In another discussion board post, Peony reflected on her own experience as a learner in the course as she wrote about the best practice of creating a supportive online course community. She said,

It reminds me that we were required to post a personal introduction, post our photos and response to other's posts on blackboard at the beginning of this course,

which encouraged peer-to-peer engagement. And both this course and group lessons had email reminder announcements to create a set of dialogues of faculty to student. I also appreciate that we received the feedbacks from each week's journal entry which can strongly encourage the interaction between faculty and student. In addition, I think using Padlet is a very good strategy that students can be in an online community where we collect and share the resource that related to the course. (DB Module 8, L- 147-154)

Participation: Experience as an Online Teacher

In several occasions in the reflective journals and also in the interviews, Peony discussed explicitly her experiences as a teacher in the two course projects and how those impacted the kind of online teacher she wanted to be. Peony recognized how challenging it was to design an online module alone in the Individual Project, and appreciated the opportunity to collaborate with and learn from others in the Group Project. Her experiences in the two projects made her gain some self-assurance as a future online teacher.

First of all, her experiences in the two projects made Peony aware that online teaching is not “easy” and online teachers have to play multiple roles. She said,

I think from these two projects I can see being an online teacher is not an easy job. That sometimes it's even harder than a lecturer because ... an online teacher has many roles, not only a lecturer but also like an instructor, and facilitator and something like that. So from these two projects I think it is not that easy and I need more practice. (Interview 2, L- 55-60)

Peony also stated that her experiences in the two projects had helped her gain confidence as a future online teacher, “because through these projects I think I have gained or I have absorbed certain amount of strategies, certain amount of technologies and related knowledge about online teaching and learning” (Interview 2, L- 70-73).

Before doing the two projects, Peony was worried about teaching online since she felt she needed to “be familiar” with many things and was not sure how to “use these theories into the real life” (Interview 2, L- 81-82). She was also anxious because of her lack of experience, and she was concerned whether she would be able to “do a good job or not” (Interview 2, L- 83-84). After completing the two projects, she felt – “I can do it” (Interview 2, L- 80- 85).

Peony liked the Individual and Group Projects since they were more “practical” and motivating,” and while completing the projects she could put “into practice” what she had learned in the course (Interview 1, L- 428-429). She believed this enhanced her thinking and learning. From the Individual Project her “one specific take-away” for the future was to make her classes “more student- centered” (Interview 1, L- 435). She would like her students to “be the facilitator of the class, or instructor of the classroom” and she would like them to “be more communicators rather than listeners” (Interview 1, L- 438-441).

Experience in the Group Project: The Group Project enabled Peony to realize that “teachers need to have a clear purpose and clear goal before designing the course” (Interview 1, L- 390-391). After that, designing activities and assessments becomes “smooth.” Not having clear goals “makes it confusing and less effective” (Interview 1, L- 394-395). From the experience of the Group Project Peony also realized that the teacher’s goals can be reached in online teaching and it can be more interesting and motivating. She thought if she were to teach the same group module face-to-face, it would not be as interesting.

Overall, Peony thought their Group Project went well “considering the level and types of student-to-student and student-to-instructor interactions,” and it engaged and motivated the students to experience video games and “build a community to share their thoughts in a discussion board” (W.J.6, L- 213-215). She felt that it was evident from the “quizzes, discussions and reflections, that the students demonstrated what they learned and knew, which presented a better learning experience in this lesson” (W.J.6, L- 217-218).

Peony was also very reflective and self-critical about how her group online module could have been improved, as evident in the following journal entry:

Though there was a clear and specific instruction on how to use technology to record personal video, we didn't provide enough opportunities for students to give feedback on ease of online technology. When assessing the lesson from the perspective of students, our lesson didn't offer opportunities in receiving feedback from students. Thus, to improve the quality of lesson and subsequent course, we need the feedback from students at the end of the lesson. To assess the quality of course materials, we can use the students' posts and responses in discussion boards. Most students had an insight reflection on their post, though few of them failed to get the main concepts of the lesson, they learned from other's post. This indicates that the content materials are appropriate for them, maybe we might take advantage of multimedia for them to get the concepts more straightforward. (W.J.6, L- 203-213)

Experience in the Individual Project: Being alone, Peony “felt less confident” about the Individual Project because she had no experience of online teaching (Interview 1, L- 406-407), whereas, in the Group Project she had her group members to talk to. From this experience she realized that in future she would have to learn from “more experienced teachers” and discuss with them “more effective ways of teaching” (Interview 1, L- 413-415).

Peony compared her experiences in the two projects and explained how those impacted her as an aspiring online teacher:

My experience ... in the group project and individual project were a little bit different, because when I was in group project I regarded myself as a member of the group as well as a part of the instructor, so from the group project I could see my strengths as well as my weaknesses and also I could learn from my group members which I think impacted ... my further teaching I think. When I worked in my individual project I was under pressure because I took charge of the whole project so I have to have, I had to think from the very beginning, for example, how I should start my class until the end of the project, for example, how I design the assessment, how I construct the feedback and also I had to use the theories and strategies into my project so I learned a lot from the project and I had appropriate practice in my individual project so I think these two projects impacted me for my further teaching ... I (got to) know what I'm good at and what I need to continue to study or continue to learn. (Interview 2, L- 39-51)

Peony also contended that working in a group allowed them to create a better product, because they had each-others' expertise to help produce something better. She said, "I think my group project is better than my individual project because you work with your members and you discuss to a better solution or a better way to convey the project" (Interview 2, L- 67-69). Peony further discussed the difference between the experiences of participating in the two projects:

The difference is that when I work in the group project I don't have much pressure compared with the work of individual project because in a group you discuss a lot, you share your thoughts and choose the best solution as I said and also your members will come up with the plans or come up with the ways or strategies that you haven't thought of which I think to some ways they complement your plans or your ideas which sometimes I neglect of so I think but when you work in your individual project there's a lot of work, like you have to think individually, you have to consider a lot whether your ways are efficient or not, your ways are not because no one is going to help you, no one is going to tell you that maybe another way is better than your way or something so I think the difference is there's no peer feedback in your individual project I think. (Interview 2, L- 90- 100)

Peony also recognized the importance of doing the Group Project before the Individual Project; she discussed how she learned things from her group-mates which she later used in designing her Individual Project. She stated,

I think it's really important and I think it is reasonable to have the group project first and then the individual project ... because as I said in the previous interview I'm not a technology person and I don't know how to design, or how to decorate, or how to construct the Blackboard, the board, the Blackboard, I just put the content on the website and that's it. (Interview 2, L- 103-109)

Peony mentioned how she learned about technology, how to decorate the website and use the Blackboard from one of her peers:

He's good at the technology, he decorated the website, the Blackboard, and he came up with a good idea of how to categorize the content and how to highlight each content ... I learned from this because I was not good at it. So I took advantage of his technology in my individual project ... I think group project first and then individual project later will be better because you can learn a lot from other members when you work in a group project and use the knowledge ... into your own individual project. (Interview 2, L- 114- 121)

Opportunities for Recognition

In this section I will discuss the opportunities the course created for Peony to get recognition from herself through reflections, from her teacher and from her peers in their interactions in various discussion boards and other posts, and what kind of recognition she received as an aspiring online teacher.

Recognition by Self. It is evident from the findings that Peony's *experiences as an online learner* and *experiences as an online teacher* in the course influenced her identity as an online teacher. At the same time, as evident in the quotes included in the previous sections, the course offered opportunities for her to reflect on the experiences in

the discussion boards, journals, and final paper which allowed her to understand her own practices and get recognition from her own self as an online teacher.

Peony also explicitly recognized the value of the reflections to process what she had learned in the course and what she would “go on to do in the future,” as she said, it “directed” her to decide on “how to teach” online courses in the future (Interview 1, L-455-456). From the experience of reflecting in the course she wanted to be a teacher who is “equipped” with three things – “be proficient with content, be proficient with strategies as well as technologies” (Interview 1, L- 457-459).

Recognition from Others. During the course, Peony had multiple opportunities to receive feedback and recognition from both the instructor and her peers. What follows are two notable examples. This first example shows how the course instructor identified specific elements of Peony’s critique of her group module, and pointed them out as evidence of an aspiring online teacher:

Excellent reflection and assessment of your module, Peony. Your analysis is very clear. I like that even though your module was quite well done to start you found ways to improve. I also like your comment about how students might have learned from each other when they did not see the point of the activity. That is a really important concept. Thank you! (W.J.6, l- 227-230)

The second illustration is an example of how Peony got recognition as an online teacher from one of her peers after she described Dewey’s concept of practical inquiry in a discussion board:

What a wonderful and concise description Dewey’s concept. It helped me to grasp that article better when reading your post and I will remember these four phases for long time due to your post. I also agree that the two phases are easier to implement but might take longer to plan for them as instructor has to really well think about authentic situations, problems and tasks that best match the learning goals while in the second phase I think it is a matter of management and being

diligent so the exploration does not go in unknown directions but stays meaningful toward achieving the final learning results. Thank you for such a great post! (Laurel to Peony, DB module 5.1, L- 165-171)

In the interviews, Peony conveyed her appreciation for the teacher's as well as peers' feedback she received in the course for the two projects, as those helped her to learn from others and improve her own product. Her experience of receiving and giving feedback in the course also had significant implications for her as an online teacher that made her realize how to utilize "feedback" in her own teaching and what type of feedback opportunities she would like to offer.

Peony said that the feedback received from the teacher and her peers allowed her to understand what she had "neglected" as well as what she did well and helped her to be more "professional" (Interview 1, L- 468-469). The feedback helped her to identify her "weaknesses" to decide on what to focus on more when designing courses in future or how to "refine" her "teaching strategies or ideologies" (Interview 1, L- 470-473). The feedback also helped her to reflect on why she did something, or whether she was effective or not. Overall those helped her to be "more critical" about designing and teaching courses online in future (Interview 1, L- 476).

Peony held the view that "feedback should be given not only by teachers but also by peers" and she would like to "combine" these two types of feedback in her own teaching (Interview 1, L- 479-480). She considered feedback to be "one of the most important things for students" because it "makes students realize ... what they did not know ... and students also can learn a lot from feedback" (Interview 1, L- 470-473). In the second interview Peony further said,

Feedback is also important for me. For example, the feedback from the discussion board, the feedback from the face-to-face course, these feedbacks can facilitate your thinking, your understanding the content, as you interact with people you share your ideas, they share their ideas, oh okay to change your, not change to improve your thinking. So from this I think feedback can strengthen my understanding and can also make be better understand the content we learned in the course and this is one impact for me. (Interview 2, L- 142-148)

Talking about the difference between the feedback she received from the teacher and from her peers, Peony said:

I think there's no difference between instructor feedback and peer feedback ... they both pointed out your weaknesses ... Maybe peer feedback will focus on your content or instructor feedback focus on your whole structure or something, but they're the same thing I think. If have to say the difference may be the feedback from the instructor may be more than the peer feedback, I think probably the instructors are more experienced than the students, than us, so they can give more feedback than peers. (Interview 2, L- 163-170)

Other Factors that Affected Peony's Identity Development

Peony referred to several readings that helped her make sense of online teaching practices and these worked as recognition from the expert in the field for her own understanding, views and ideas that she formed as an aspiring online teacher while participating in the course. She was also aware of the stigma and negativity surrounding online education in general and decided to do her best to help change people's perceptions regarding online education.

About the readings on theories in the course Peony said, "I will make theories into practices because what I've read ... are about the theories of online teaching so I will apply these theories in my future practices" (Interview 1, L- 513-515). Peony concluded that the readings made her realize what to "follow" and where she needed to improve. She contended:

I should learn from the theories and I need more preparation - not only theories but also technologies because I always think I'm not that experienced so this material [the readings] equipped me with enough knowledge ... **gave me the confidence to be an online teacher.** (Interview 2, L- 205- 209)

Talking about the negativity surrounding online education Peony reported that she herself initially had very “negative perception” about online teaching learning which changed into positive one after taking the course (Interview 1, L- 540-541). Therefore, she decided, “I will try my best to change others’ perceptions, especially students” (Interview 1, L- 541-542). In the future, if she were to find students who think online teaching learning is not effective, she would make efforts to “prove” that online class is “as effective as face-to-face class” (Interview 1, L- 544). However, she did not think the negative way in which others looked at online teaching learning impacted her idea of the kind of online teacher she wanted to be.

Summary

When Peony came to the class she had very limited previous experience of online leaning consisting of just one online course that had not been effective for her. This blemished her perceptions about online education. Her experiences in the course both as a student and as a teacher played crucial roles in changing those perceptions and in shaping the kind of online teacher she wanted to be. As an aspiring online teacher Peony recognized that online teaching is not easy and she would have to play multiple roles: “innovator,” “facilitator,” “partner,” life-long learner as well as online teacher. Peony also realized that the “instructional approaches” in both online classes and traditional classes are the same (F.R. L- 157) and she recognized that choosing one mode of

teaching over the other needs to be determined by the “course goals” and instructors’ expectations from the students as well as by the context (F.R. L-150-153).

As an online teacher Peony would like to create a “supportive” online learning community where students interact with each other, collaborate with each other to have meaning making experiences, and have easy access to interact with the teacher and to ask questions whenever they need. Peony would like to engage and motivate her students by creating a relationship of trust and by improving their self-efficacy. She would like to be an online teacher who would use content that relates to the day to day life of the students and who would value and elicit the students’ prior knowledge to make their learning more effective and meaningful. As an online teacher Peony would like to use both formative and summative assessment and offer multimodal opportunities to students to demonstrate their learning while also using specific assessment templates that she was introduced to in the course. Peony wanted to identify students’ needs and their interest before determining the course goals and she would make effort to create learning opportunities for them based on their needs.

As for designing online courses, Peony would adopt the backward design approach and use many of the other design principles she learned in the course. She also planned to take advantage of “multimodal resources,” Web 2.0 tools and other technology to teach her online classes. She learned important things about technology in the course; yet, she thought she needed to learn more about technology to be an effective teacher. However, for the kind of online teacher she wanted to be, content knowledge was more important to her than technology.

Peony's participation in the course activities and in the two projects, both as an online learner and as an online teacher enabled her to comprehend what works and what does not in an online setting. She decided to use several of the course activities modelled in the course in her own teaching. She realized the importance of collaboration in designing and teaching an online course since in the Group Project she learned many things from her peers and felt less stressed. She experienced a sense of accomplishment after completing the two projects which helped her gain confidence as an aspiring online teacher.

Peony acknowledged the opportunities provided by the course for recognition from self and from others, as well as their values. The various reflection opportunities in the course allowed her to think deeply about teaching methodologies, being knowledgeable about content, and being efficient in using technology as an online teacher. The reflections also allowed her to see where she was doing well and where she needed to improve as a future online teacher. Though in her discussions she did not talk about these as "recognition," however, these indeed were cases where she recognized herself as an online teacher implicitly.

Similarly, Peony did not explicitly discuss how her teacher and peers recognized her as an online teacher, but she discussed in detail how the feedback she received from these people helped her to understand various experiences and practices and thus helped her grow as an online teacher. Their feedback and comments enabled her to see her strength as well as her shortcomings, which she found beneficial as a future online teacher.

At the end of the course Peony said that she aspired to be an ESL teacher and teach ESL learners online, using both synchronous and asynchronous sessions. Her ESL background made her want to be the kind of online teacher who would use online education to connect people across the world.

Peony also discussed some challenges that she anticipated to face in future as an online teacher. Keeping up with “technology” would be a challenge for her. Another challenge would be “resources;” she was aware of some resources but she would have to identify which of those are good for her students. It would take her time to choose the right resources having no experience of teaching online.

5E. The Case of Laurel – An Experienced International TESOL Teacher

Background

Laurel was an international student from a European country enrolled in a master's degree in TESOL at Warner School of Education. At the time of the interview she was back home, but shortly after she came back to the Warner School as a PhD student in Teaching and Curriculum.

Teaching Training and Experience

Laurel was a language teacher back in her country, where she taught for about 10 years. She received no teacher training before she started to teach. However, she participated in several in service professional development trainings in her country, and further her preparation as a teacher in the TESOL program at Warner School.

Online Experience

Laurel had some prior online learning experience, as while in her country she took an online course from another US university through a US State Department Scholarship. In her preliminary introductory post she explained that her interest in online education came from realizing the great demand for online learning as many of her students had difficulty coming to class because of their jobs and constantly used technology in day to day life. Therefore, she took EDE 484 because her “career goals in the future matched this course” and, “online teaching and online teacher training is what I aspire to do using the knowledge gained in this course” (Student introduction). She further articulated her reason for taking EDE 484 in a personal email communication:

The reason I took the course was first of all to open the door for myself for more job opportunities, as being able to teach online removes constraints of place for

one. Second, I think that with the evolution of technology and dynamics of lives of our students, we should definitely teach hybrid courses even when we can do face-to-face as this removes costs, time and allows for more self-paced learning on the side of students. Another thing is that learning how to use platforms such as Blackboard facilitated my face-to-face teaching as I can this way disseminate the learning materials, assignments and other information more effectively. Another additional reason was that I aim to be a teacher trainer and being skillful in online teaching is precisely what is required in a world where teachers find it difficult to travel to venues due to their busy routines. Add to this that I want to teach internationally, both as a teacher and a teacher trainer, so taking this course was a way to make it true by both gaining the needed skills as well as having the qualification on paper to present to possible recruiters. (Laurel, personal communication, November 15, 2018)

What Kind of Online Teacher Laurel Aspired to Be

In this section, I will address my first research question by describing what Laurel aspired to be with respect to each of the ten components identified by the course designers as characterizing the “kind of online teacher” the course aimed to prepare, and then report on other elements that emerged from my analysis of the data. I will conclude this section by discussing the changes Laurel reported to have experienced as a result of the course. I will start with Laurel’s own take-aways at the end of the course, as reflected in her last journal entry.

In her own words – main take-aways at the end of the course:

1. make learning goals, instructions for students and everything else as clear as possible
2. use multimodality in delivering content
3. share work in chunks because it is easier to absorb one piece of knowledge at a time for students
4. create opportunities for informal social interaction between instructor-students and students-students through building such threads on Blackboard or by utilizing other social media as additional tools to enhance this aspect
5. model informal interaction by being active first
6. use prompting questions that explicitly welcome students to share how new knowledge relates to their past experiences and future goals
7. monitor learners’ participation and track their activity on Blackboard in order

- to figure out their level of motivation, thus intervene in time
8. use open-ended questions that stimulate higher order thinking
 9. give feedback as often as possible
 10. show examples of work done in previous sessions of course to students as a model
 11. make course menu easy to navigate, use visual help like timetables, instructions in bullet points, checklists, etc.
 12. use tools that enable synchronous communication or classes such as ZOOM as often as possible but not for long sessions
 13. organize learners in small groups when in synchronous activities so everybody gets a chance to speak
 14. provide hyperlinks in instructions that enable students to access learning materials or learning spaces directly
 15. remind students explicitly how they can benefit from course
 16. remind that not all the students have the same knowledge about using technology, so provide them with guiding resources even when there is little doubt
 17. use a wide range of assessments which enable evaluating students' learning progress both formally and informally such as tests, quizzes, projects, journal entries, papers, self-assessment activities, etc.
 18. be concise about what learning goals each assessment is used to intend to measure
 19. ensure that students feel free and welcome to ask any question at any time to instructor and provide them with concrete ways to do it such as through phone, e-mail, a separate discussion thread, etc.
 20. provide students with ways to benefit from each other's knowledge through designing tasks which require peer review during the process
 21. use your observation of students' progress, their learning artifacts, open discussions about how they feel about their learning and so on to modify your content as necessary, thus enabling learners to have a say in curriculum and instructional methods. (W.J.7, L- 326-364)

1. Seeing Online Learning as a Complement, Rather Than an Alternative, to Traditional/Face-to-Face Learning

As an aspiring online teacher Laurel recognized that online education does not necessarily have to be an alternative, but rather can be a complement to traditional education, although she did not talk about it as elaborately as some other participants did. She thought that experienced traditional teachers would make better online teachers.

Laurel contended that “synthesizing learning practice” via “online venues” can be used in face-to-face as well as online classes (F.R. L- 176-177), and online education can be used as an additional means of learning together with face-to-face classes especially in a large class context. She explained:

If students have appropriate devices, they can be online in real time when in classroom and use these venues to take notes, summarize new content and share relevant resources. For example, instead of having students using a notebook and pen to create mind maps, they can use Padlet application, which moreover, allows them to share their work with more audiences than instructor and classmates. (F.R. L- 177- 182)

Interestingly, Laurel believed that “teachers with more face-to-face teaching experience would be able to design and deliver better quality online classes. This is because they already know what motivates students and how to keep them engaged and stimulated” (I. R. L- 7-13).

2. Seeking to Increase Students' Access to Learning Opportunities by Leveraging Online Spaces

Laurel valued the increased access to education that online teaching could provide to students. She considered online education to be flexible and cheaper. She believed it could bring students from different places or countries together, and it can be used as complementary to face-to-face classes. She saw online education as also having potential for after school activities in her country.

As a future online teacher, Laurel considered online learning to be “an invaluable opportunity for students” because “they do not have to attend the venue in order to attend the content, information and education” (I.R. L- 2-3). She thought that online learning allows people the opportunity to have access to education and “knowledge from different

places while not disturbing their routine and work that they are already engaged with but still developing further professionally” (I.R. L- 3-5). She believed that online learning is “less costly” “in many cases” (I.R. L- 5-6).

According to Laurel, one value of online teaching and learning (OTL) for teachers is that “they can reach students who they normally would not meet at a venue” (I.R. L- 7-8). One can teach a course abroad while being at home. Some teachers might find online teaching more appropriate for them at least in the beginning because of the struggle to be face-to-face with students. She also identified some unique uses of OTL in her country:

[OTL can be used] as supportive or additional learning to regular face-to-face classes because it removes time and venue constraints present at schools in my country where, due to the large number of students, school time is only four to five hours. Higher grades (6-9) have to finish their shift in the morning so younger ones (grades 1-5) can enter the school in the afternoon. (F.R. L- 103-107)

Laurel added that in her country “there is no room for after-school activities that would help students who need additional learning hours to succeed” and this can be solved by introducing online learning. However, she realized that she would have to work hard “to convince the school staff and parents about its effectivity” (F. R. L- 107- 110).

In the pre-interview survey, Laurel rated increasing access a little less because she realized there would be other factors at play and she would not be able to “do that much” about increasing access on her own (Interview 1, L- 117). She thought she could “increase their [students’] awareness” or she can “increase access to resources but it doesn’t guarantee” the increase of access to education (Interview 1, L- 119-121). She contended, “On my end it can be perfect, I am so willing to collaborate, but ... there’s

another part, the other person who needs to do the half of it, so it's not only on me"

(Interview 1, L- 122-124).

3. Seeking to Create a Caring and Interactive Learning Community in Any

Instructional Context

Laurel believed that in order to keep students motivated, and to overcome transactional distance, creating a learning community is crucial for an online teacher. She would like to create an informal space for discussion to help create a learning community, as well as create opportunities for informal reflections. To ensure group cohesion in a learning community she would intervene and interact only when necessary. Additionally, she would utilize informal talks and collaborative activities to build a learning community.

Laurel thought the "most challenging part in designing and maintaining quality of online activities is building a community of learners" (F.R. L- 62-63). She described a community of learners as a space where "students must be engaged with the teacher and with each other not only through doing tasks that have to do with content of the course but there must exist a social cohesion between them" (F.R. L- 63-65).

Laurel shared her own experience of feeling isolated in an online setting, which she was reminded of by the texts on transactional distance. About an online class she took some years ago, she said:

I had a feeling that I was the only one suffering and all classmates were doing well. But, once I got engaged in pair work I felt relieved to learn that my partner was experiencing the same difficulties and pressure. This made me see the task as of normal difficulty level and increase my motivation to keep on. (W.J.2, L- 67-70)

This experience made Laurel think that in an online setting, “communicating between classmates is even more important than communicating with the instructor” (W.J.2 L- 70-71). Laurel believed that fostering a secure and vibrant learning community is “more necessary especially in an online setting” because there is “transactional distance” (Interview 1, L- 52-53). The distance of location between the teacher and the learners can get students “easily ... disengaged” compared to face-to-face settings; therefore, a learning community is important in online classes to “motivate” students (Interview 1, L- 54-55).

Laurel would like to create a space for her students to “ask for help in regards of any trouble they might have such as needing more clarifications about new concepts, difficulty in understanding instructions or expressing frustration with technical problems” (F.R. L- 33-36). She also stated that “providing learners with enough opportunities and spaces to communicate with each other and instructor in a more informal way is a must” (F.R. L- 65-67).

Laurel would like to create a learning community by using “informal reflections both to get insights about each student’s thinking process and to help in building a relationship between each student and instructor” (F.R. L- 172-173). Regarding social presence, she wrote in one of the discussion boards:

I just wanted to say that as for group cohesion to occur, I think that there also must be a limited presence of teacher in each group as well. Sometimes, the group might not be able to develop a constructive relationship among its members at all and in that case teachers should be pedagogically prepared and have strategies to intervene when it happens. It can be simple things like popping in and asking what they are doing and who is doing what, discussing their ongoing work with them and so on. I just experienced the benefit of this facilitation during our Zoom

breaking rooms when the instructor entered our group and gave us suggestions about doubts we had about our topic. (DB Module 5.3, L- 73-80)

Laurel suggested that online teachers need to be proactive to create the connections needed to create a learning community: “The lack of nonverbal and paralinguistic communication is a disadvantage in online classroom and we should compensate for them by using informal talk initiated by instructor which can make learners feel more ready to open up and express their emotions” (Module 5.3, L- 136-138). Regarding creating social presence, as needed for a learning community to be built, Laurel said:

I think that the first step is when the instructor presents a syllabus with a section with clear statements in regard of behaviour [*sic*] and communication norms expected during class. However, this is not enough and the social presence has to be maintained all the time by all the parties and sometimes it is little details that impact social atmosphere a lot. One such example was when our instructor asked us to address each other with names when replying in posts. (DB Module 5.3, L- 118-123)

Laurel also reminded that there are “social norms concept even in communication in online environment, especially considering the cultural diversity that such a class can have” (F.R. L. 37-38). Because online communication “lacks non-verbal cues, gestures and body language that are present in face-to-face setting,” she would like to keep her students’ cultural backgrounds in mind when she communicates with them (F.R. L- 37-41).

4. Seeking to Enhance Students’ Engagement and Motivation by Capitalizing on the Many Affordances of Digital Technologies

For the kind of online teacher Laurel wanted to be, it was critical to enhance students engagement and motivation. While at the beginning she shared concern on this

point, by the end of the course she came up with specific plans for engaging and motivating her online students. Monitoring learners' participation, having synchronous sessions, having explicit talks on challenges and benefits of online learning, and promoting social interaction are some of the strategies for enhancing engagement and motivation that Laurel mentioned.

In the initial reflection, Laurel shared her concerns related to “maintaining students' motivation and also making sure that technology use does not become an alienating tool for them during the process” (I.R. L-14-15). To avoid this problem, Laurel said she would also “monitor learners' participation and track their activity on Blackboard in order to figure out their level of motivation, thus intervene in time” (W.J.7, L- 337-338). In order to help the students to remain motivated, Laurel planned to include “as many synchronous sessions with my students as possible and talk explicitly about their challenges and remind them about learning goals and benefits of taking the course” (F.R. L- 42-47).

Additionally, Laurel would make the “learning goals explicit” and promote “social interaction” among the students to keep them motivated both in an online as well as in a face-to-face setting (F.R. L- 183-186). This will allow them to “feel comfortable to make their needs known, thus enabling peers and the teacher to help them” (F.R. L- 186- 187).

5. Seeking to Promote Deep Learning and Understanding by Capitalizing on Appropriate Digital Tools and Resources

Promoting deep learning and understanding was important for Laurel as an online teacher. She discussed ways to promote deep learning for her online students, which included utilizing strategies like asking open ended questions, using different media and technology to share students' ideas, and building on students' prior knowledge as a means of promoting better understanding.

Laurel discussed some of her beliefs about what it takes to promote deep learning while reflecting on one of the readings in a discussion board:

Bransford et al. (2000) highlighted that one of the approaches that support learning with understanding and encourage sense-making of content being learned is progressive formalization. This means starting with learners' informal ideas and then transforming and formalizing them as course progresses. One such example I think was the online learning preconceptions survey we did at the beginning of our course as well as posting our thoughts about what we think about this way of learning in discussion board. (DB Module 5.1, L- 108-113)

In another discussion board, when discussing the best ways to deliver content online based on research, Laurel wrote:

The way of building connection between students and content is by explicitly encouraging and planning for students to construct new meanings of new content upon previous conceptual and cultural knowledge and experience. According to Bransford et al. (2000), a key strategy toward applying the above theory is through designing critical tasks that stimulate cognitive conflict so learners test their thinking and discuss conflicting viewpoints. Also, teachers should design for gradually and structured delivery of knowledge by dividing content in units which way enables gradual and structured acquisition of new concepts, knowledge and information as tasks should always allow for students to elaborate their initial preconceptions before moving on with new knowledge (Bransford et al., 2000). (DB Module 5.1, L- 114-122)

Laurel contended that teachers can ensure deep learning by "posting open ended questions through forums ... or even social networks or using different means of technology," so that students can have an "environment" where they can share "whatever

they know and connect it in whatever way they want” (Interview 1, L- 63-66). She also believed that it is important for teachers to provide students with an “environment” where they can “feel more relaxed” (Interview 1, L- 67).

Laurel held the view that it is important to take into consideration and to build upon students’ culture and prior experiences:

We should also acknowledge our learners cultural backgrounds and their previous schooling experience. This can be achieved through encouraging them to talk in narrative about themselves while answering open-ended questions. For example, in this course we are always prompted to give our opinions and examples about topics in the readings. (DB Module 5.3, L- 135-142)

6. Seeking to Promote Collaborative Learning in Any Instructional Context

As an aspiring online teacher, Laurel recognized the importance of collaborative learning; therefore, she wanted to create an environment where her students can work together – whether in online or face-to-face settings. She would like to promote collaborative learning in her online classes by creating group projects and activities, while also leveraging different digital tools for collaborative work, such as google docs. She also planned to scaffold her students through the zone of proximal development (ZPD) with the help of collaborative learning.

Laurel believed it is important to create opportunities for students to share “their knowledge, their concepts” and she contended, “It is also very important to expose students to each other’s writing” (Interview 1, L- 72-74). She thought that sharing students’ work is also connected to fostering a caring and vibrant community, as well as designing motivating and engaging activities (Interview 1, L- 74-76).

In another discussion board Laurel discussed elaborately what she thought about connecting learners, learning communities, and collaborative work. She said,

According to constructivist theory, questioning new knowledge, accommodating it in the already existing one and reconstructing it do not occur individually. This said, the higher the social presence the higher the cognitive presence. Thus, collaborative work and peer- assessment are two particular ways that can contribute to connecting learners. In distance learning, the feedback process can create a sense of community in the online classroom. Providing feedback, and receiving and utilizing feedback, often results in a reflection process that becomes a lifelong learning skill (Phelan, 2012). Computer-mediated communication tools definitely allow for implementation of collaborative work such team-based learning activities due to its synchronous and asynchronous communication tools. (DB Module 5.3, L- 124-134)

Laurel would like to promote group projects and collaborative activities as an online teacher. She said, "I would like my students to create products that prove they are learning, like the ones we did online [in EDE 484]" (Interview 1, L- 90-91). As a teacher she would like to give clear instructions to her students for projects like the Group Project they did in EDE 484, and she would like to "be available" for them. She would form the groups to leverage the members' different expertise to create a good product. She would communicate with the students and help them to "come up with a good idea ... something that they can do, concrete, something that can be done" (Interview 1, L- 101-102). She would like to help her students to narrow down a topic, or to come up with a "concise topic or concise lesson" so that they can do it (Interview 1, L- 103-105). She would also like the course activities to be engaging and interesting to the students. Laurel would utilize "online spaces such as Google docs, Prezi, Padlet" to enable collaborative work in online as well as face-to-face teaching (F.R. L- 173-175).

Laurel also held the view that “It is the responsibility of the teacher to drive students through the Zone of Proximal Development in regards of cognitive development and also make sure that during this journey they benefit from collaborative work as much as possible” (DB Module 5.2, L- 171-173).

7. Seeking to Provide Students with Choices and Differentiated Learning

Opportunities, Leveraging Technology Whenever Possible

Laurel did not discuss explicitly about providing choices to students and meeting their individual needs. However, she did talk about differentiated learning in an online context. She would use a multimodal approach in her class to provide differentiated learning and she would amend the curriculum based on her students' needs.

In a discussion board Laurel said, “Multimodality is another important concept in regards of presenting content as it can address different learning styles” (DB Module 5.1, L- 130-131). Laurel contended “presenting and accessing knowledge and information through different modes is what definitely makes technology and online spaces invaluable” (W.J.1, L- 5-7).

Additionally, to ensure differentiated learning, Laurel would like to “modify the curriculum and learning activities” based on her students' individual “needs and preferences” (F.R. L- 79-82).

8. Appreciating the Need for Goal-driven Instructional Design and Thoughtful

Instructional Choices – Especially When Planning Online Learning Experiences

As an aspiring online teacher Laurel placed utmost importance to instructional design. She had very clear views on her approach to designing an online course. First of

all, she would adopt a backward design approach and use Bloom's Taxonomy for deciding the learning goals. She had also identified a number of concrete teaching practices she would want to use in her online courses. She also recognized the need to acknowledge and address her students' pre-conceptions about online learning.

Laurel said in the future she would "pre-teach one to one sessions with students in order to ensure that everybody is on the same page when the course officially starts"

(F.R. L- 35-36). She contended:

For me who is used to value traditional classroom learning and had preconceptions about online learning, I understood that there is need to know your students' thoughts about it and have a plan how to change their attitudes toward positive ones. I think this can be done through having a rigorous and flexible course design at the same time. (F.R. L- 139-143)

This according to her would require the teacher to make "criteria for evaluation clear, setting strict deadlines and respecting and evaluating based on them as well, but at the same time allow for students to have a say in the curriculum of the course through having them discuss other alternatives" (F.R. L- 143- 146).

Consistent with a backward design approach, Laurel would like to use Bloom's Taxonomy for determining her learning objectives, which in turn would guide her "planning." She added, "I learned that I can ensure my learners will reach higher order thinking levels only if I have covered all its levels in my learning goals" (F.R. L- 86-93). She would also align her formative and summative assessment with the learning goals, as modeled in her Group Project.

As reflected in the long list of take-aways she reported in her last journal, Laurel had identified several specific strategies she planned to use in her online teaching. She

would use journal entries in her classes because she thought those would allow the instructor “to use open-ended questions as prompts to trigger students’ higher level thinking skills” (F.R. L- 50-51). This would also allow her to learn about her “students’ thinking process and respond to each’s student needs appropriately” (F.R. L- 49-56).

Another important thing Laurel would like to adopt in her teaching (in which she was not good at in the past) is “allowing students to experience success” (W.J. L- 50-52). In order for that to happen she would leave “larger assignments around the second half of the course, and being clear and concise in giving instructions about tasks” (W.J.1, L- 52-53).

An important practice Laurel would adopt is “having work load divided in chunks so students do not feel overwhelmed due to inappropriate cognitive load” (F.R. 182-184). When there is “heavy load of content to deal with, dividing it in small chunks of work and with a balanced deadline” would keep her students less stressed and make them “constantly” to manage everything on time (W.J.2, L- 57-60). She would make the learning goals explicit, promote social interaction among the students to motivate them both in online and in face-to-face setting. She believed this would allow the students to “feel comfortable to make their needs known” and they will be able to receive support from both their peers as well as the teacher (F.R. L- 184-187).

Laurel would like to participate in the online discussions to make sure her students are not “confused about the structure of their posts, length, and formal and informal nature of their writing.” She would grade the students’ participation in the discussions to motivate them (F.R. L- 188-194).

For sharing students' work Laurel would use "Google docs and open discussion threads, with the aim of having students being exposed to others' opinions and perspectives and providing them with opportunity to co-construct knowledge together" (F.R. L- 57-59). To give directions for independent work, Laurel would adopt multimodal approach using "videos, written check lists, tables, PowerPoint slides," as she thinks that "this way students' different learning styles are supported and it leaves less room for confusion" (F.R. L- 195-197). She would use reminder e-mails to help students "stay organized" as well as to show that the instructor is concerned" about the students' progress (F.R. L- 195-200).

Laurel would use an "introductory video" explaining the course goals to build a connection with her students. She would also ask students to make and post videos on specific tasks because she thought "it is actually like killing two birds with one stone, because while students are proving what they have learned, you actually get to know a lot about them and their ways of thinking, become familiar with their faces and personalities and so on" (W.J.5, L- 238-241).

Laurel said when face-to-face meetings are not possible, "sharing screen would be just as helpful as face-to-face when it comes to demonstrating how to create a lesson online, or modular or unit, or whatever course online because you really have to know practical work, technical work" (Interview 1, L- 209-212). She believed that it is important to have the skill and experience of "putting it online" because "these skills do not come without practice, without trying and without demonstration" (Interview 1, L- 214-216).

9. Seeking to Enhance Student Assessment Practices Through the Use of Digital Technologies, so as to Better Support Learning and Inform Instruction

Assessment of student learning is important for the kind of online teacher Laurel wanted to be. In the discussion boards and weekly journals she talked about assessment and stated that she would use journal entries for assessment, use formative assessment where needed and would provide constructive feedback to her students with the assessment. She would also like to create a database of progress of her students to monitor learning outcomes.

Laurel believed that online classes allow for more “assessment opportunities” because “while students traditionally were asked to write a paper and bring it to class, online learning comes along with practicing new literacies, so they can make a video, a website, a PowerPoint presentation etc., to illustrate their learning” (F.R. L- 158- 160). Thus online classes can enhance student assessments because “not all learners are supposed to be able to articulate their learning in the same way or prove that they have learnt the same things” (W.J.3, L- 127-128). Laurel believed that use of technology in online classes makes it possible for students to “prove and perform their learning in authentic ways” (W.J.3, L- 129). OTL also offers the opportunity to use “ready-made learning materials, spaces and articles instead of modifying or creating new ones” (F.R. L- 160- 162).

Laurel also identified an important aspect of online learning she learned about is that “more open-ended questions that require higher order thinking are able through online than face-to-face as both instructor and students have ample time to construct their

questions and answers thoughtfully” (F.R. L- 163- 166). Also, these posts can be ‘tracked at any time and can serve as artifacts of learning for evaluation purposes” (F.R. L- 163- 167).

Laurel specifically talked about the value of utilizing journal entries for assessment, saying:

The informal structure of writing (in journals) enables students to convey their main take aways without the concern of saying things like in books but as they understood them. Another great aspect about journal entries is also the fact that students can go back to them and quickly recall their learning and track it as well. When teachers sees there is an appropriate social atmosphere, sharing journal entries as a class would be another great wrap up activity as learners would be able to see things from others’ perspectives. However, when we use journal entries for ending one module and not only as part of it, then the nature of prompts for them should also be a concluding one like “What are your main take aways? How has your thinking changed after this learning?” And so on. This activity can also serve instructors for further planning when as it gives opportunity to observe to what extent students have grasped the fundamental learning concepts. (DB Module 8, L- 62-71)

Laurel thought that “instructors can use formative assessment to change the instructional methods when it reveals that content is not being acquired to a pleasant level by students” (DB Module 5.1, L- 123-124). She also proposed to “incorporate reflective writing as well as self-assessment and peer-evaluation as part of a metacognitive approach” which she aimed at using in her future teaching (W.J.3, L- 120-121).

While talking about assessment, Laurel also discussed the topic of feedback which she thought could also help students to perform self-assessment. Laurel summed up her learning about assessment in the course:

This week’s readings highlighted that the role of feedback is supposed to serve teachers as much as students and facilitate their work rather than merely communicate some learning results to learners. But, it is all about the forms of

feedback we design that make it worth or not for using for further improvement. (W.J.3, L- 110-113)

Regarding the importance of teacher feedback Laurel said, "When instructor's points are meaningful and constructive it makes you feel in control of your learning, because you have an idea of how much work is needed in order to improve as well as assess your own work as well" (DB Module 5.2, L- 131-134). She contended, "I have seen students who do not agree to a certain grade they have taken but never encounter any student who would not agree with feedback remarks of teacher" (DB Module 5.2, L- 134-136). She thought that "feedback helps creating self-assessment skills for students as they can see clearly how their work was given certain grade" (DB Module 5.2, L- 136-137).

While talking about peer feedback, Laurel said that she believed online courses have better opportunities for enabling peer feedback compared to face-to-face courses where it is constrained by the class time.

Creating criteria rubrics was a new thing Laurel learned in the course and she particularly appreciated as "Not everything can be measured through a letter grade or numerical grade" (W.J.3, L- 113-124). Therefore, she would like to "develop a practice of providing assessment rubrics before the assignments and also involve students in developing rubrics themselves" (W.J.3, L- 118-119). Laurel said, for her, "designing learning outcomes and criteria rubrics can be challenging as well, as sometimes I feel like they allow for a lot of subjectivity when it comes to evaluation" (F.R. L- 33- 36).

Laurel would like to create "an electronic learning records/database of students' progress over time" because she thinks "it would be a great advantage if enabling

education stakeholders at multiple levels have access to learning outcomes with the purpose of informing their future interventions and educational programs” (W.J.,3 L- 134-137). She brought up an important issue in her country related to student assessment:

Students' academic success in my country is not protected by any law and in many cases there are many humiliating instances when learning results are in public. There have been changes in higher education about these, of course thanks to incorporation of technology, but in primary schools parents are still communicated their children's progress during collective meetings. An electronic database, as claimed in the readings, can make assessment more transparent and inclusive not only to parents, but interconnect educators, school leaders, district administrators as well as reduce external assessments which bring extra stress to students. (W.J.3, L- 137-144)

10. Seeing the Use of Digital Technologies as a Tool Rather Than a Goal in Itself

As a future online teacher it was important for Laurel to have sufficient knowledge of technology and its latest developments to keep up with her students. She particularly emphasized the value of learning about digital resources for her online classes. She believed technology allows for better products, but instead of creating new online resources, she would prefer to learn how to best utilize the existing ones for her classes. She also discussed some anticipated challenges related to technology in an online context.

Laurel believed creating great online learning materials “is not quite of primary importance, because there are millions of great materials that first of all I want to utilize” (Interview 1, L- 125- 127). Rather, she would think herself successful as an online teacher if she can utilize what is already there. She also thought “creating materials is enough, it doesn't need to be great” (Interview 1, L- 130- 127) because, she said, “for my students they can write the materials that make sense only in the context, in the context

that they did throughout the course, but ... maybe it doesn't serve everybody else" (Interview 1, L- 132- 134). She believed those things do not depend on her "100 percent" (Interview 1, L- 135).

Laurel held the view that apart from knowing about available digital resources and tools, teachers have to know about what technology their students have access to. Though there are so many free "applications" available in the Internet, not all of those are accessible everywhere in the world. Some of the students might not be skilled in using certain "applications or educational tools," therefore, teachers have to know what their students can or cannot use and what can be adopted for the class (Interview 1, L- 40-41). Teachers have to use resources from which "all can benefit" (Interview 1, L- 41-42). To better support her students with technology and digital resources, Laurel would "pre-assess" her students' "digital skills" and enact "trial session about internet" to find out if they have "the appropriate software needed for the course" (F.R. L-33-35).

Laurel shared a concern about effectively introducing new tools to students, as she explained that,

It is challenging to facilitate technology tools at the time when needed and through no face-to-face communication. Students can get frustrated and have problems with accessing materials due to different causes which might not be something that instructor or classmates can help with all the time. (I.R. L- 14-18)

Another concern for Laurel was that "the majority of teachers around the world have not been part of or experienced online learning. Moreover, only knowing that they are not part of the digital generation is sometimes enough they feel alienated from technology use and try to avoid it" (W.J. L- 22-25). Also, teachers do not receive training on online education much while pursuing their "teacher education" degrees (W.J. L- 26).

Limited Internet access or difficulty with internet, "time difference," and learners' "digital skills" can worsen the situation (F. R. L- 30- 33).

Additional Aspects of the Kind of Online Teacher Laurel Wanted to be

In this section I will discuss some of the other aspects of the kind of online teacher Laurel aspired to be besides the ten components explicitly targeted by the course.

Professional Components of Teaching. Laurel discussed some other professional components of her teaching identity in her posts and interviews. As a prospective online teacher she especially emphasized the importance of knowing the content, being a life-long learner and innovator, and collaborating with colleagues.

Laurel said that as a teacher it was "very important" for her to "know the content" she had to teach (Interview 1, L- 15-16). She added, "If I don't know very well the program, I can find sources to fill the gaps I have in my knowledge about the content" (Interview 1, L- 16-18).

Laurel also stated that she was a "lifelong learner and innovator," and she thought these are important characteristics especially for online teachers (Interview 1, L- 44). She contended that she took the course EDE 484 because of that reason.

As an aspiring online teacher, Laurel believed it would be very important for her to collaborate with colleagues; however, she also pointed out that "the other colleagues also have to be willing to collaborate" (Interview 1, L- 141-143), as she thought not every teacher is willing to collaborate. She believed collaboration does not need to be in real time face-to-face with colleagues, as she could collaborate "virtually" with colleagues from "around the world for materials" (Interview 1, L- 144-145). She would like to visit

“blogs” created by other teachers to “see what they have done with classes and in different spaces, or online spaces to benefit from materials that others have developed before” (Interview 1, L- 145-147). She said she would not depend on in person collaboration “that much” (Interview 1, L- 149).

Field-Specific Considerations. Laurel’s focus on TESOL also made her more appreciative of the value of online learning to enable students in different locations and from different cultures to interact with each other.

In her blackboard posts Laurel did not discuss much about the considerations specific to her field of TESOL in an online context. However, in the first interview Laurel stated that because she taught English, “language can be a barrier” in her case because “people use a lot of second language so they can have different understanding or the way you expect them to do things, the way you structure your class your course” and also because “people don’t have experiences” with online (Interview 1, L- 252-255).

Laurel also contended that the most “distinguishable” feature of OTL is that “it can bring together people from different regions of the world, from different disciplines and with various experiences, thus enabling much more than only learning the content of the course” (F.R. L- 3-5). Online classes can enable “intercultural communication” (F.R. L- 5-6) which would add value to her TESOL classes.

Acknowledged Changes in Views on Online Teaching and Online Teachers

Like several of the participants of the study, Laurel came to the class with not so positive ideas about online education which she had developed mostly as a result of her previous experiences with online courses. However, it is evident that Laurel experienced

significant changes in her perceptions about OTL after taking the course, most of which were related to specific teaching practices and activities.

After taking the course, Laurel realized online teaching requires a lot of “time and effort” “to give/write detailed instructions so students do not get confused during the learning process, things that teachers usually clarify spontaneously in classroom” (F.R. L-148-149). She also used to think “instructions work better when given face-to-face as compared to written ones” (F.R. L-150-151), yet from her experience in this course she “learned that it’s possible to give people instructions online so they do not become confused about what they have to do” (Interview 1, L- 182-183).

Laurel initially thought that face-to-face meetings were important, and at least a couple of face-to-face meetings would be needed for the students to know the teacher “as a person” – which she considered very “important” (Interview 1, L- 167-171). Because she believed some questions can be answered only face-to-face, she thought a teacher would be able to answer questions and clarify details on how things has to be done during those face-to-face meetings (Interview 1, L- 171-174). But after she took the course, she realized that if teachers provide instructions clearly or if they “clearly explain things” with the use of “videos and other means” or “using different media” a fully online class can just “go smoothly” (Interview 1, L- 174-177). She even started to think that when instructions are written online, they may become more “accessible” (Interview 1, L-178). She contended it “maybe sometimes even easier” to ask questions in an online class because during face-to-face conversations people “sometimes do not hear very well, are not focused, or forget, or need things to be repeated twice to be sure” (Interview 1, L-

179-181). Therefore, she thought, “when there are written things you can read them once, twice, and just think and get what it is saying” (Interview 1, L- 181-182).

Before taking the course, Laurel used to think face-to-face communication was “invaluable” for a teacher to “give on the spot feedback and clarifications to learners” (F.R. L- 117-118). While taking this course, she realized that there are other ways in which instructors can provide feedback and concluded, “Now I think that online learning enables even more feedback opportunities” (F.R. L- 119-120). She also believed that online classes enable the feedback to be “recorded and learners can refer to it whenever they need” (F.R. L- 120-121). Moreover, she contended that online teachers have better opportunities to “make well-constructed comments” (F.R. L- 120- 121). She stated that “If it is well planned, online feedback can be even more constructive and as timely as in face-to-face classes” (F.R. L-152-154). Additionally, people can have enough time to read each-other’s work carefully and give useful feedback, which is not possible in a face-to-face situation due to time limit.

Laurel had an online synchronous session via Zoom for the first time in the course. She was amazed to see “how easily” it can be done and that students “can actually feel like it is in a real classroom” (Interview 1, L- 185-187). She said, “I loved it being at home and just discussing things” (Interview 1, L- 188). She read in some of her other TESOL course that “sometimes being behind the screen lowers anxiety” and she said she “really experienced that” in EDE 484. After taking the course she concluded, “I came to believe or to reinforce my belief that for some people online works maybe better than face-to-face” (Interview 1, L- 192-194).

When asked if the survey was given before she had taken the course, would her answers be different, Laurel responded affirmatively. She contended:

It would be easier to do that, I would give some of them three and some of them one too and I would know by each situation by my own online experience as a learner that some are important but I wouldn't pay attention to the meaning of each of them as I pay attention now. Like, of course, we did the whole course on these things, and now I can see each of them, the importance of each of them. (Interview 1, L- 156-160)

Impacts of the Course Activities on Laurel's Identity Development

In this section I will discuss how different learning experiences in the course impacted Laurel's identity development as an online teacher, so as to address my second research question: *How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?* I will first talk about the impacts of participation (both as an online learner and as an online teacher) on Laurel's identity development as a certain type of online teacher, and then I will talk about the effects of recognition by self and by others on her identity development. I will also discuss some other factors that influenced her identity development.

Overall Impact of the Course

Laurel said her experience in EDE 484 was completely different from her previous online experiences, which were "asynchronous most of the time, like all technology, the technology we used back in 2012, I can't remember which platform" (Interview 1, L- 253-256). She said it was not "as lively as" EDE 484 and "the instructor was not as flexible ... the instructor was like someone from far away, we didn't know much about her" (Interview 1, L- 257-260). She shared her experience of working with a peer from Myanmar where they completed the task by sending emails back and forth

which she found “very difficult.” Whereas, EDE 484 was “lively” and “transactional distance” was removed by the “face-to-face meetings,” and by the “flexibility” of the communication between the instructor and students (Interview 1, L- 264-266). She thought EDE 484 had “better technology, smaller class” and it used “different media” to make the experience different (Interview 1, L- 266-269).

Regarding what caused the changes in her perceptions about online education, Laurel said, her “experience” throughout the class – “having the Blackboard, having all the options, having e-mail, having the context to ask for help, having clear instructions, having this face-to-face meetings time after time and having instructors demonstrating what we have to do” (Interview 1, L- 198-201).

Participation: Experience as an Online Learner

Throughout the course in her discussion board posts, journals, and final reflection, as well as in the interviews, Laurel showed how her experience as a learner in the course shaped the kind of online teacher she wanted to be. She discussed her views on sharing students' work, quizzes, zoom sessions, group project, fish activity, feedback and she also discussed her take-aways from those learning experiences.

Laurel said that she greatly benefitted from the “sharing students' work practice” in the course; these experiences made her realize that there are assignments that are “more appropriate to be shared privately” and there are assignments that are more useful if completed collaboratively. She realized the importance of balancing these two types of assignments.

Laurel thought the quizzes in the course “were an effective way of rehearsing the content in general and I liked the way questions were formulated as they required having a gist of readings and not merely memorization of facts” (W.J.2, L- 61-63).

From her experience of the Zoom sessions, Laurel was “convinced” that group works in breakout rooms “can be even more effective than during face-to-face classes as there are no such distractions such as noise coming from others’ discussion, and moreover, students can take notes online which can serve them whenever they need” (F.R. L- 124-126). She thought Zoom sessions should be short and frequent to be effective. She also believed that “online learning is more documented than face-to-face” (F.R. L- 127).

Laurel discussed her experience as a learner in the Group Project where having “different ideas and ... different perspectives were very important” and she thought without this diversity “things wouldn’t have come to be as good as they were at the end” (Interview 1, L- 282-286). From her experience in the Group Project, she contended, if the students are from various places where they cannot meet in person, the teacher has to make sure that they can use technology like Zoom to “see each-other’s face” and to work in the project. In a group project like this “they have to talk many times, they have to discuss, they have to embrace or defend, embrace other ideas or defend theirs or have to listen to other explain more about their ideas so they get convinced” (Interview 1, L- 294-296). She said it is like making “a deal” where they need to communicate a lot, and “if they are not able to meet physically then you really have to choose and make sure that your students use a good media or a good application, whatever for this, or skillful and

willing and able to use this" (Interview 1, L- 297-300). She said this communication makes the students "move forward" to make progress.

In a discussion board in module 3 Laurel commented on the design of that module and its implications for her as an online teacher:

We had this module structured in steps (tasks), it had a timeline, deadlines and so, which I think fall under the instructor's role of designing and structuring the course experiences. Furthermore, the description (instructions) about each task and the process of doing them were clearly stated as well as expectations and outcomes which I think reflect directing and supporting aspect of instructor's role. This aspect was further fulfilled through the section "Ask Your Instructor," as a way of supporting students if they encounter barriers during the process. As for assessment role, this was illustrated by dividing work into smaller tasks and giving points for each section that count toward the final grade. (DB Module 3.2, L- 82-90)

In another discussion board Laurel discussed some other experiences she had as a learner in the course that touched on issues like motivation, feedback, quizzes which also had significant implications for her as an online teacher. She said,

In regards of motivation, I considered quiz to be a way of fulfilling the "continuous feedback" criteria, as you could see where you should check for more clarity of information in readings. It also gave the feeling of "controlling content" because questions were easy and manageable and required at least to have a gist of readings. They did not ask for specific information and did not make you feel overwhelmed. The points we gather through doing all the tasks and activities in this module apply to our final grade and it ensures "monitoring learners with external locus control" because we are aware that by doing chunks of work we raise our chances to have a higher grade at the end. Since I once got an email saying that I did not enter the course, I suppose this course has a tracking system for participation which is a tool of "monitoring learners with poor performance", so the instructor can act and help when it is necessary in and in a timely manner. (DB Module 3.2, L- 91-101)

Laurel also talked about her take aways from another learning task – reviewing examples of online modules – in a different discussion board:

I also appreciate the way our instructor enabled us just say our thoughts and get points out of that as it really gave me the feeling of success and easiness with the course right at the beginning. Reviewing different online lesson formats did affect my previous ideas of online lessons that they all must have a similar structure to our course. For example, when reviewing Khan Academy lesson, I was looking for the same patterns like where is a content folder and where is a collaborative task or an assignment part but it was not that linear as in research methods module. Khan's lesson seemed to have a more holistic layout though. Realizing that not every online lesson should necessarily have the same format represents a way of changing my preconceptions, while feeling free to imagine what my individual online module would look like and plan what features I would like to take from all these examples is a way of exercising self-efficacy. (DB Module 3.3, L- 84-94)

From her experience as a learner in the course, Laurel learned that in an online class "everything has to be planned before and it work just like that" (Interview 1, L- 240-241). She was not "used to being in those kind of education settings" in her country, and she found the course to be outstanding (Interview 1, L- 241-242).

Laurel considered the course and the course instructor as her models for her future online teaching. She contended that the course itself was a "good example" and she "just wanted to be like the instructor" even "months before" they taught their group project module (Interview 1, L- 308-310). She stated:

I wanted to be available for my students, I wanted to make sure they do not get confused, I wanted to make sure they are reminded about deadlines, I wanted to make sure that the content of the things they had to learn were just one step behind what they know, so that the information doesn't overwhelm the students, short activities, interesting ones, maybe the ones just for the sake of fun and just have a variety of things, some which require a short attention span and some others which require a longer attention span and then different ways of presenting the content like taking care about visual learners, audio learners and other individual preferences. Also the content being an interesting topic relating to students' interests and so on. (Interview 1, L- 310-319)

Participation: Experience as an Online Teacher

Laurel's understanding of the kind of online teacher she wanted to be was also shaped significantly by her experiences as a teacher in the two course projects. About these experiences she said,

The first thing that comes to my mind is that it taught me that **I can be a skillful online teacher** and that I started to believe in myself ... For example, when I'm looking for a job, I just say, yes, I designed a whole module online so I know the whole process from the beginning to the end, I was in control of it. I can say that I taught online, and I found that I could manage it, that **that gave me more self-esteem** and along the way of course I learned a lot of additional skills or computer skills, or online teaching and learning skills like practical skills and figure things out and how they can work more smoothly and so on.

So all in all I say that through doing it, **this experience of participation** of doing it, coming up with an explicit product to give me self-esteem and taught me or teach me that way I believe that I was a skillful online teacher, at the end I came to believe that I'm skillful, I can play around with things online and good design it's fun, I have all the time to move things around and to make things better and all the luxury to plan ahead or I felt it's in my, I'm in control of it. (Interview 2, L-31-46)

In an email correspondence, Laurel further stated that her experience as a teacher in the two projects gave her a lot of confidence in herself as an online teacher,

I gained a lot of self-confidence through designing and implementing the online module. I enjoyed being able to play around with all the technology tools on Blackboard. Trying out new options and being successful made me see myself as a skillful and digitally literate teacher, what I consider as very important for aspiring online teachers as technology tends to evolve quickly, therefore our learners' technology preferences and tools as well. Doing everything from the beginning, that is first designing the project, and then putting it online, was invaluable in the sense that I experienced not only online teaching in the second phase but instructional design as well. This way I learned beforehand to answer many why-s behind items I planned to do once online. I also learned how important it is to design according to learners' interest, especially doing a little research about their background before deciding on the content I want to teach. At the end, I came to conclusion that another topic would have worked better.

All in all, after successfully implementing this online module I felt ready to teach online without fear that I would not be able to manage connecting with my

students or about not finding easy and enjoyable ways or modes to transfer the content. (Laurel, personal communication, June 26, 2018)

Experience in the Group Project. The Group Project was very meaningful for Laurel because it allowed her to experience a complete cycle of designing, teaching and getting students' feedback for an online module. In addition to what is already reported in a previous section, it is worth highlighting the following comments about the implementation of the Group Project:

Reaching your students in the way, and once you have reached them and they are reaching back, that was exceptional because you see that you have transferred what you wanted to transfer. You have this- will they get it, will they do what they are asked to do...are they blowing up and then just the feeling that you were clear and you got understood, you've transferred what you wanted to transfer (Interview 1, L- 235-240).

Laurel also looked at her experience of working as a group in the project very positively, as she felt that the members of the group benefitted from dividing the works based on each team members' expertise. She stated,

We were led by the good will to uplift each other and contribute to the tasks to our best, appreciate each other's efforts, value the social atmosphere occasionally and most importantly be motivated to come up with a well-done draft at the end (W.J.5, L- 206-212).

Experience in the Individual Project. Laurel considered the Individual Project of designing a module as "a way of transferring our knowledge gained through readings to real world" (W.J.2, L- 44). She also talked about how she missed having someone to discuss the project as it was in the case of the Group Project. Additionally, she talked about the value of doing the Group Project first.

Laurel said that as a teacher, she "sometimes" needs a second opinion to check if things are "doable" or not, but in the Individual Project she did not have that "opportunity

to check with somebody” whether she was “too ambitious” (Interview 1, L- 335-337). While doing the Individual Project she sometimes felt the need for opinions about “the content or activity” whether those were “appropriate for all the students,” whereas, she had that opportunity of getting a second opinion in the group project (Interview 1, L- 337-339). Laurel contended, “I had to take care of many things, I had to imagine all the time” (Interview 1, L- 340). She had to work on one step but at the same time she had to think two steps “forward” because, she said, “What I designed for them to do now will affect them later” (Interview 1, L- 341-343). She was doing and redoing things again and again; however, she thought she “was able to take care of many aspects while designing that unit,” she could take into consideration “different aspects which make an online course a good one” (Interview 1, L- 343-347). She made sure to “present the materials and content in different modes” and create “opportunity for collaboration;” she was able to “cover” many things “besides the technology” (Interview 1, L- 347-350).

Laurel also expressed her appreciation for the scaffolding role that the Group Project played for the Individual Project:

Having more confidence knowing that design, the work did not overwhelm me because it was not the first time like when the first time it was major work but divided in parts it was manageable. The second time it was manageable because we had already gone through the process so it was not something big on your own after doing it in group and that sense it was relieving or it was a good strategy according to me. (Interview 2, L- 97-102)

Opportunities for Recognition

In addition to Laurel’s experiences as a learner and experiences as a teacher in the course, the other thing that significantly impacted the development of her online teacher identity was receiving recognition from her own self as well as from others. In this

section I will discuss in what ways the recognition she received impacted the kind of online teacher Laurel wanted to be.

Recognition by Self. For Laurel, recognition from self happened mainly in the reflections throughout the course. Laurel explicitly recognized the value of these reflections, and especially the journals which she said worked as “a checklist” for her; and she also said that by reflecting in the course she “was able to take more” with her and she could push herself “to find more and more” (Interview 1, L- 396-397). She contended,

When you have to reflect you say one thing and it seems like you run out of ideas and then you push yourself to say more of what you learned, and then you find more and more, and the more you find for the sake of reflection the more you improve because it pushes you to find what you want to learn, and it's time you're trying but you just cannot articulate. Once you have to reflect you have to articulate and you it remains with you ... It's more ready to use it when you want to use it. (Interview 1, L- 398-404)

Many of the quotes from journals, discussion boards and final reflection reported so far are good evidence of the depth of Laurel's reflections. Here is another example of how she recognized herself as an online teacher in a journal entry, where she reflected on her past practices and present experiences and her take-away for the future:

Among other important things that I learnt and want to really practice in my future teaching and at which I might have not been very effective in the past were allowing students to experience success, which translates to leaving larger assignments around the second half of the course, and being clear and concise in giving instructions about tasks. Many times, I planned that way for my students that they develop hard working habits right from the beginning. While with task instructions, I used to have a method of giving a kind of description about tasks. Now, I think that I will write my instructions in the form of steps (one thing at a time). (W.J.2, L- 50-56)

Recognition from Others. The recognition Laurel received from her teacher as well as from her peers also impacted the development of her identity as an online teacher. This recognition came in the forms of comments, feedback and evaluation. For an example, the instructor recognized Laurel commenting on her last weekly journal where she posted her list of insights on online teaching learning, she wrote: “Wow! This is an excellent list. Very thorough!” (W.J.7, L- 368). The following is another example of how Laurel was recognized by her instructor in a weekly journal:

Laurel- I am glad you found a way to plan and organize the content into manageable chunks. And that checking things off a list was a motivator for you. I do like your thoughts on balancing different teaching styles. I think it depends on the course, the learners, their prior knowledge, and your objectives. (W.J.2, L- 90-93)

The following extract is an example of how Laurel was recognized in a discussion board on cognitive presence by her peer Lupin:

I couldn't agree more with the importance of starting with informal and culturally defined ideas and meanings in order to provide an inclusive learning environment in which everyone has equal opportunity to achieve the learning goals for the course. The practical design elements in and teaching principles you referenced provide a helpful roadmap or toolkit to put that theoretical approach into practice. Thank you! (DB Module 5.1, L- 141-145)

Laurel talked explicitly about the feedback she received; she believed feedback makes one's work “better” not only in an online setting, but in any situation. Feedback can work as “an eye opener” for a teacher (Interview 1, L- 374). Laurel contended that the feedback she received in the course “**doesn't impact me on what kind of online teacher I want to be, it impacts me in general of what kind of teacher I want to be**” (Interview 1, L- 378-379).

Laurel compared the two types of recognition and feedback she received from her teacher and her peers as reflected in the following excerpts:

Every time I got feedback, it first highlighted the positive aspects and this way made me read my work again as to believe that I really had managed to transfer what I wanted. **My self-confidence increased as I felt more and more capable and engaged in the conversation about the subject matter.** Therefore, I also was able to recognize the way I would like to give feedback to my students in the future, e.g. how to avoid unnecessary comments and be more constructive or leaving open ended questions for them which do not necessarily ask them to answer me back but push them reflect further on their own.

The feedback from instructors was a way of confirming my understanding of the materials we were working with, like big ideas or theories, **while peer feedback had a more affective role, the one of solidarity and understanding each other as instructors** to be, or at least this is how I felt. (Laurel, personal communication, June 26, 2018)

I felt that the **feedback from the teachers was affirming** – for me that was the nature, or that was the effect it had on me. I was looking for affirmation there while feedback from peers was explorative.... it was an ongoing conversation. (Interview 2, L- 205-207)

Other Factors that Affected Laurel's Identity Development

Apart from the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course, there were some other factors that impacted the kind of online teacher Laurel wanted to be. In particular, Laurel discussed the impacts of the course readings and also the stigma surrounding online education.

Laurel found the readings to be confirming many of her thoughts and experiences – thus acting as a kind of recognition from experts in the field. One of her reflections about the reading texts reads:

The readings of this week once again raised my awareness about the importance of formative assessment. It could not have been better theorized than in Bransford et al. (2000), "Students' thinking must be made visible (through discussions, papers, or tests)..." (p. 140). For teachers who have been schooled themselves in a

system when assessment was done only to measure what students have learnt at the end, it is challenging to vision the above in practice. I remember when we used to say to our students that whoever has a grade below B needs to work a lot in order to increase points, and that was all. No details on what parts and how. Our students would go and try hard to improve their results but most likely they will be improving even better in those parts of the test\task when they were already good at. This week's readings highlighted that the role of feedback is supposed to serve teachers as much as students and facilitate their work rather than merely communicate some learning results to learners. (W.J.3, L- 102-112)

Later in the same journal, Laurel also commented on the value of the course readings for her:

Readings throughout the whole program and this module's input in particular, have all contributed that I now have a different perspective on assessment and look at it as a way of informing me about the effectiveness of my instruction and the need of changing it when necessary. (W.J.3, L- 122-125)

Laurel reported that the course readings helped her realize that learning theories do not stand "as absolute on its own" rather "it is all about combining them skillfully" and this combining depends on the "teaching and learning beliefs" of the teacher. She stated, "I could easily recognize all the learning theories we read about to have happened in my teaching" (W.J.2, L- 83-84). In an email correspondence, Laurel further discussed how the readings impacted her as an aspiring online teacher:

Reading about best practices also helped me articulate better how my teaching and learning beliefs should look in practice. Readings helped me in detailing theories into explicit and recognizable activities and aspects I have to take care of as an online instructor. For example, I became aware about the importance of providing my students with a broader audience than only the teacher, thus enabling and planning carefully for them to communicate and co-construct knowledge together. Also, about dividing work in chunks, that is acknowledging that it is important to challenge my students only one step beyond where they are. (Laurel, personal communication, June 26, 2018)

In contrast to most of the other participants, Laurel said that she was not affected by the negativity and stigma surrounding online education – in fact, she never even saw this as a problem:

I never considered online teaching and learning as stigmatized, it is just depends on how well you design it for whom and how you maintain it. If you really want it to be effective then you continuously and consistently have to work on making it work. Therefore, I wanted to learn more about how to motivate students and keep them engaged timely. And my expectations were definitely met by doing this course. (Laurel, personal communication, November 15, 2018)

Summary

With extensive international teaching experience and some limited online experience as a student, Laurel took EDE 484 to increase her expertise and broaden her horizon as a teacher, since she saw online as having great potentials especially in her country. Her perspectives about online education changed significantly as a result of taking the course, as evident in what is reported so far. As her prior experience of taking an online class was not that good, her experiences in EDE 484 both as a teacher and as a learner allowed for “repair work” that made it possible for her to develop a different vision for the kind of online teacher she wanted to be.

Laurel saw online education as offering opportunities for access where more students from diverse global background can learn together, and people with different types of restrictions can have educational opportunities they were previously excluded from. Laurel would like to create a learning community in her class to eliminate the transactional distance, and develop some strategies to do so in an online course. As an online teacher Laurel would keep her students engaged and motivated by monitoring their participation, having synchronous sessions, and having clear goals. She would promote

deep learning by asking open ended questions, by eliciting her students' prior knowledge, and by being mindful about their cultural background. Laurel recognized the importance of collaborative learning in an online setting. As an online teacher, she would promote collaboration among her students by having group activities, using specific digital tools, and by supporting them through ZPD. For assessment, Laurel would like to use formative assessment, provide her students with multiple ways to demonstrate their learning, provide meaningful feedback to her students, while leveraging digital tools to maintain a confidential database of their learning outcomes. She would make effort to learn about students' needs and respond to those individually, and she would revise her curriculum based on her students' needs. For instructional design, Laurel would like to use Bloom's Taxonomy to determine the learning objectives, plan everything well in advance accordingly, and most importantly, she would create opportunities for students to experience success. Laurel would make efforts to be knowledgeable about digital resources and use various media to deliver content and to provide instructions and she would use synchronous sessions where possible. As a professional, Laurel would like to be knowledgeable about the content she teaches, be a life-long learner to continuously improve her practice, and collaborate with her colleagues to learn from them as a teacher.

Laurel's participation in the course as an online learner as well as an online teacher impacted her identity development significantly. She discussed specific learning activities and how those impacted her. Because of these experiences, her perspectives changed meaningfully to a positive one. The Group Project experience was most

impactful as a means to develop her confidence as an online teacher, where she was able to engage in a full online learning cycle.

Laurel also made good use of the opportunities for recognition offered in the course. The reflections in the weekly journals and in the final reflection allowed her to deepen and retain her learning. Feedback from her teacher allowed her to feel confirmed about her understanding of the theories and her practices; whereas, interactions with and feedback from her peers were more “explorative.”

Laurel also talked about some challenges she anticipated to face in the future as an online teacher. She recognized the challenges of students' limited access to technology. She also thought that in her specific field language can be a barrier in an online context. Laurel continued to think that her biggest challenge as an online teacher in the future would be “not having the opportunity to meet my students face-to-face” (Interview 1, L- 438). She was also concerned about how to choose from the many available digital resources, and about her students' technological skills.

5F. The Case of Iris – A Veteran Special Education Teacher

Background

Iris was an African American veteran special education teacher and EdD student in Teaching and Curriculum at the Warner School. She aspired to be an administrator/teacher educator who would like to provide professional development and coaching to other teachers.

Teacher Training and Experience

Iris had over 20 years of teaching experience as a traditional teacher for special needs children. She never had any formal teacher training before she started teaching. She said, “I learned as I went along” (Personal Correspondence, July 8, 2018). She received some in service teacher training later.

Online Experience

Iris had no prior experience with online teaching or learning, she never took any online course before enrolling in EDE 484.

What Kind of Online Teacher Iris Aspired to Be

In this section, I will address my first research question by describing what Iris aspired to be with respect to each of the ten components identified by the course designers as characterizing the “kind of online teacher” the course aimed to prepare, and then report on other elements that emerged from my analysis of the data. I will conclude this section by discussing the changes Iris reported to have experienced as a result of the course. I will start with Iris’ own take-aways at the end of the course, as reflected in her last journal entry.

In her own words – main take-aways at the end of the course:

1. In designing the lesson, it is important to clearly state what it is I want my students to do in navigating through the lesson
2. Be available by any means necessary to answer student concerns
3. Be sure to have a voice as the instructor
4. Encouraging feedback it is important to student growth
5. Make the lessons interesting
6. Change lesson design don't keep repeating the same format
7. Provide opportunities for social interaction
8. Use a variety of online resources as the instructor to help diversify the lesson for all learners
9. As the instructor, be careful not to over shadow students in discussions
10. Encourage students to be authentic in their response. (W.J.7, L- 109-114)

1. Seeing Online Learning as a Complement, Rather Than an Alternative, to Traditional/Face-to-Face Learning

Iris explicitly stated that she saw no significant difference between the kind of online teacher and face-to-face teacher she wanted to be. The only difference she mentioned was that online teaching requires much more details “compared to the face-to-face lessons” (F.R. L- 81-82). She stated:

My overarching takeaway from the course was whether it be traditional, or whether it be online, we are going for the ultimate goal, ultimate student learning, student achievement. Two different forms but yet they sort of parallel a lot and the online teaching helped me to realize that whether I'm standing before my students physically or if I'm online with them I still make a difference in that, I carry a lot of responsibility in their learning and how that learning is presented to them. (Interview 1, L- 479-485)

2. Seeking to Increase Students' Access to Learning Opportunities by Leveraging Online Spaces

Iris held the view that online learning can provide new opportunities for students with disabilities (as articulated in more detail in a later section); therefore, as a special

education teacher she would like to make use of online learning to increase access for students with special needs.

Iris contended that the special need students should not be “excluded” from online teaching and learning (OTL) because they are going to live in this world of technology more than she will (Interview 2, L- 168). Therefore, as a special education teacher she wanted to learn more about OTL to create access for her students.

As an example of the potential for online teaching to create greater access for students with special needs, Iris told the story of a student who had down syndrome and other people said “she couldn’t process” (Interview 2, L- 204). The students in that class were supposed to make a family tree and others said she would not be able to do it, but Iris disagreed. Iris sent the student to the computer and she said,

When we put her on the computer she was hitting those keys, she just lit up, she just started smiling and started pushing those keys with her finger and then she could see the words, she could see what she was hitting on the monitor and it was just so amazing ... she ended up making her book like everyone else did and she shared her story and it was good. (Interview 2, L- 215-221)

3. Seeking to Create a Caring and Interactive Learning Community in Any

Instructional Context

Iris gave significant emphasis on being able to create a learning community as the online teacher she aspired to be. In the beginning of the semester one of her concerns was how to get her learners to “bond” with her and how to build a learning community in an online course. But as the semester progressed, these concerns changed to the realization that “the most valuable affordances of online learning are socialization and building an

online community” (F.R. L- 5-6). Iris mentioned several times the behaviors and practices of the instructor of EDE 484 as a “model” for how to make this happen.

When she first started the course, Iris had some doubts and concerns in her mind about establishing relationships in an online course. In the first weekly journal she wrote, “I believed that the teacher and the student could not form an online trust: that is essential to the learner and teacher” (W.J.1, L- 5-6). She was also concerned about ensuring teacher “presence” in an online class (F.R. L- 85). After taking the class for a week and looking at “the design of online instruction” she was experiencing, Iris realized that trust can be built between students and teachers even in an online setting. One way to achieve this trust, according to her, is by developing the lessons and tailoring the assignments in a way “to meet the needs of the students” (W.J.1, L- 5-9). She also realized that using the correct tone in her communications and having a welcome page introducing herself would be beneficial to create a teacher presence in her online courses.

It was very important for Iris to be available to her students and to answer students’ questions promptly. She considered the course instructor of EDE 484 as a model for doing this. She shared her experience of reaching out to the instructor regarding some issues while designing the individual lesson plan – as she was struggling with it, since this was the first time she was designing an online module. She commented that the instructor was very patient, gave ample time to help her and make her understand the process. Iris said that the instructor did not make her feel “uncomfortable” or did not make her feel that she “wasn’t adequate” (Interview 1, L-117). As an online teacher Iris

wanted to demonstrate this quality and be equally available to her students. She also realized that online technologies would allow her to do so effectively:

I've learned that I could go into the system and design a question where if you have any questions please contact me, or maybe get to the point where I could leave my number making myself more personal, they could contact me and that builds that trust. So if I don't have that visual, that physical input I could still have it online and it's all on how I could represent myself. (Interview 2, L- 70-74)

Iris stated that "To be an online teacher I think I want to also show compassion and I want to be patient" (Interview 1, L- 197-198). She thought everyone in the class but herself "had some experience and some knowledge they brought to the table" related to online teaching learning. She only had her "professional experience as a teacher" in a traditional classroom setting, but she felt the course instructor and TA showed "so much compassion ... so much understanding ... it wasn't pity, it's just we understand where you're at and we're going to bring you to here, and I got there" (Interview 1, L- 204-207). She would like to show similar compassion to her students. She contended, "As a teacher when your children lack that background knowledge you have to provide it – whether field trip, movie, whatever" (Interview 1, L- 224-226). She stated that the course instructor "showed me that knowledge by sitting down to me and explaining whatever it took, she provided me with that background knowledge and that was very essential to my moving forward" (Interview 1, L- 227-229). Similarly, as a teacher she would like to always provide her students "an understanding where they're not feeling inadequate and where they are in the learning" (Interview 1, L- 231-232).

Iris would prefer to have hybrid classes, so as to create opportunities for her students to meet each other face-to-face and to socialize (F.R. L- 19-20). To create a

learning community, she would “provide students with as much contact information needed in order that they may not experience the feeling of being alone or neglected” (F.R. L- 60-62). She would share her cell phone number and email contacts with them and would collect their contact information. Additionally, she shared her idea of implementing a “check-in point” in her online course:

I would send out an email to all the students in the class as a check point in which they could express their needs without feeling incompetent. I would also implement in the module an online tracking system that would alert students to where they are in the lesson. Providing students a peer buddy to help them as they navigate throughout the lesson would be beneficial. However, the peer buddy would have to be accessible and active in helping; and not make the individual feel he/she is a burden or a problem. (F.R. L- 57-71)

Another thing that Iris thought was important for building a learning community is the connections between the teacher and the students. Iris believed the “wording” a teacher uses in designing the lesson “creates the tone for connecting with the student” (F.R. L- 86). Therefore, she would like to be careful about wording in her online modules, and she planned to have a welcome page in which she would introduce herself to her students (F.R. L- 86-88).

In a discussion board Iris discussed the importance of communication in creating a leaning community, as she wrote: “Communication between instructor and peers is very important, without open communication, so many problems can occur” (DB Module 5.2, L- 84-86). Recognizing that when people work in a group project, lack of communication can hinder progress, she also wrote: “Communication helps the members to embrace others ideas and differences, it is a necessary resource” (DB Module 5.2, L- 90-91). Iris gave examples of the course teacher several times, how she responded to emails

promptly, and was available through “different media.” She believed that being accessible is very important for a teacher for creating a learning community, especially when teaching children with special needs, because:

To me they're so damaged in a lot of ways, educational wise, social wise, emotion wise and their voices are silent. I think the online teaching gives them a way to hear their voice and a way that they can share their opinions and comments with others without being injured. So I like it (online) for that, it keeps them safe, you know, they're not dealing with their peers who may bully them or tease them about their thought and may have a student who's bright, they're not feeling intimidated or shy for being bright. It's a safe space for them... it depends on the teacher how safe that space is going to be (Interview 1, L- 593- 601).

In her final reflection, Iris also stated that she would “design lessons in a manner that the goals and objectives would promote and encourage socializing by means of communication, and sharing” (F.R. L- 8-9).

4. Seeking to Enhance Students' Engagement and Motivation by Capitalizing on the Many Affordances of Digital Technologies

As an online teacher Iris would like to ensure students' engagement, and therefore enhancing their motivation to learn was of great importance to her. She identified a number of ways in which technology could be used to increase engagement in learning – including leveraging young people's natural interest in digital devices, using a variety of media to convey content, and using social media to allow students to communicate and share work. Iris also greatly valued the private options online learning can provide to students with special needs – which in turn can encourage them to take more risks and increase their confidence.

Iris wrote in a discussion board that “learning and motivation are essential to student learning” and “how the instructor motivates the learner through the lesson, builds

self-efficacy, self-confidence” (DB, Module 3.2, L- 130-131). Iris also recognized that “Motivating students can be challenging but when they are involved in activities that make them think, they are more likely to be motivated in the learning” (DB, Module 3.3, L- 117-118).

Iris stated that the “first potential” she saw about online learning is that “it is private” (I.R. L- 2). It is a benefit “for those students that may feel they are not smart as other students can work in the privacy of their home/ selected location – and not feel threatened to keep up with others” (I.R. L- 2-4). She believed “this will help build their individual self-confidence and motivate them to learn. It will help them in building other skills as well: such as discipline, commitment and self-motivation” (I.R. L- 4-6).

Being asked in the interview about how she would design motivating and engaging online learning activities, Iris responded: “I would like to design hands on lessons, engaging lessons that they (students) could have fun at and it would provide them with different media” (Interview 1, L- 163-164). She would like to design the course “in way in which students are not afraid to take risk: the learning becomes fun- not something they are afraid of” (W.J.2, L- 57-58). She stated that EDE 484 was an example for her for that, as from this course Iris “learned that online learning can be fun for students” (W.J.1, L- 15). She contended:

The online course can be developed in a manner in which the student can participate in a variety of assignments. As most learners enjoy chatting and socializing on social media, creating a blogging activity in the lesson would promote socialization: and the student would have fun engaging in social conversation with others. (W.J.1, L- 15-22)

Iris believed that technology can help increase students' motivation and engagement, since children are so interested in and familiar with digital devices in their everyday life. She further elaborated this view as follows:

Children cognitively are taking in a lot of learning from their multimedia devices. And as teachers, we have to compete with some very interesting material being presented to children. I have noticed that children can spend hours on their cell phones and other digital devices, but when they come to school, down goes their head and they sleep for the entire class period. When asked why they come to class and sleep, students say because their classes are boring. This is why I liked Dewey's approach to learning. Getting children to inquire and making connections is important between how they are seeing the world and how it operates. (DB Module 5.1, L- 273-279)

According to Iris, another value of OTL for students is "not being exposed to other students' negative behaviors. Many students working in a school environment do not like the bad behaviors of disruptive students: but cannot escape it, for they are contained in the environment" (I.R. L- 1-9). This, in turn, could increase their engagement, she believed.

Iris also said that as an aspiring online teacher she would like her students "to see the passion that I have for what I'm doing, it doesn't have to be great, just that I love it" (Interview 1, L- 190-191). Seeing the passion in the teacher for her subject can also motivate students to learn.

5. Seeking to Promote Deep Learning and Understanding by Capitalizing on Appropriate Digital Tools and Resources

As a teacher, Iris had always aspired to enable her students not just to learn and understand the course material, but also to become problem solvers and critical thinkers.

As a result of EDE 484, she also came to a deeper appreciation of the importance of building on students' prior knowledge.

Iris stated that she would like to be “the kind of teacher that promotes learning” for her students, she would like to “present lessons in a way that it makes them (the students) be critical thinkers and problem solvers” (Interview 1, L- 289-291). She believed that “learning is all about connecting the real world to the lesson for the students” (F.R. L- 36). Reflecting on some of the course readings in an early journal, Iris wrote:

I will design instruction that allows my students to think, and to think about how learning impacts their lives, and how their lives impact education. It is important that I bring to the learning their present thinking and ability: and have them concentrating on when, where, what, and how their learning will navigate their futures. It is my belief that instruction should provide children the opportunity to be challenged, and to learn problem solving skills. Higher learning involves students being able to inquiry about the world around them. (W.J.2, L- 59-69)

Iris said that from the course instructor of EDE 484 her “takeaway was learning to embrace the student's present level of understanding” (W.J.2, L- 55-56). She would like to remember that “prior knowledge is an asset, on which new learning is formed and built” (W.J. L- 56-57). Iris stated, “I think it’s important that students realize that their knowledge is not obsolete to the learning and that they bring with them their experiences from their culture, their history” (Interview 1, L- 38-40). As a teacher she would like to “build on that” and “to embrace that” because she believed this would allow them to take “ownership” of their learning and gradually they would “become an expert” in the learning (Interview 1, L- 40-42). She would design lessons in a way so that it connects

with the students prior learnings (Interview 1, L- 43). Regarding eliciting prior knowledge, Iris further said:

All children bring prior learning to an assignment ... All children have different experiences in life that mold who they are, how they view the world and what they become. As instructors, we want to build on all aspects of the learning. It is their prior knowledge and engagement in communities...such as their families, churches, peers, and other events that they learn to form opinions, values, communication, and morals. (DB Module 3.2, L- 131-136)

Iris believed that for creating a “learner-centered environment” it is crucial to build connection between students to content. She contended:

In this teaching approach, students think and learn in relation to their prior knowledge and understanding of the world. They think about a problem from their cultural experiences. Their experiences could have them think about the problem in a correct manner or an incorrect way. Discussing the problem for clarity and understanding allows them to rethink and readjust their misconception of the problem at hand. Here the teacher recognizes the importance of building on students' ideas and cultural knowledge, as they are essential to the student's understanding and growing of the content. (DB Module 5.1, L- 209-214)

6. Seeking to Promote Collaborative Learning in any Instructional Context

Iris looked at promoting social interactions and collaborative learning as a key component of the teacher she aspired to be. She also believed that promoting collaborative learning is particularly important in an online environment, and that there are tools she could use as a teacher (such as discussion boards) that would help her achieve this goal.

Regarding social presence and interaction between students and teachers, Iris stated, “Teacher presence and social interaction with peers is so essential to student learning” (DB Module 5.2, L- 34-35). She also wrote:

Research has shown that students grow mentally, academically and emotionally from social interaction. Social interaction promotes competition and motivates

one to want to do better, because their peers are being successful.... we as human creatures need socialization in order to cognitively develop and to be healthy. (DB Module 5.2, L- 35-42)

Iris believed that collaborative learning is especially important in an online setting because learners in an online class can feel isolated, as “you might have questions and concerns and there’s no one that you feel you would be able to reach out to help you resolve those” (Interview 1, L- 152-153). To address the issue, she suggested: “have the students work together, they can collaborate, they can help one another, they can share ideas, the exchanging of ideas and thoughts” (Interview 1, L- 153-155). She contended that promoting collaborative learning is also very critical “in developing and appreciating the online course” because “by nature we’re just social animals, it’s just something we can’t get around, so we need that social piece that is what is natural within us, we’re going to always need that that collaboration and that contact” (Interview 1, L- 157-159).

Iris further shared her thoughts on social interaction, collaboration, community of practice and their implications for her online teaching in another discussion board:

As I have learned from prior modules, the design of the online lesson should promote social interaction and collaboration between students. Social interaction of students in an online course is essential to their motivation. Wenger and Lave, the researchers responsible for the community of practice theory, said by nature we are social creatures and that need must be nourished. The researchers explained that is through social interaction we learn and acquire knowledge of the world. Learning from one another broadens our understanding of things we do not understand, and it brings diversity to the learning. Brown (2000) states that schools are a part of the larger community in which students live and interact. It is from social interaction with their families, churches and friends that children learn to think, problem solve and view situations from different perspectives. Would it not be natural for schools to continue building on what is human nature in the learning? Brown’s (2000) concept of learners as part of a school community is central to how students learn and build their social skills. Building discussion boards into the online learning encourages competition between learners and is a positive form of self-assessment. (DB Module 5.3, L- 192-205)

Iris planned to use Padlet in her future classes because she thought it is “a great source of socialization, communication and sharing of ideas between peers. It allows the students to see others work and introduces them to the real world. Learning is all about connecting the real world to the lesson for the students” (F.R. L- 34-36).

In her reflections Iris mentioned her own experiences of collaboration in the class several times. She stated that working with her classmates in the Group Project was a great learning experience for her, as she learned things from others. She also learned things from interacting with others in the discussion boards, in class and in the synchronous online sessions.

7. Seeking to Provide Students with Choices and Differentiated Learning

Opportunities, Leveraging Technology Whenever Possible

Providing choices and differentiated learning were important for Iris. While she did not elaborate on how she would identify her students' individual needs or provide differentiated learning online, she talked about how she would make efforts to meet her students' individual needs.

Iris suggested that all teachers should “keep the students' needs and wants at the center of attention in designing the lesson” (F.R. L- 78-79). She would let the students know throughout the course that they can depend on their instructor “to provide assistance in a positive and caring manner” (F.R. L- 78-81). She wanted to tailor the lessons and assignments to match the students' needs, and provided the following example in this regard: “if the student is at the primary age, his/her online work should be developed in a manner in which the assignments are short in quantity” (W.J.1, L- 9-10).

Iris contended that “Online learning for students is like having your own one-on-one teacher” (I.R. L- 16-17). Thus, it allows better opportunities for meeting students’ individual needs.

8. Appreciating the Need for Goal-driven Instructional Design and Thoughtful

Instructional Choices – Especially When Planning Online Learning Experiences

Iris considered being good at instructional design to be a critical part of the kind of online teacher she wanted to be, as evident in her list of take-aways from the final journal entry, which included several items related to designing instruction:

- In designing the lesson, it is important to clearly state what it is I want my students to do in navigating through the lesson.
- Make the lessons interesting.
- Change lesson design, don’t keep repeating the same format.
- Provide opportunities for social interaction.
- Use a variety of online resources as the instructor to help diversify the lesson for all learners. (W.J.7, L- 280-289)

As an online teacher Iris would adopt goal-driven instructional design. She would like her instruction to be student centered, where she would build on students’ prior knowledge, make the lessons interactive and use Bloom’ Taxonomy to identify worthwhile learning goals and related tasks. She also emphasized the importance of giving clear directions and creating opportunities to synthesize learning. She recognized some of the unique limitations of online classes in terms of instructional design, and found ways to deal with them.

In a discussion board Iris talked about several aspects of designing online courses and the responsibilities of teachers related to instructional design. She stated:

The teacher is like the driver of a car. It is the driver's responsibility to keep his/her eyes on the road to keep others safe in the car. A skillful driver knows how

to avoid an accident, because he/she knows the meaning of the signs on the road. The same with the teacher, he/she navigates the students to success by the skills they implement in the design of the lessons. (DB Module 5.2, L- 197-201)

In her final reflection Iris reflected on her increased understanding of instructional design as a result of the course:

As a new learner, I have learned that designing online lessons is what the teacher brings to the instruction. It is about what the goal and objectives the teacher wants the students to experience and that can be done in a variety of media's.... I have learned that there is a process in creating lessons for students. I learned that the lessons can be engaging, when fun activities are implemented to enhance the lesson. (F.R. L- 96-105)

In addition to promoting the building of an online community, the goals and objectives of the lesson should be present, clear, and doable. I do feel that I can apply these practices to my future online classes. (F.R. L- 89-94)

For her future online courses, Iris would like to choose activities based on the “goals and objectives” of each module (F.R. L- 73-74). Interestingly, when she first joined the program, Iris was “totally against goals” (Interview 1, L- 47-48). She explained her changed position as follows:

I believed there's some sort of learning structure but goals were not my priority. I think they were too constraining, too confining to children's learning but I find it's the opposite because you can open up their minds and broaden their learning by setting a goal. A goal is just the starting point for them. So by having the goals will help me to design lessons based on their learning styles, how they take in knowledge. (Interview 1, L- 49-54)

While designing and teaching an online course, Iris would remember that “prior knowledge is an asset, in which new learning is formed and built” (W.J.2, L- 56-57). She would design the course in a way that it is student centered as opposed to teacher centered because she believed “the purpose of an online lesson is to have the student take

ownership of his/her lesson" (W.J.3, L- 95). She would also design the lesson "in a manner that reflects the student's ability and talents" (W.J.3, L- 101-102).

Throughout the semester in the journals, discussion boards, as well as in the final reflection and interviews, Iris discussed specific instructional practices that she thought would help her become the kind of online teacher she wanted to be. In a journal entry, Iris wrote that she was "concerned about the design of the lesson being interactive enough for students, both academically and socially" (W.J.1, L- 24-26). In her future teaching, she would like to include "a variety of activities in the lesson" and she would "implement many of the methods learned in the class [EDE 484]" (W.J.3, L- 109-110). The activities would also "involve communication, sharing and responding to the online community" (F.R. L- 76-77). Iris would like to "design lessons that will challenge" her students (W.J.3, L- 111-112). Her lessons would "involve collaboration with other classmates and the use of technology" and those would "engage the student in higher level thinking" (W.J.3, L- 93-104).

To help her students synthesize the learning, Iris would "have them practice problem solving skills based on the content learning" (F.R. L- 29-30). She believed that "synthesizing the lesson is a good way to have the students think about and show how they understand the lesson from a different perspective" (F.R. L- 30-32).

Iris also recognized a challenge in designing online modules as she said, "the greatest limitation of online learning is getting the students to commit to responding to the module questions in an appropriate timeframe, in order for others to respond" (F.R. L- 10-12). Another limitation according to her is that "in online courses or activities,

directions for independent work cannot be provided face-to-face” therefore, there will be no immediate opportunities for the students “to ask clarifying questions or for the instructor to elaborate” (F.R. L- 52-53). To overcome this limitation, Iris would like to provide “clear and comprehensive” directions for independent work – something she learned to appreciate as a result of the course (F.R. L- 54).

9. Seeking to Enhance Student Assessment Practices Through the Use of Digital Technologies, so as to Better Support Learning and Inform Instruction

Iris wanted to be an online teacher who helps her students grow by providing meaningful feedback. She would like to create on-time, formal and yet fun assessments for her students; she also preferred multiple opportunities for assessment and diverse types of assessment other than tests for demonstrating students’ learning.

In the second interview Iris talked in detail about what she learned from the course about assessment and how she would want her students to demonstrate learning:

I learned that assessment doesn’t have to mean a test ... Whenever I hear the word assess, it sounds so scary to me. But I learned that there’s multiple ways of assessing and again I learned that from the class. [The instructor] would give us something to read and then she said give me your feedback on that, where was the author going on that, what would you change, that’s assessing. So I have just learned - in my years of schooling it was always a test of multiple choice or something - assessing can be fun. It could be a project. Because the thing with the assessing piece is that what I want to know is did my students get what my goal was in my objective, did I accomplish that through my objectives? (Interview 2, L- 390-399)

Iris believed that “providing learners with feedback on their work is essential to their academic growth” and she contended that feedback can be provided “in the form of a formative or summative assessment” (DB Module 5.2, L- 221-223). She also believed “assessment or feedback should be given routinely” (DB Module 5.2, L- 227). She

wanted to make the assessment fun for her students, allowing for student choices and offering opportunities for them to feel “successful” (W.J.3, L- 98).

Interestingly, Iris held the view that “assessment is meant for the teacher more than for the student. The assessment helps the teacher in bettering his/her practice in improving student academics, and it helps the student in understanding how he/she is processing the academic information” (DB Module 5.2, L- 223-226).

10. Seeing the Use of Digital Technologies as a Tool Rather Than a Goal in Itself

As an aspiring online teacher Iris recognized the importance of technology to support students' learning as well as their success in today's world, especially in her field of special education. In the second interview she gave some examples from her experience of how technology can enable learning and change the lives of students with special needs, as discussed in more detail in a later section. In the beginning of the semester, Iris shared some concerns about her lack of knowledge of technology – along with her eagerness to learn more about technology to support her students' learning. Those concerns seemed to be reduced as a result of the course.

According to Iris, exposure to technology is a great affordance of OTL because “technology is connecting the global world. People are discovering and learning about cultures, foods, diverse societies and so much more through technology” (I.R. L- 19-20). She contended that “as an educational culture, we need to keep up with what is going on” (I.R. L- 21-22). She also stated, “As technology is moving forward and quickly, I as a teacher have to keep up” (Interview 2, L- 166-167).

In her preliminary journal, Iris specifically mentioned some technological concerns she had as a learner, as well as a teacher. The concerns she mentioned were:

1. Privacy, will my peers respect and keep confidential what I share?
2. How long does my work stay on the system?
3. will my instruction be completely scripted?

Interestingly, she did not revisit these concerns in any of her posts as the semester progressed.

Iris stated that she learned about some technology and the use of certain tools from this course. She mentioned Padlet several times in her reflections and interviews, as a tool she found useful for her and she would like to use it in future in her own teaching. Another tool she specifically mentioned was Zoom, which she would like to use to meet her students synchronously online; she thought Zoom was a great means “to socialize, communicate and provide feedback on the content” (F.R. L- 41-42).

Additional Aspects of the Kind of Online Teacher Iris Wanted to be

In this section I will discuss some of the other aspects of the kind of online teacher Iris aspired to be besides the ten components explicitly targeted by the course.

Professional Components of Teaching. Iris wanted to be a teacher who has adequate content knowledge, who collaborates with her colleagues, who has up to date knowledge of research in relevant fields and who is a life-long learner.

In her first interview Iris mentioned that, from observing the course instructor of EDE 484, she realized that it is crucial to have deep knowledge of the subject one is

teaching. Talking about what she would need to become an effective online teacher, she said,

Knowledge that they [the students] need from me to give them answers to their questions, be knowledgeable on the [online] system and knowledgeable in that content because sometimes you can design a lesson and you may not be familiar with the content or what it's asking, what is the goal, what is the objective, what are the outcomes, what are your resources to get that student from point A to point B, so if you don't have that knowledge yourself you have to have some content knowledge, if you're lacking that you're not going to be able to move forward. (Interview 1, L- 134-141)

Iris believed that when designing her future online lesson, it would be “natural” for her to collaborate with her “peers and colleagues” and she would like to receive “ideas and feedback” from them (Interview 1, L-181-182). Based on their feedback she would revise and re-design her lessons to make them “great” for her students (Interview 1, L-183-184). Her experience in the Group Project taught her the value of these practices.

As a future online teacher, Iris also emphasized the importance of being a life-long learner. She thought all teachers need to be life-long learners because students want their teachers to be innovative, use new techniques, and include creative activities. In particular, Iris contended that it is critical for online teachers to have knowledge of the recent research and development in their field. While discussing the importance of the course readings, Iris provided the following suggestions for online teachers: “Stay up with the readings, stay up with the research as much as you can, because things are always changing, new things are always coming out” (Interview 2, L- 327-328). In her second interview, Iris provided additional suggestions for teachers to be lifelong learners:

I say become a lifelong learner, don't continue doing what you did last year, try to do something new next year. So constantly go out there and keep seeking, keep asking and getting involved. So that's how I see myself as a lifelong learner ... Kids talk, all her lessons are like this, she doesn't change her lesson, I did this when I was in school, she's been teaching 20 years and it's the same lesson today. Kids know, so they'll tell other kids, they won't value you, they won't value what you're saying because they'll just be oh take her class because she doesn't change her stuff it's the same old stuff when I was taking her class. But when you have something new they're surprised, surprise them big time. I can only do that by keeping myself abreast with the knowledge and learning I had. (Interview 2, L-363-374)

Field-Specific Considerations. As evident in the observations reported in previous sections, Iris' identity as an online teacher was influenced by her prior identity as a special education teacher – as she was constantly looking for ways to use online tools and technology to improve the learning experiences of students with special needs.

One of the reasons why Iris believed OTL has great potential for special education is because students like new things and innovations, she contended that it is important for the special need students to “know the technology and it just changes them” (Interview 2, L- 222-223). They should be able to “participate” in technology, because she said that “this generation as a whole already come with the skills to work with the computer” (Interview 2, L- 225-226).

Explaining what potential online education has for the students with special needs, Iris said:

Each child learns differently, but I find children with special needs, not all of them, but they tend to be really good with technology. For some reason they're not afraid, they don't have inhibitions about it, they get on there and it doesn't take very long for them to pick up. I know a young lady personally ... she couldn't remember formulas and multiplication, you know, linear stuff, she couldn't remember it at all, but we gave her a computer, the phone there, and it was amazing. She went on to excel, she went on to work for the Pentagon. (Interview 2, L- 175-182)

In her interviews, Iris gave several examples from her teaching experience of special need students excelling with the use of technology, in addition to the student with Down syndrome reported earlier in the “increasing access” section:

I've had other students that go on and they've excelled, they've done well. I've had other people that go into the computer, they go into research, they can look things up, they interact and get really wild. Those children go on to get good jobs. So that's what I see with technology, I've seen the impact of technology on students, I know it's good, like I said it's not for all kids but for those that we can take to they do very well, it builds their confidence, wow I can do something that no one else can do. (Interview 2, L- 184-190)

As a special education teacher, Iris would like her students to be “advocates” (Interview 2, L- 347), and for herself to design lessons that would develop her students’ “thinking in understanding peoples’ differences and to embrace diversity” (F.R. L- 16-17). She would like the teachers that she would teach “to not just say the word diversity but to live it” (F.R. L- 18).

Acknowledged Changes in Views on Online Teaching and Online Teachers

Iris came to the class without any prior experience of online teaching and learning – although she had her own pre-conceived notions about online teaching learning, including significant doubts about OTL and its effectiveness. However, after taking the course her perceptions changed significantly – especially about building trust, developing relations with the students, and making lessons appropriate to students in an online space.

Iris stated, “When I first entered the course I did not see myself as an online teacher” – especially since she had been a traditional k-12 school teacher for a long time (Interview 1, L- 58-59). Before taking the course, Iris thought it would be tough to build

trust in an online setting. Because in a traditional class the teacher and the students meet face-to-face, they can solve issues quicker and build trust easily as they meet face-to-face. Iris was not sure how to do that online. However, her perception changed and she wrote in her very first weekly journal:

When I first came to class, I believed that the teacher and the student could not form an online trust: that is essential to the learner and teacher. However, I have learned in one week that based on the design of online instruction, the teacher and the student can build trust. This can be done when the teacher in developing the lesson tailors the assignments to meet the needs of the student, he/or she is instructing. For example, if the student is at the primary age, his/her online work should be developed in a manner in which the assignments are short in quantity. Time also plays a role. A young student based on the format of the lesson should not be spending hours at time doing assignments. The teacher taking into consideration the student's ability and age is building trust between him/her and the student. (W.J.1, L- 5-13)

Another major doubt Iris had was about building a relationship with students. When she first entered EDE 484, she was not sure how an online teacher could “build a relationship” with their students because they would not see each other (Interview 1, L- 255). However, from the final reflection and weekly journals, it was evident that Iris experienced a change of perceptions about online teaching and learning in terms of developing relationships with students in an online setting. She said in the final reflection:

My perception about developing a relationship with my students has changed. When I first entered the class, I just could not wrap my head around how the online instructor could create a presence. I know that the wording I use in designing the lesson creates the tone for connecting with the student. For example, I could have a ... welcoming page in which I introduce myself to the student; this allows the student to get to know me on a personal and professional level (F.R. L- 83-88).

Iris had some concerns related to teaching online which were resolved gradually as a result of the course: “how do you make your lessons age appropriate, challenging, engaging, collective... I had a negative perception of online, I didn’t think those things could be accomplished but after taking the course I saw that they can be accomplished” (Interview 1, L- 298- 302). After taking the course, Iris realized that in an online class she “could have the same results” with her students, and she could “phrase” her “questions” in the same way.

Iris started to believe that “being an online teacher is just as important as being a teacher in the classroom” (Interview 2, L- 227-228). Because of the experience in the course, she stated:

I’ve become a believer because for me I can now really see what you can accomplish ... because the point is to get students learning, to have them responsible for their learning, what they’re learning they’ll remember that better, the computer allows that. (Interview 2, L- 233-237)

Regarding her overall experience in the course and how it impacted her perceptions, Iris wrote in her final reflection:

I remember entering the class unsure and doubtful of my ability and what to expect. I heard about the challenges of the class but I never heard anyone say not to take it.... I have seen a lot of growth in me when compared to my first day in the class. I can now see that the online instructor can create presence in getting to know his/her students. I have learned that there is a process in creating lessons for students. I learned that the lessons can be engaging, when fun activities are implemented to enhance the lesson. (F.R. L- 96-105)

As concluding remarks in her second interview, Iris stated that she would “encourage” students coming to the programs at Warner School to take courses on online teaching, because she believed they would “come out a different person” (Interview 2, L- 412). Her message to future students was, “Even if you had the knowledge, you’re

literate on online teaching you're going to walk away thinking differently, you'll appreciate it, because I do, I appreciate it" (Interview 2, L- 413-416).

Based on her overall experience in the course and especially in the two projects, Iris said if she were to get a job offer to teach online courses she would "more probably say yes, I would take it – as opposed to when I first started the class, I'm not going to take it, I know nothing at all" (Interview 2, L- 140-142). She felt that she now had the "foundation." In one of her interviews she stated:

I came in as an empty vessel, literally, but when I walked away I said to you I could do an online class. That's pretty cool in just a semester. I was an unbeliever, I didn't make it no secret that I was an unbeliever of online teaching and you were very patient with oh you'll see, it will come together and it did. It did for me. (Interview 1, L- 577- 581)

Impacts of the Course Activities on Iris' Identity Development

In this section I will discuss how different learning experiences in the course impacted Iris' identity development as an online teacher, so as to address my second research question: *How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?* I will first talk about the impacts of participation (both as an online learner and as an online teacher) on Iris' identity development as a certain type of online teacher, and then I will talk about the effects of recognition by self and by others on her identity development. I will also discuss some other factors that influenced her identity development.

Overall Impact of the Course

As already discussed in the previous section, the course had a significant impact on Iris' views of online teaching and learning as well as herself as an online teacher.

About her participation in the course and how it impacted her, Iris stated in her first interview:

As a learner I did enjoy the process ... I came in as a learner, I came in totally with nothing, when I walked away from the program I had quite a lot of learning through readings, through interacting with my peers, interacting with my teachers, building a project, implementing a project, all those together made me, I feel that if I was asked to do it I could do it based on what I learned in the course. So I think it was really beneficial to me as a learner. (Interview 1, L- 359-368)

Iris also appreciated the fact that the course was hybrid. She thought the face-to-face sessions helped build the relationship between the teacher and the students, and helped build trust. She felt that the way the lessons were designed made the students feel the teacher “was there” and that the students “could communicate with her” (Interview 1, L- 271). Iris also talked about the impact the course teacher had on her:

Didn't take over the conversation, she didn't critique you on your thoughts, she just expanded on those thoughts and maybe gave you what you were thinking or what made you think that way. It wasn't like oh that's not the way you do it or oh that's wrong, she was never negative, neither were you. There was never negative response to my feedback to the task, so communication was really good, it made me share, it gave me a safe environment, I felt safe on the site when I was online that I was going to be put down with what I said mattered, so that really helped me a lot. So that did change my perception of building that relationship. (Interview 1, L- 272-280)

Participation: Experience as an Online Learner

From several of the Blackboard posts, final reflection and the interviews, it is evident that Iris's experience as a learner in this hybrid course had a profound effect on her perceptions about online teaching and learning. As already reported in several of the previous sections, Iris also explicitly mentioned how the instructor in the course acted as a model for her – and how she wanted to replicate some of the instructor's practices in her own future online teaching.

About her experience as a learner in the course, Iris explicitly said in an early discussion board, "As a learner, the various forums used in the online class were motivating. Having a variety of tasks, engaged me in the learning, as I am learning new approaches to online instruction" (DB Module 3.3, L- 115-117).

In her final interview, Iris also shared that in the beginning of the semester she found it difficult "to deal with the timeframe, to meet the time demands, that was hard" (Interview 1, L- 357-358). But as the semester went by she realized it was "necessary" and she "got used to it" (Interview 1, L- 358). While it was tough for her to keep up with the deadlines, it made her manage her time, and not to wait till the last moment for completing tasks. She stated, "I learned how to become more regimented as a participant in the online learning and you have to open the computer because the teacher may send you a message that you may have to respond to something" (Interview 2, L- 422-424). She contended that keeping up with the schedule and staying focused would make an online experience "fun" (Interview 2, L- 425).

Iris' experiences as a learner in the course also made her more sensitive to the difference students might feel when interacting online versus face-to-face. In the interview she shared:

I think what I learned is when you do it as a student in the class and you're online you become more conscious of what you're writing because others are viewing that so you tend to put more, you're more careful, you give more thought to what you're saying. (Interview 2, L- 308-311)

Iris thought that the instructor made her activities in the course "engaging." She mentioned how the instructor gave "different types of instructions" for the students

(Interview 1, L- 170). For example, Iris found module 5 of the course “interesting” as well as “challenging,” as she reported in a discussion board:

It was very challenging for me, because it made me look beyond the readings, and forced me to start thinking about the concepts that the researchers presented. It made me question how I as an online teacher would implement those ideas into my lessons. I was made to look at my students perspectives: and that as an online teacher I need to consider the culturally and social communities of my students in designing a lesson(s). Communicating with my students and having limited teacher presence is also essential to their academic growth and learning. (DB Module 5.3, L- 259-265)

Of all the activities in the course, the one that impacted Iris most was the Group Project. Reflecting on this experience from the learner’s perspective, she said:

Doing the group project was very influential to me and then as a future teacher, online teacher, how important those social interactions of those students so having them doing group projects, collaborating together on assignments, designing something, designing an online group project and having them to implement that. So I think that social piece for me, that grouping stood out. (Interview 1, L- 314-319)

Iris mentioned that the Group Project was “very challenging” for her as a learner because of the “group dynamics” (Interview 1, L- 328-330), but this provided her with some important insights about how to manage group work as a teacher:

As a teacher I think I want to be more specific when I set up my groups, I think I might want to make it as a survey and kind of see if we could kind of match personalities, maybe giving groups, different ones in the group tasks so that no one person in the group is doing more than another or doing less. (Interview 1, L- 330-334)

To deal with similar challenges for students working in a group project, Iris came up with a suggestion, “I think there should be a pre and a post survey ... what did you feel about the experience, what’s not going well.... I think that would be essential for the social piece implementing that group project” (Interview 1, L-339-344).

Iris also said that if she were to take a position as an online teacher, she would go back to the course instructor as her model.

Participation: Experience as an Online Teacher

Iris discussed in detail her experience as an online teacher in the course and how those impacted her confidence as well as her idea of the kind of online teacher she wanted to be.

Regarding participation in the course as a teacher, Iris said, "Participation for me was crucial in terms of designing the lesson" (Interview 2, L- 22). She said that it was the "main thing" for her, because she never designed an online module or course. Based on what she had learned in the course her goal was to find out "how was I going to get my students to understand what I wanted them to know, what was I going to do, what was going to be my objective, how was that going to look," she also wanted to find out "where...to start" (Interview 2, L- 24-26). She learned from the instructor that identifying the learning goals was the first step, then the activities and assessment should be designed.

After finishing the entire Group Project, Iris said, "I started seeing that I could have the same results" in an online class as a teacher (Interview 2, L- 62-68). She felt confident. Based on her experiences in the two projects, Iris also gave some suggestions for aspiring online teachers:

There are going to be times when you may not be able to put your hands, you may not be able to reach out to someone, but there are tools that you can use, there are resources and books and things that you could do or you could contact, you could make that connection. So but **my takeaway is don't be afraid, I've learned that because I was really scared, I was really nervous and I really doubted my ability.** I learned from this experience don't be afraid to embrace other's thoughts

and their contribution and don't be afraid of your own, put it out there and if it's not the direction you want to go in then embrace someone else's opinion on that and you may be able to help someone else too. So that's my takeaway. (Interview 2, L- 128-137)

Experience in the Group Project. Iris showed her growing confidence in herself as an online teacher as she reflected back on the outcomes of her first experience as an online teacher, after completing the Group Project:

I thought we did a good job with the class because we presented our questions and our activities, they were doable, they weren't intimidating, they were age appropriate for what we wanted. I think we reached our goal which was to have them design their own lesson and then communicate amongst their peers, so we were able to accomplish that. (Interview 2, L- 48-52)

From this experience, Iris realized she herself can be effective as an online teacher. She felt a sense of achievement after completing the Group Project, she said,

It [Group Project] has made me realize that yeah I could do online teaching, it can be accomplished, just that same accomplishment you get in class you can also get through the online teaching. So, that for me was the eye awakener because I walked in not believing but I walked out believing. (Interview 2, L- 75-78)

Experience in the Individual Project. Iris said the Individual Project helped her to think about how she should "approach" the lesson, because "it's not just getting on the computer and designing a lesson," it required setting the goals first of what her students would learn as a result of the lesson, which she found time consuming (Interview 1, L- 379-380). Iris thought that it takes time to find the "resources" to design a course, because a teacher would want her "lessons to have substance and to be meaningful" (Interview 1, L- 381-382).

About her experience of doing the Individual Project and its implications for her as an aspiring online teacher, Iris said in the second interview:

It was something that was doable. The positive part about doing it independently is that you don't have anybody interrupting you, you do have that power to just continue your lesson and to design it how you want it to go. So there are advantages, but the disadvantage is you don't have someone else saying that may not be the direction you want to go. For example, when I met with [the course instructor] while I was doing my independent lesson there were a lot of things that ... she was like that's not quite where you're going with that, your rationale is not connecting to whatever you're trying to get for you goal, you're all over the place with it ... I thought it was fine, but once she and I had the conversation I could see why she made those points. Okay I see where I could improve that. So that's the point of I think working independent versus working in a group. (Interview 2, L- 114-125)

Comparing the Group and Individual Projects and their impacts on the kind of online teacher she wanted to be, Iris said,

I prefer doing it with the group, yes it was challenging because we all had different ideas and personalities, there were some challenges in terms of getting everyone, what was each one's role in the group. I think once that's established.... I liked the group participation to share those experiences or ideas, so I liked that better working collectively. (Interview 2, L- 87-97)

On being asked about having the Group Project first and then the Individual Project, and if it made any difference, Iris said,

I think that was a good way to do it, I liked that arrangement, I wouldn't change it for myself cause like I said again **I came in really not knowing anything. So being with the group project it allowed me to look at, I more or less watched and listened** because the ladies were very knowledgeable, my group was very knowledgeable in technology which was great because I'm not. They showed me how different things how to get into the essays book and how to set up, I didn't even know the basics. So I thought that was very good, so **I had some skills coming out of that experience like I could take to my independent work.** (Interview 2, L- 156-157)

Opportunities for Recognition

In addition to experiencing participation Iris had multiple opportunities for recognition from herself as well from others throughout the course. Weekly journals and final reflection created opportunities for her to receive recognition from her own self,

while the discussion boards and other Blackboard posts created opportunities for recognition from others.

Recognition by Self. In the previous section I have discussed how *experiences as an online learner* and *experiences as an online teacher* within the course impacted the identity development of Iris as an online teacher. Her reflections on these experiences captured in the discussion boards, journals, and final paper were also critical for her to understand those experiences and connect those with the course readings. For example, she wrote in a weekly journal:

Another takeaway for the readings is that communication amongst students is important to the learning. It boosts their social interaction and is a resource to acquiring new learning and understanding. It helps students' in embracing and respecting the opinions of others. **My future implications as an online instructor would be to design lessons that embrace communication, risk taking, collaboration and partnerships.** (W.J.2, L- 59-63)

Iris also appreciated the opportunities provided in the course throughout the semester for reflections. She stated that it is “important” for a teacher to reflect, because it allows the teacher to think about how the students did, what they learned from a lesson, if they learned what s/he wanted them to learn, if they dug deep into the topic, if s/he provided them a “means” using which to “dig deep” the topic etc. (Interview 1, L- 445-448). Iris contended, **“Reflecting also helps me to look honestly at myself and at my work and it helps me to question what I want to do”** (Interview 1, L- 451-452). She stated that the reflection opportunities in the course helped her question herself, how she could have “done this differently” or how she could have “approached this lesson differently” for her students to understand it better. Iris stated, “It’s a constant evaluation

in being objective and sometimes critical on yourself. So I think that's what it is, in fact I know that's what I took away" (Interview 1, L- 454-456).

Recognition by Others. Iris received recognition from both her teacher and from her peers on her participation in online activities as well as on her reflections on those activities – and she explicitly recognized the importance of these interactions for her own development as an online teacher.

Iris received her teacher's and peers' recognition in the form of comments in class, in the discussion boards, and most importantly as feedback on the Group and Individual Projects. Here is an example of how her peers recognized her as an online teacher:

I love your point that the assessment or feedback should be on time and routine. Yes, it is true that providing confidence and gratification to students is very important for teachers to do. By replying students routinely, the instructor and students can build a trust relationship. This commitment is necessary between students and the instructor which can be mutual benefit. The instructor can track students better, and students can be motivated by the timely feedback from the instructor. (Tulip to Iris, DB Module 5.2, L- 235-240)

The following is an example of how Iris received recognition as an online teacher from the course instructor:

Your take-aways are very thoughtful and insightful Iris! Thank you. I recently went to a seminar at UR where faculty talked about their transition to online teaching. One faculty member said that after learning about how to best design things, the first thing he asks himself about everything (content, activities, assessments) is - what / how does this contribute to my learning goals. And if the answer is that it doesn't he stops and doesn't include it. If everyone in class takes away what you have here, then the online world will be a better place. (W.J.3, L- 119-124)

Iris unequivocally recognized the benefit of recognition in different forms. For example, Iris talked about the impact of discussion boards on her as an aspiring online teacher:

The discussion boards really make me embrace and reflect on what my peers are saying. I think about how they approach a task and how they interpret it. Providing feedback is good for me in the lesson, because it helps me to reflect on the meaning that my peers are stating. It doesn't matter whether I agree or disagree, I respect their point of view. **This task makes me think about what others are thinking, how they are seeing the world.** So I am motivated to read their posts. As I develop my online instruction, communicating with others will be a major motivator to my students. (DB Module 3.3, L- 120-126)

Talking about the feedback she received from her peers and how those impacted her as an aspiring online teacher, Iris said:

I liked the fact that my peers said things like well that was a really good point you made I didn't really think about it that way and even my own comments to them they were insightful what I wanted from them. Some would say to me I didn't understand how you got that thought, I didn't see it that way, can you explain further what was your thinking on that. So those things really made you think when you're doing the readings to really look at what you're reading and dig deeper into the readings so you could perceive it maybe in a different way. (Interview 2, L- 247-254)

Iris valued the opportunities of getting feedback from the course teacher as well as from her peers in the course. She contended that the feedback she received was not meant to point out what she did "wrong" but rather allowed her to see how she was "thinking," or "perceiving" things and how she should "present" something "in a way that's clear," or how she could present something using "different modalities" to her students (Interview 1, L- 402-404). She stated, "Feedback is essential to me, because I may be going along thinking I'm doing everything right but that feedback lets me know that I may want to go look at it and approach it differently" (Interview 1, L-405-407).

Talking about how the feedback impacted the kind of online teacher she wanted to be,

Iris said:

I think being able to look at something through a different lens, that's my takeaway, is being able to think I'm so definite in what I do that I should be open to others' viewpoints and being able to implement those into my lesson. (Interview 1, L- 411-413)

Iris acknowledged that the feedback she received from both her teacher and her peers helped her to "understand" what she was doing (Interview 2, L- 256) and these helped her realize "how I perceive myself" (Interview 2, L- 258). She would like to "be better each time" she designs and teaches a lesson, she would like to learn how to do things differently (Interview 2, L- 259). She would read all the comments and "develop the lesson in a way that it becomes more interesting for the students" (Interview 2, L- 261-262). Comparing the teacher feedback and peer feedback she received and their impact, Iris said:

As much as I appreciated my peers' feedback I appreciated my teacher's more and only because I felt that she was the expert ... you go to school you see the teacher as the master ... although...the peers' feedback was good the teacher took it to another level. (Interview 2, L- 269-272)

Other Factors that Affected Iris' Identity Development

In several cases Iris mentioned how she found validation in the course readings and how those impacted the way she saw herself as an online teacher. She found the readings to be "very essential" because as a teacher she needs to read others' work and learn about research to "back up" what she is doing and to evaluate if she is going in the "right direction" (Interview 1, L- 463).

While discussing the impact of the readings on the kind of online teacher she wanted to be, Iris stated that the readings were based on research “done by people that are doing this [teaching online], they do this every day,” therefore they had significant impacts on her own views (Interview 2, L- 297-298). One specific reading that Iris found very useful was the one about Bloom’s Taxonomy, which she felt helped her understand how to help students to get from one level to the other. She also mentioned readings that discussed how to “respect” students, and others on how to “bring their culture into the learning as an online teacher,” also on how to involve the students in the learning community or how to “involve families into the learning process” (Interview 2, L- 320-323). Iris added that “the readings made us maybe look at things, question those things and get those things out to my students” (Interview 2, L- 323-325).

In her preliminary journal, Iris shared one of her major concerns: “Will I be seen as a true teacher by colleagues [who are] not engaged in online teaching?” (I.R. L- 29). During the first interview, while talking about the negativity surrounding online education, she mentioned that she still had concerns about whether her colleagues would look at her as a “legitimate teacher” (Interview 1, L- 514) or take her “seriously” (Interview 1, L- 518). She stated:

All of my colleagues are traditional teachers. Although they all now are embracing technology, I don’t think it’s something they’ve got their heads wrapped around totally on ... I don’t think they would consider me as a legitimate teacher, cause they feel I’m not in the trenches, I’m in a different trench. I’m not in the real trenches with them. Like we see every day the students what they’re going through, the social problems, economic problems, those things, they probably think I don’t see those things because I’m online, I’m disconnected from those things. I don’t have the challenges of dealing with an administrator. I don’t have the challenges of dealing with parents so that makes me a part of the clan, but as an online teacher I’m absent from those things, so they may not view me as

a real teacher. There are things that make you a real teacher are not, but as an online teacher I wouldn't face those issues. (Interview 1, L- 520-532)

When asked if and how the stigma surrounding online education impacted the kind of online teacher she wanted to be, or how she perceived herself as an online teacher, Iris said:

I think it would have some impact in ... how I view myself, maybe I started to think I'm not a legitimate teacher ... So it would make me question me as a teacher because as we all know, teaching involves more than an academic piece, you have to have the social emotional piece as well because if those things are not intact with the student they're not going to learn. So I mean they're dealing with what are we going to eat tonight, or will my mom be around tomorrow, or those issues they impact the classroom learning seriously. So I guess for me it would impact my thinking of myself as a teacher. Am I really a teacher or am I just designing a lesson. (Interview 1, L- 538-547)

To clarify her point Iris added that it was not that she did not believe in the "process" and she knew "it [online teaching learning] works" (Interview 1, L- 557). However, she stated:

I can't help but be affected by it, because I've been a teacher longer than I've been an online person, so I still go back to that world. It does impact me how my peers look at me. When I talk to my peers I would never talk about online teaching because that's not what they're talking about, they're talking about their day, the administrator, how their lesson went, how did the students take the lesson, what they encountered throughout the day is what conversations are with them. I never could say to them, well I had an online class today and I taught this and it was so much fun, I had such an interaction with a student, they're not going to take me seriously. They're not there yet and it's going to take time you know, I guess like with the cell phone, who would ever think that the cell phone would be a priority, if you asked me this 100 years ago, never. But now it's part of the culture, it's become normal. So now that we impact online teaching into the culture or into the learning it becomes more believable, more accepted, we're going to have conversations now because we're on the same level. I don't think we're there yet but we're getting there. (Interview 2, L- 557- 571)

Summary

Having no prior experience with online teaching or learning, Iris came to the class with significant doubts in her mind. In the first interview she said she did not see herself as an “online teacher” when she came to the class, she doubted the effectiveness of the online classes, was not sure about building trust and building relations with the students in an online setting, and she did not know how an online class is designed and taught. But at the end of the semester her perceptions changed significantly and she came to recognize that “being an online teacher is just as important as being a teacher in the classroom” (Interview 2, L- 227-228).

The kind of online teacher Iris wanted to be was not much different than the kind of face-to-face teacher she wanted to be. She realized that online classes require more details, yet student learning is the goal for both of the modes; and she realized that she can make a “difference” as a teacher in both modes.

Iris would like to build a learning community where there is trust, by being accessible, enabling connection and interactions between students, answering their questions timely, making her presence visible and using different media to ensure her availability. Iris would like to make her students feel adequate by being patient and compassionate. She wanted to use technology to help motivate her students because she thought children like technology. She believed that collaboration with peers can also motivate students and promote deep learning, as humans are social beings and they need social connection and collaboration for learning to take place. As an online teacher Iris would create multiple and diverse assessment for her students. She would also like to

provide meaningful and on time feedback to her students to guide their learning. Iris would adopt a student-centered and a goal-driven instructional approach using Bloom's Taxonomy. She would like to utilize technology and some specific web tools for her instructions. Iris would like to collaborate with her colleagues while designing and teaching an online course, and continue her learning of technology.

Most of all, Iris wanted to be a teacher who can leverage the potential of technology to increase learning opportunities and access to education for students with special needs – who she thought can benefit most from online education. She would also like all her students to develop an understanding for differences, embrace diversity and be advocate for self and others.

As mentioned earlier, Iris started with significant doubts and concerns regarding online education but she walked out of the class as a “believer.” This change of perspective happened because of her overall experiences as a learner and a teacher in the course. Her positive experience as an online learner in the course was especially impactful, as it challenged her pre-conceptions about the limitations of online learning. She also gained confidence from her experience as a teacher after designing the two projects and teaching one of them.

The course also created opportunities for Iris to get recognition from herself as well as from her teacher and her peers. She reflected on activities and best practices both from the perspectives of a learner and a teacher which implicitly worked as recognition for the kind of online teacher she aspired to be, even though she did not discuss those specifically as recognition. On the other hand, her interactions with her instructor and her

peers and the feedback she received from them in the discussion boards also helped her improve her understandings and practices as an online teacher, and those worked as recognition for her as well. Together, her experiences as a learner and as a teacher in the course, and the recognition she got from her teacher and her peers, influenced Iris significantly to understand the kind of online teacher she wanted to be as discussed throughout this case.

Iris also identified some challenges and concerns that she anticipated to face when teaching online in future. Those includes: a sense of “inadequacies” or “shortcomings” she might have, and whether she would be able to choose the best lesson and present it correctly while allowing her students some flexibility. To face these challenges she decided to always keep questioning about the outcomes of her lessons, about what would be the students’ take-aways as well as her own take-aways as a teacher from a specific lesson.

5G. The Case of Lilac – A Veteran US TESOL Teacher and Instructional Coach

Background

Lilac, a white female from upstate New York, was a doctoral student at the Warner School enrolled in Teaching and Curriculum. A veteran TESOL K-12 teacher, she had been working as an Instructional Coach for Primary Schools for the Rochester City School District for 4 and a half years.

Teaching Training and Experience

Lilac had over 20 years of teaching experience as a K-12 classroom teacher, as well as experience of providing professional development to other teachers. She completed the usual teacher preparation program required to become a certified teacher in New York State before starting her teaching career.

Online Experience

Lilac took one online course on writing prior to taking EDE 484, and it was a positive experience for her. She also had some experience teaching online before taking EDE 484, as she taught two online courses (one of which was hybrid) designed by another person at a university in upstate New York. She taught hybrid online professional development sessions as well (which were not full courses).

What Kind of Online Teacher Lilac Aspired to Be

In this section, I will address my first research question by describing what Lilac aspired to be with respect to each of the ten components identified by the course designers as characterizing the “kind of online teacher” the course aimed to prepare, and then report on other elements that emerged from my analysis of the data. I will conclude

this section by discussing the changes Lilac reported to have experienced as a result of the course. I will start with Lilac's own take-aways at the end of the course, as reflected in her last journal entry.

In her own words – main take-aways at the end of the course:

1. Having an online presence is critical to building community between teachers and students because as humans, we need to know there is someone there to provide support when needed.
 2. Provide opportunities to meet at least once in the beginning of the course to provide guidance for students at the outset and to introduce peers to one another. I think it will save time and will encourage students to ask questions early on. Utilizing Zoom or another form of collaboration is also advisable to provide for peer support.
 3. Make the interface for reviewing assignment criteria and submitting them easy so that students don't get confused or miss submission deadlines.
 4. Establish protocols for participating in discussions and group work and other expectations for completing assignments.
 5. Build background knowledge gradually and allow students to submit smaller assignments so they internalize the readings and other methods of providing content.
 6. Diversify resources to add novelty and perspective.
 7. Use online tools strategically based on well planned learning objectives.
- (W.J.7, L- 338-351)

1. Seeing Online Learning as a Complement, Rather Than an Alternative, to Traditional/Face-to-Face Learning

From attending this course, Lilac realized that there was not much difference between the face-to-face and online modalities of teaching – as planning for both should start with deciding learning goals and outcomes. She believed online education is equally effective, although she personally preferred face-to-face classes over online classes.

Lilac stated that the “implications for online teaching are the same as teaching in person. When developing modules, you will have to ultimately determine the goals of learning and what you want students to be able to do by the end of your course” (W.J.3,

L- 131-133). For both modalities, she suggested to start designing backward, using Bloom's taxonomy to identify where "the students are at in their personal learning" (W.J.3, L- 134-135).

Lilac also contended that compared to face-to-face, in an online context, "I think you can teach as much, I think you can learn as much, I think you can be diverse. I think all of the other things that you take into consideration in teaching are exactly the same" (Interview 1, L- 606-608).

Even though Lilac recognized the importance of online learning for specific contexts and people, she believed it is all about "personal preference" (Interview 1, L- 609). She said about herself, "Being an online student or online teacher is not my favorite, it's not something I really enjoy" (Interview 1, L- 601-602). She contended that she was a "face-to-face learner" who also preferred to teach face-to-face and that it was "just" her "personality" (Interview 1, L- 603). She argued, "Even with a screen where you can see everyone it doesn't necessarily make it, it's just not the same thing, it's just not. So, that's my only thing, the rest of it is fine" (Interview 1, L- 604-606).

2. Seeking to Increase Students' Access to Learning Opportunities by Leveraging Online Spaces

For Lilac, increasing students' access to education was crucial for the kind of online teacher she wanted to be. She believed online education can contribute new educational opportunities especially for adult learners (like the ones attending her professional development sessions) as well as for people with disabilities and other

limitations, as they will be able to attend online courses from wherever they are. In her final interview, she stated:

There are times when people can't take courses because of when they're offered or ... there may be other barriers to their attendance to a class, whether maybe their spouse already has commitments and they're not able to take a course whenever on a certain day of the week or they're too far away and their university does offer it, or if they're disabled and they wanted to become certified or educated in another area altogether but they can't get there in person. So having the online option is very valuable or if they're disabled and they want to teach a class they could teach multiple classes from home and I think probably there is a need for that especially with so many universities that offer online programs. (Interview 2, L- 300-309)

At the same time, Lilac recognized that accessibility can be a challenge if students do not have access to a computer and internet service. However, she believed this can be resolved by "the availability of computer labs and lending libraries" at a university campus (F.R. L- 70).

3. Seeking to Create a Caring and Interactive Learning Community in Any

Instructional Context

Lilac aspired to be an online teacher who values and invests in creating a learning community – as evident by the first two items in her list of major take-aways from the course (as reproduced at the beginning of this case). In her final reflection Lilac also provided an extensive list of strategies she would adopt to create an online learning community.

Lilac emphasized the importance of creating a learning community because she believed "learning is a social experience and by its nature enhanced when shared" (F.R. L- 79-80). Lilac contended that "having an online presence is critical to building

community between teachers and students because as humans, we need to know there is someone there to provide support when needed” (W.J.7, L- 369-371).

As part of the course final reflection, Lilac provided the following list of strategies to create an effective learning community in an online course:

- Holding occasional, if not weekly, synchronous sessions (either online or in person) to maintain contact and to reduce isolation.
- Providing students with the option to work in a group on a group project when it meets the objectives of the learning goals to aid in understanding of unit goals.
- Providing a variety of content resources in multi-media formats to provide novelty when hearing or viewing (or attending an event) can provide more information than a text.
- Designing learning activities that push people out of their comfort zone a little that are creative and allow for more opportunity to dive deeply into a topic by either providing a list of ideas or asking students to come up with their own.
- Using discussion boards when there aren't synchronous face-to-face meetings to keep dialogue flowing.
- Offering at least one opportunity to meet in person to help students get to know each other and reduce anxiety of sharing in a public domain once they participate in discussion boards.
- In addition to emailing people, calling students if necessary, when you believe they need a lifeline.
- Offering opportunities to co-construct learning in a shared contribution document (such as Google Docs) to help facilitate learning of a topic that may require multiple viewpoints.
- Utilizing other online tools like Padlet, Google Hang Out, or Popplet when they may help facilitate a learning objective and provide novelty for students to make it interesting. (F.R. L. 83-101)

4. Seeking to Enhance Students' Engagement and Motivation by Capitalizing on the

Many Affordances of Digital Technologies

As an aspiring online teacher, Lilac recognized that enhancing students' engagement and motivation is critical for meaningful learning. She would like to leverage technology to create enjoyable activities; she would also strive to communicate with and

provide feedback to students regularly, and use tools like Zoom to enhance her students' motivation and engagement.

About creating motivating and engaging activities for her students, Lilac said it would be her “number one thing” because it is “the most important aspect of keeping students involved, in touch, in development of their understanding of the content” (Interview 1, L- 196-197). Lilac believed if a teacher creates activities that the students enjoy as well as can learn from, they in return will “set it as a priority to check in every day and not wait until the day before the class starts to join a discussion or whatever” (which she has seen happening with the discussion boards often) (Interview 1, L- 198-200). She argued that if the students “enjoy the activities no matter how difficult they are, if they find them easy to participate in then they will do better, they'll perform better too” (Interview 1, L- 201-203).

Lilac believed that for engaging and motivating students in an online class, “taking responsibility for reaching out and helping them try” are two important things a teacher can do (W.J.2, L- 68). She also contended that to motivate students, “facilitators of online classes can and should utilize personal communication and regular student feedback as a means of helping students continue on the learning path, allowing for a medium for students to safely discuss their concerns” (W.J.2, L- 70-72). Additionally, Lilac thought that Zoom can be a useful tool for engaging students, because it would allow the students to see who the teacher is.

As a professional development (PD) provider Lilac's reason for taking the course was also connected to engaging learners, as she said, “I chose this course because I

wanted to be able to learn how to design online learning as an engaging as well as informative means of receiving training" (F.R. L- 17-19).

5. Seeking to Promote Deep Learning and Understanding by Capitalizing on Appropriate Digital Tools and Resources

For the kind of online teacher Lilac aspired to be, building on students' prior knowledge "is a critical attribute to consider" when designing learning activities (Interview 1, L-240). To promote deep learning and understanding she would build on her students' prior knowledge, and employ inquiry-based learning methods, make her students independent learners and figure out ways to get students emotionally connected with content.

Lilac believed that eliciting prior knowledge goes hand in hand with meaning-making opportunities, because if a teacher can connect the new learning with what the students already know and help them see how it can improve, then learning becomes "optimal" (Interview 1, L-256-258). She contended:

If you can help them attain new learning by providing an opportunity for them to bring their expertise on something and use the new learning as well, actually use the old learning as a vehicle to acquire the new learning because the prior knowledge is really sort of like a foundation of which to build on which is why I'm thinking about it in these terms. So I wouldn't want them to learn brand new content for some things and then a new skill, for example, a skill in this context is learning how to in the context of our course, learning how to create learning activities using web tools and, let's just stick with that, using web tools. So I think if I can encourage my students to use their background knowledge in teaching if they're TESOL, literacy experts, or math, if that's their content, whatever it is, they can then use the new web tools to teach math, to teach (their subject). So I think absolutely having the prior knowledge gives them a huge level of comfort in knowing they got this, they already understand the content and so new learning is what they really have to focus on. (Interview 1, L-241-254)

In a journal entry, as she commented on a reading about cognitive apprenticeship, Lilac discussed some of her valuable take-aways about promoting deep learning and the roles teachers can play in the process:

I love the concept of the cognitive apprenticeship as described in *Cognitive apprenticeship: Teaching the crafts of reading, writing and mathematics*. In *Knowing, Learning and Instruction* (Collins, A., Brown, J.S., Newman, S.E. (1989). I agree that gradual release to students is necessary as they learn and attempt problem solving with scaffolds that are accompanied by required metacognitive explanations to classmates and teachers as a means to promote deep learning of concepts. That said, this requires the presence of a teacher acting as facilitator. As the facilitator, the teacher is constantly modeling, guiding through practice, questioning, listening and correcting when necessary. Students develop trust in the teacher when they sense that the teacher has faith in their ability to learn the content. In my opinion, as on-line instructors, it is important to build modules that allow for apprenticeship. (DB Module 5.2, L- 245-254)

Lilac also articulated her views on an inquiry approach to teaching and learning as follows:

As a teacher, I was very taken with inquiry based learning and eventually it became the main vehicle that I designed ENL classes for my students. I believe that a compelling question posed by the student (triggering event) is necessary for true inquisition and a desire to learning to happen. During the integration process, students must grapple with concepts through constructive conversations with their peers. This leads to resolution and the presentation of what they learned. (DB Module 5.1, L- 177-183)

In her pre-interview survey, Lilac also wrote that she wanted to be a teacher who “inspires students to become independent learners through leveraging digital resources.”

Lilac believed that it is important to engage students emotionally with what they are studying. She contended that “When you hear people refer to online learning as dry or boring, I believe the problem is that they haven't emotionally connected to the content” (DB Module 5.1, L- 234-235). In a discussion board post, she referred to Pacansky-Brock

(2016) who “talks about the cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects of learning”

(DB Module 5.1, L- 236-237), explaining:

When teaching children, teachers regularly try to capture students' imagination and subsequent thinking about content by drawing them in with a story and appealing to how the content relates to them. We call that the "hook" or the anticipatory set. If you hook students, you draw them in and make them care about what they are learning. According to Pacansky, this "hooking the student" is not necessarily part of the university experience because as adults, students are learning for the sake of learning and supposedly motivated intrinsically. However, she also says that's not necessarily true, "The important point is that an affective connection to an experience fosters greater memory retention and deeper engagement (Pacansky, 2016)." In other words to aid students in relating to content – thus leading to engagement, you have to create cognitive presence by designing assignments that allow for connections to daily life (constructing meaning as one of the 6 C's). Also, giving students opportunity to participate in making decisions in what projects they choose (Choice as one of the 6 C's) to do gives them a chance to take ownership of their learning. To create cognitive presence means that students feel that the learning is important and they accept the challenge of learning the content of the course. Another one of the 6 C's that Pacansky describes is collaboration. When students can choose groups, projects and are able to collaborate, they can fully immerse themselves in the learning and it becomes important therefor connecting the affective and cognitive aspects of learning. (DB Module 5.1, L- 237-254)

6. Seeking to Promote Collaborative Learning in Any Instructional Context

As an aspiring online teacher, Lilac recognized the importance of promoting collaborative learning, in part as a result of her own participation as a learner in the course. To promote collaborative learning in her online courses, Lilac would utilize strategies like having face-to-face meeting opportunities for the students, creating opportunities for them to support each other and creating accountability partners among the students.

For her online classes, Lilac would like to “provide opportunities to meet at least once in the beginning of the course to provide guidance for students at the outset and to

introduce peers to one another” (W.J.7, L- 372-373). She believed this would save time and “encourage students to ask questions early on” (W.J.7, L- 374). Where necessary, she would like to utilize Zoom meetings or other forms of collaboration to provide peer support.

About creating opportunities for students to work together, Lilac said that it would be more “powerful” if she can provide ways for her students to support each other’s work rather than actually working together. She further explained:

I feel like the creation of those opportunities would look more like supporting one another rather than necessarily assigning work that they need to do together to share a common grade ... for me as an instructor, to hold students accountable for supporting one another and to provide some sort of a protocol and accountability tool to make sure they’re doing that as opposed to creating an assignment where they have to work together and then they have to get a grade. (Interview 1, L- 101-107)

Lilac argued that doing work separately but critiquing each other’s work and helping each other in the process of doing tasks would ensure students’ collaboration within a class (Interview 1). To her, it is more “like having an accountability partner” (Interview 1, L- 112). She herself had a partner like this and they wrote together, shared things with each other, and critiqued each other’s works. Lilac wanted to foster a similar kind of collaboration between her students, because she thought they would become “more productive” as a result (Interview 1, L- 119). She contended that creating a “specific group projects” for students to work together is “not often learning” (Interview 1, L- 119-121).

As a future online teacher, Lilac also recognized the importance of conveying clear expectations for collaborative work. She said, “We all need parameters, explicit

expectations and norms when it comes to collaboration” (F.R. L- 173-175). She held the view that working in a group is “like playing in a band, you can’t have one instrument that is overtaking the whole band because they feel like they need to be heard. We have to take turns, there should be a protocol for how we share ideas” (Interview 1, L- 432-434). Lilac personally liked group projects even when those are difficult. In the first interview she said that as a prospective online teacher, she would like to have some “group guidelines, something very basic what are we going to agree to do when we’re together, how are we going to insure that we get something accomplished in our time together” (Interview 1, L- 442- 445). She would provide guidelines for the students to decide “who’s going to be the scribe, who’s going to be the facilitator, you know, just some basic cooperative things” (Interview 1, L- 445- 446). She called these “basic cooperative working guidelines” (Interview 1, L- 447- 448).

In the second interview, Lilac shared her views on the use and benefits of discussion boards to promote collaborative learning. She considered them not to be precisely “effective” and she is not sure about how to incorporate them in her own teaching; at the same time, she also recognized how they can be useful for some people:

Even after a year and a half now of being on the learner side of online discussions, I still don’t find them very effective and so I feel like as a teacher I’m not sure how I will incorporate that later on. I feel like I would like to see another way of communicating that is really authentic, because I feel like discussion boards are contrived and I have seen a nice model of group discussions this summer semester, I feel like it’s a little better than what everyone else is using, but still I feel there’s got to be another way to get people to open up. That’s just one opinion, because other people who don’t like talking in class will find those group discussions freeing for them. (Interview 2, L- 155-163)

7. Seeking to Provide Students with Choices and Differentiated Learning

Opportunities, Leveraging Technology Whenever Possible

Lilac recognized the potential of online education for differentiated learning – most notably to enhance access to a greater variety of resources and assessment that can meet different learning styles and preferences. She also discussed ways to enact differentiated learning in her future online classes.

Lilac believed that meeting students' individual needs and differentiation relates to increasing students' access to opportunities and resources. She held the view that it is important to provide multiple opportunities for the students to be able to access everything, and to give them “some opportunities to choose what they produce” using the skills or content she is trying to teach (Interview 1, L- 264-265).

To enact differentiated learning, Lilac would use various media to convey content, because she contended:

Using a variety of media formats to convey content definitely provides differentiation of learning styles. Also including a PowerPoint with audio and the same with notes is going the extra mile for those who need both audio and visual media formats for optimal retention. (W.J.2, L- 74-77)

Lilac would select readings that convey different perspectives to ensure differentiated learning in her teaching since she believed that to meet the students' individual needs multiple perspectives should be represented in the “compilation of literature/research articles” chosen for a course (W.J.2, L- 78).

8. Appreciating the Need for Goal-driven Instructional Design and Thoughtful

Instructional Choices – Especially When Planning Online Learning Experiences

For designing and implementing online instruction, Lilac had a specific set of strategies – to be clear in stating her objectives and providing instructions, keep content and audience in mind, do task analysis, design activities according to the learning objectives, utilize Bloom's taxonomy, use protocols for group project, and use journals and discussion boards effectively.

Lilac's key beliefs and values about instructional design were captured in a journal where she listed the online course design aspects that she would like to adopt as a future online teacher:

1. Learning objectives should be clear and succinct in the overview
 2. Included in the objectives should be how students will be expected to demonstrate their understanding
 3. Provide means for student success using ZPD
 4. Communicate and provide feedback so that students know they are on the right track
 5. Provide content in a variety of media formats for learning style preferences.
- (W.J.2, L- 90-96)

Lilac would strive to keep the content as well as her audience in mind when planning and designing a course, because she believed that “the audience is equally as important when planning modules as the content itself” (W.J.1, L- 6-7). She planned to use the Planning Template introduced in the course to systematically plan her modules.

In her preliminary journal, Lilac mentioned that “As a future online teacher, I hope to be able to identify essential learning goals and objectives and provide a balance of learning activities that make the experience enjoyable in addition to achieving the learning outcomes” (I.R. L- 19-21).

Lilac would like to “construct learning objectives and corresponding learning activities that aid in student understanding” (F.R. L- 149-150). She would choose online

learning activities based on whether or not they will facilitate specific learning objectives.

Lilac realized that “learning activities aren’t the learning objectives” and this

understanding was foundational for her to “plan for instruction” (F.R. L- 123-125).

Determining the learning outcomes should provide the teacher with “direction in

choosing learning activities” (F.R. L- 126). Then the teacher can start with the

assessments and “work backward to determine everything from what students need for

basic understanding to specific language required to do the final project” W.J.3 L- 128-130).

Lilac suggested to “do a task analysis to determine student readiness

using Understanding by Design principles” (W.J.3, L- 127-128). She would like to

conduct a pre-assessment to find out her students' prior experience with the topic and

then she would modify learning activities based on that (W.J.3 L- 132-136). Regarding

the use of Bloom’s Taxonomy Lilac also said:

I found the directive to classify learning activities according to a level on the Bloom’s Taxonomy metric necessary to ensure that you are utilizing the zone of proximal development for students as they complete learning activities. I don’t think you have to begin a module with the lowest level on Bloom’s, but you need to know where your students are so that you can continually challenge them without overwhelming them. (F.R. L- 58-63)

Lilac believed that once teachers know the learning outcomes they can figure out

“what resources will best build the framework around it” (F.R. L- 110-111). However,

she also recognized that “finding resources that will help facilitate” the desired learning

can be a great challenge (F.R. L- 106). She recognized the importance of carefully

selecting readings that are varied in modality and provide the necessary support to

students to make sense of them as she stated, “When it comes to concept development,

providing background readings is essential to giving students multiple perspectives and multi-modal opportunities to understand them” (F.R. L- 133-134). She further contended:

When assigning reading to my students, I will assign excerpts of texts that will be valuable to concept development and as was done for us in this module, requiring some sort of learning activity such as a quiz or a note catcher will help students get what they need from the texts. (F.R. L- 145-148)

As an online teacher, in the future Lilac would take time to make sure “expectations are clear,” because in an online context “if the instructor is not available to answer questions and a deadline is coming up, a student is going to get very anxious if directions for completing assignments are not thorough and clear” (F.R. L- 212-214).

Lilac also emphasized the importance of making expectations clear for her online students through protocols:

There are certain things that need to happen in order for online learning to be a success ... [one is] providing protocols for students, to provide framework for understanding how to participate in the discussion, how to participate in a wiki, how to do group work, how to, how to, how to, just so that everyone understands how we're going to go about this learning process online. (Interview 2, L-5- 9)

Lilac would like to utilize journal entries to help her students synthesize their learning. For synthesizing learning, she would also use activities like asking the students to “develop their top 5 Tips for successful collaboration” (F.R. L- 200).

Lilac would use online discussions because she believed they have several benefits despite the reservations reported earlier. Most importantly for a teacher, discussion boards gives “a sense of students’ understanding of the content,” which will allow the teacher to “prepare additional resources if necessary” (F.R. L- 222-223). She would like to use open-ended questions for online discussions. Additionally, “the

discussion prompt should provide an assist in getting students to the end goal of a module” (F.R. L- 226-227).

Lilac also explicitly noted the following affordances of online contexts with regard to instructional design:

- Teachers can “map out goals and objectives for a class, plan learning activities and organize content resources ahead of time” (F.R. L- 37-38). This allows the teacher to make sure that the learning objectives for each week are met, which “increases accountability on the part of the student when they know that they will not receive credit if the submissions aren’t made” (F.R. L- 41-43).
- In an online context, since “everything is preplanned and ready to go,” the teacher can “focus more on supporting learning objectives by enhancing understanding with advice” (F.R. L- 47-49).
- Online learning affords students the “opportunity to be able to have content resources” which they can access and work on at their own time and space; and they can “review the materials over and over again” (F.R. L- 22-24). While commenting on others’ posts students can use quotes as well to make their points.
- Discussion boards in an online class allow students the opportunity to “everyone in the class through their comments and viewpoints on things,” whereas, in a traditional face-to-face class “there is usually a core of students that consistently participate” (F.R. L- 29-30). Online interactions help develop a strong learning community in the class, which enables learning from their classmates.

9. Seeking to Enhance Student Assessment Practices Through the Use of Digital Technologies, so as to Better Support Learning and Inform Instruction

Attentions to the assessment of student learning was a critical component of the kind of online teacher Lilac wanted to be. She would adopt various approaches for her students to demonstrate learning, including giving students choices about how to show what they learned and providing opportunities for peer assessment. She believed that online teaching can provide some unique assessment tools like using discussion boards. She also emphasized the value of rubrics to help students understand learning goals and expectations. She also had some strong feeling about the role of “feedback” and how it needs to be handled in order to be effective.

Lilac did not like tests, instead, she would like to provide multiple assessment opportunities to her students and she would like to create “opportunities for them to bring their own assessment ideas” (Interview 1, L- 264-267).

In particular, Lilac stated that she was comfortable with rubric-based assessments, and she was trained for it. She recognized that there are students who want to know “exactly what” the teacher thinks, in these cases she could always go back to the rubric and tell them “this is how you did this well, this is how you did this well, this could use more work, you know, always going back to the rubric” (Interview 1, L- 296-298). She identified using rubrics to clarify learning expectations as one of the top two things that needs to happen in order for online learning to be a success, and further elaborated on the value of engaging students in the construction of the rubrics:

Rubrics and not just giving student rubrics to help them understand what the goals of learning are, but actually provide some opportunity for students to have input

on those rubrics but to add to it so that they can internalize what is expected. There are some people who want to see the end product for an example, and then there are other people who might find the end product, you know, other exemplar papers, too confining, so it's hard to find a balance between it so that's where rubrics come in handy. (Interview 2, L- 12-18)

Lilac recognized the importance of providing useful feedback as a critical component of good assessment. In an online conversation with a classmate about feedback, she wrote that by giving feedback to the students “not only can the instructor guide the individual student, but can redirect or correct students when they may make a generalization that is not true or incorrectly perceive an aspect of a text they all read” (DB Module 5.2, L- 24-26). She also thought that “the gentle nudging of the instructor during discussions can be tricky, you don't want to discourage students from stating opinions, but you also want to make sure students are on track” (DB Module 5.2, L- 27-29). She argued that “this requires finesse, presence and off-line connections to students when needed” (DB Module 5.2, L- 29).

Lilac believed that peer feedback is “helpful” too, though she recognized that some people do not like it, because they do not want feedback from their peers and want it from the teacher.

In another discussion board Lilac stated that teachers should create the opportunity for students to give feedback to their instructors “on the learning path” (DB Module 8, L- 18). She herself had used this strategy in her traditional classes because “sometimes it's hard to tell if they are really getting something out of the task or they are just performing activities because they have to” (DB Module 8, L- 18-21). She contended that this allows teachers to know where they need to improve. She further said, “I have

used surveys more in the middle of a course to see if participants are getting what they need. I found using the survey in the beginning of the class to be useful” (DB Module 8, L- 28-29).

10. Seeing the Use of Digital Technologies as a Tool Rather Than a Goal in Itself

Lilac acknowledged that technology has significant affordances to offer for students' learning. Therefore, as an online teacher she would take full advantage of all the benefits technology can offer for designing her courses in a way that leverages specific tools, and even involve her students in creating and curating digital resources and materials. Lilac contended that the use of technology was something where she needed to improve and it was indeed one of her reasons to take the course.

Lilac considered web 2.0 tools to be beneficial for her students, as she believed that:

Using the web 2.0 tools is a great way to increase the learning opportunities because you have multiple formats the students could use. So you could do a wiki and allow students to co-create a document that could be used beyond the course. (Interview 1, L-170-173)

Lilac would like to use videos for her online classes. According to Lilac, creating videos together or individually would allow her students to have more insights into things, because videos allow us to communicate a lot of things. Google docs can be used as “a tool for creating a note catcher” and students can collaborate in creating documents on theories and other things (Interview 1, L- 178-179). She brought the example of one such document on theories she and her classmates created in one of the courses at Warner School, which she ended up using as a valuable resource for herself.

In regards to the importance of being knowledgeable about digital resources as a future online teacher, Lilac said:

I feel like my teaching style is such that I would be asking students to bring those ideas up in class and letting them bring their knowledge to the classroom so I do feel like I have to have some knowledge of the tools. I feel like they're going to know a lot more about them than I will so I'm probably going to learn more about them. (Interview 1, L- 95-99)

Lilac recognized her “weakness” in creating and curating online materials for students, although she considered it extremely important (Interview 1, L- 131). She saw creating and curating materials more as a collaborative process and believed that her students could share materials too and “help curate the materials” for her (Interview 1, L- 138).

Lilac shared that she enjoyed learning about “new technological devices and applications” (Interview 1, L- 309) especially when she is “learning it with someone else” as well as when she has to create or design activities and courses (Interview 1, L- 311). However, she also said, “It doesn't mean I stay on top of it” (Interview 1, L- 310). Yet she also recognized that if she does not “continuously learn” she would not know the current developments and opportunities available for her (Interview 1, L- 312-313). She stated:

I know I can't know everything, but I do think it's important, because it's going to continue to change constantly and this is the way our world works right now, everything is co, co- collaborating, co-constructing cooperating, co-producing, co everything. (Interview 1, L- 314-318)

Additional Aspects of the Kind of Online Teacher Lilac Wanted to be

In this section I will discuss some of the other aspects of the kind of online teacher Lilac aspired to be besides the ten components explicitly targeted by the course.

Professional Components of Teaching. Lilac aspired to be an online teacher who would be a life-long learner, would collaborate with colleagues, and would have some impact on the policy making.

Lilac considered herself “definitely a lifelong learner” (Interview 1, L- 335). Lilac felt that she needed to continue her own education so that she could “be abreast of the latest research and the most prevalent technological resources that are available” (F.R. L- 115-116). She believed she would need to read a lot to have the up-to-date knowledge of research and find texts with which she could connect. She contended, “To be an effective teacher, I will have to be a good student” (F.R. L- 116-117) and she decided to get a doctorate degree “because I like to learn” (Interview 1, L- 337). She also stated:

In order for me to keep myself engaged in my work because I get bored after I do the same things over and over again I put pressure on myself; [I tell myself, it's] time to learn something new, let's give this a new look. (Interview 1, L- 337-340)

Lilac believed collaboration with colleagues would be important for her as an online teacher and she had even already developed a collaborative system for herself. One of her colleagues from another university was her “accountability partner” and they sat and wrote together two days a week, they shared their work, critiqued each other's work to “support one another” (Interview 1, L- 112-116) She said, “We do help each other tremendously through that” (Interview 1, L- 117). Lilac also contended:

In the perfect program, design collaboration would be such a natural part of the purpose of the program. So there's a group of us working in teaching and curriculum for example, the goals are so explicitly stated that we're all working towards them anyway, and everyone is on the same page. (Interview 1, L- 148-152)

Lilac stated that what motivated her to get enrolled in an EdD program even after she had become “an instructional coach,” was the belief that she would be able to have “more impact on decision making and curriculum and program design from that spot” (Interview 1, L- 341-343). However, from working at the district level as a coach for five years, she realized, “The people that did get to make those decisions were administrators. You can come to the table but if you don’t have power over the money you don’t have power in the budget making process you have no power” (Interview 1, L- 344-346). This made her think what else she could do, and realized that she could teach teachers. She contended,

I have a lot of experience behind me, I have seen a lot of great things that don’t work and I’ve seen a lot of things that do and I felt like this could be a way for me to advance some things. (Interview 1, L- 348-350)

Field-Specific Considerations. Being a professional development (PD) provider influenced Lilac’s views of the kind of online teacher she aspired to be. She held the view that online education could offer greater convenience and access to teachers who are willing to pursue professional development, although she also recognized that there are other challenges that need to be addressed as well.

First of all, Lilac recognized that being a professional development provider and coach is “different than being a classroom teacher, it’s a lot different” (Interview 1, L- 54-55). From the perspective of a teacher trainer, Lilac thought “convenience” is one of the biggest advantages of online teaching, because it offers “a better chance for professional development” (Interview 1, L- 18). She believed more teachers would participate in professional development if it is offered online because the teachers are

busy teaching, taking care of family and they become exhausted at the end of the day.

Therefore, it becomes easier for them if the PD is done online. Lilac said it was also more convenient for her than teaching face-to-face.

Lilac also recognized that convenience is not enough to ensure teachers' participations in PD. She reported, "In our district teachers are just really bogged down with tasks and work so getting them to show up to a PD" is hard (Interview 1, L- 580-581). She mentioned that sometimes a lot of people sign up for a PD classes but do not show up at the end "because they don't receive any type of credit usually" (Interview 1, L- 586-587). One can only expect one third of the people who sign up for PD classes to show up. She said that is why it is crucial to offer something that is "relevant to their teaching and they can implement tomorrow, and their students are going to enjoy it is key" (Interview 1, L- 592-593).

Acknowledged Changes in Views on Online Teaching and Online Teachers

It is evident that Lilac experienced significant changes in her perceptions about online teaching and learning (OTL) as a result of the course. She acknowledged this in her final reflection:

When I began the course, my expectations were that I was going to have to muddle through layers of learning activities in an isolated fashion and learn how to design a module independently. When I read through the syllabus, I was a little nervous about designing a module because I couldn't fathom how to go about it and that is why I wanted to take this class. I was very surprised that the process is the same for planning in-person goals and objectives. The main difference is the learning activities and basically, I think you have many more options when teaching online because you have the entire web to draw from. Using the OTL Planning Template provided a systematic process that allowed for you to plan for everything and I think I was pretty thorough in planning my individual module. That was very exciting to me. As I watched Blackboard be populated with each of my folders, I felt very successful. (F.R. L- 178-187)

Lilac contended that because she had taught both face-to-face and online classes, she had “some questions and some personal goals” that she wanted to “accomplish as a result of the course” but she realized that she “had no idea of the variety of tools and there’s just an endless number of ways that you can design learning activities that will meet everyone’s needs” (Interview 1, L- 356-359). As an example, she mentioned that before taking the class she did not realize how important it is to communicate learning goals and objectives clearly. She also discussed how she integrated the things she learned from this course in her own course that she taught at an Upstate New York university, where she incorporated clear directions and put the expectations upfront “about how to access certain things” so that it would become less challenging for the students in the beginning of the semester (Interview 1, L- 367). She said:

Immediately after the course, I taught in the fall I did use Zoom and I also used I think I did use a wiki for co-constructing something ... I also did that with a district PD last summer and that one was also co-constructed using Google Docs ... I was hoping to do was to incorporate ways that we could get a little bit more face-to-face, I did offer that we get together in person for the course that I taught in the fall but people did not want to do that and I was okay with that, but I just wanted to make sure the options were on the table for them. My goal was just to give people a feeling, a sense that we had a class community, so I definitely feel that that was helpful, our course was helpful in guiding me in creating that. (Interview 2, L- 281-293)

Lilac mentioned that before taking EDE 484, she had taught a course fully online where she “struggled with the isolation of not having those face-to-face opportunities” with her students (Interview 1, L- 375). She thought that only in face-to-face meetings teachers “can make some very quick informal assessments of students’ knowledge” (Interview 1, L- 376-377) and that her students would not communicate with her in an online setting when they felt they “weren’t getting everything they needed” (Interview 1,

L- 387). However, after taking the course she “realized there are other ways to get that information so especially with the web tools that really was the jewel of the course, learning how to use those and bring them into the class into your online course design” (Interview 1, L- 388-391).

Impacts of the Course Activities on Lilac's Identity Development

In this section I will discuss how different learning experiences in the course impacted Lilac's identity development as an online teacher, so as to address my second research question: *How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?* I will first talk about the impacts of participation (both as an online learner and as an online teacher) on Lilac's identity development as a certain type of online teacher, and then I will talk about the effects of recognition by self and by others on her identity development. I will also discuss some other factors that influenced her identity development.

Overall Impact of the Course

From what I have reported so far, it is evident that Lilac's perceptions about online education changed significantly as a result of her experience in the course and her views on best teaching practices also changed in a more general sense. She reported to have benefitted from reviewing online course in the beginning of the semester, writing the weekly reflections, participating in the discussion boards, participating in the Group and Individual projects. She learned new things while participating in the module created by another group where she was a learner, for example, she enjoyed creating and posting a video as a part of the module. She also enjoyed writing the final reflection in the course

which helped her to put all the ideas together. From the synchronous sessions she learned how to stay “focused and directed” while enacting similar sessions in her future classes and she decided to include multiple Zoom sessions in her future classes. In the following sections I will discuss more specifically different course activities and Lilac’s “participation” in those and the “recognition” she received and how those impacted the kind of online teacher Lilac wanted to be.

Participation: Experience as an Online Learner

In her journals, as well as in the interviews, Lilac reflected on her experience as a learner in the course. She spoke explicitly about several aspects of the course that she experienced as a learner and their implications for her as a future online teacher.

In response to a fellow student on a discussion board, Lilac shared her views on her experience as a learner in the course in the beginning of the semester, saying:

The sequence of doing a pre-assessment followed by reviewing sample modules is an effective way to build student success early on. In addition to that, I noticed through my own metacognitive learning process that once I saw multiple samples, I felt like the goal of creating one was accomplishable. I also got some good ideas from looking at multiple aspects of modules. For example, providing multi-modal opportunities for involvement and the production through learning activities allows for engagement in the learning and with other students. (DB Module 3.3, L- 102-108)

Lilac wrote in one of the journals that she thought “the time spent on building background knowledge” before they started working on their own projects was “an effective approach” (W.J.2, L- 73-74). Further, in the first interview she discussed how she benefitted from the “background building” in the beginning of the semester where they had to learn about learning theories, motivation and learning styles. This was helpful for her to understand what her students “might need in coming into the course in terms of

keeping them engaged, and what to look for, what signs to look for” (Interview 1, L- 413-415).

Lilac also commented on the use of multiple media to convey content in the course, and how as a result she realized that “using a variety of media formats to convey content” provided “differentiation of learning styles” for the students in the course (W.J.2, L- 74-75). She added:

Including a PowerPoint with audio and the same with notes is going the extra mile for those who need both audio and visual media formats for optimal retention! Multiple perspectives were represented in the compilation of literature/research articles on learning theory and motivation. (W.J.2 L- 76-78)

From her experience as a student in EDE 484, Lilac realized that “the instructors were checking in often ... in multiple ways;” she found this useful, because whenever she or others had questions, they could ask those promptly and those used to be answered quickly too (Interview 1, L- 529-531). She mentioned a specific experience where the instructor “answered it so that everyone could see the answer” to learn from it (Interview 1, L- 537). She also realized being available and accessible to students is a very important thing for online classes, because it “helps decrease that sense of isolation that students can feel when they’re working independently” (Interview 1, L- 541-542).

The Group Project confirmed for Lilac the importance of developing some “group practices and rules” (Interview 1, L- 426), or what she refers to elsewhere as “a protocol.” She believed this is important because people come from different cultures and some people prefer to work individually, and they might find it difficult to work with others and share their work with others. Lilac mentioned how non-cooperation and miscommunication among members in a group project can be frustrating as she reported:

I do get frustrated in group projects when I feel like people are not able to contribute equally, and I also get frustrated in group projects when people are not cooperative and they want to hold onto things and not flex a little bit for the sake of moving forward. That to me is extremely frustrating with group work, but overall the concept of group work is very valuable to me. (Interview 2, L- 134-139)

Lilac also stated that she benefitted greatly in this course “from being able to see and evaluate the work of my peers” (F.R. L- 206). As a result, in her future teaching she would put effort “to develop a ‘practice’ of having students share work” (F.R. L- 207-208).

In one of her journals, Lilac talked about the use of quizzes as a tool for demonstrating learning, she said- “the quizzes were helpful in providing a purpose for reading and for focusing on content that the facilitator wishes students to retain” and after taking the first quiz she was “better focused” for the second one (W.J.2, L- 82-84).

In a discussion board Lilac reflected on her experiences of attending the asynchronous and synchronous online sessions in the course, concluding that the course “had a nice balance of asynchronous and synchronous sessions” (DB Module 8, L- 106). She enjoyed the “synchronous online sessions the most” because those were “highly focused and directed” (DB Module 8, L- 107-108). Based on these experiences she further wrote:

As I plan my online class for the fall, I will build in the opportunity for at least one in-person, and at least 5 Zoom class meetings as well as having students do some form of a group project so that they can feel more connected to the course. (DB Module 8, L- 108-110)

Similarly, her own experiences in the course demonstrated to Lilac the value of reflections, and led her to the decision to include weekly reflections in her next online

course although she chose not to include a final reflection. She explained her decision as follows:

In the content of the class that I was teaching, they learned so many theories about second language acquisition, and since it's like one of the first courses they take they really needed to have some way to record that. My experience in the previous semester when I taught it a lot of students didn't really seem to have enough of that internalized because they would have to fill in a graphic organizer at the end of the course because there was a pre-assessment as well as a post assessment on different learning theories and who different strategies were attributed to, they didn't do so good on that the first time. So I thought okay I need to create something that they need to record and internalize the ideas as they go along so it won't be so hard to find everything in the course. (Interview 1, L-492-501)

Participation: Experience as an Online Teacher

As a result of participating in the two course projects Lilac gained confidence in her ability as an online teacher, while also coming to a better appreciation of practices such as identifying learning goals, deciding the learning activities, providing clear instructions, collaborating with colleagues, using templates, and adopting backward design methods. She also recognized how the experiences in the Group Project helped her in designing her Individual Project.

Experience in the Group Project. Lilac reflected on how their group worked together for the Group Project and what she learned from the experience. She said it was not difficult for them to identify learning goals and decide on learning activities. They over planned in the beginning, but later sorted it all out. She stated that she “felt grateful for having members that have strong knowledge on identifying learning objectives and planning instructional activities that correlated easily with the tool we had chosen” (W.J.5, L- 252- 254). Together the group “worked hard to design solid activities that

were aligned with our goals and objectives” (W.J.5, L- 256-247). This experience allowed her to learn about deciding goals and corresponding learning activities, and allowed her to see the value of collaboration.

In the second interview, Lilac identified providing clear direction as one of the problems in one part of their Group Project which she thought they could have improved. As a result, she now recognized that providing “valuable directions, comprehensible direction is critical” in the context of online teaching (Interview 2, L- 79).

Lilac also discussed in the same interview how the collaborative aspect of the Group Project had significant implications for her as an aspiring online teacher, how she learned things from her group members and how the collaboration helped them create a better product. She stated:

I think it was great to have collaborators to help co-teach because really, especially in the design aspect, personally I work really well with others.... I find that my own thinking can grow when I hear someone else speak because that helps me think of other ideas or perspectives. So I really love the collaborative aspect of learning and teaching for that reason. I think we learned a lot from each other. There were skills that I had and others didn't and vice-versa. So that made the process of teaching enjoyable and I would recommend if there's any way to co-teach a course it's an amazing experience ... it also would help make the weight of the course a little bit less because you have someone who can divide the aspects of the course of and share in the course load. (Interview 2, L- 90-100)

Lilac also mentioned the value of the Group Project as a stepping stone towards her Individual Project. She said, “Again I'll just emphasize that it [the group project] really did provide a scaffold for starting the next project on our own, that was the big thing, the scaffolding” (Interview 2, L- 142-144).

The successful “participation” in the task of teaching the group online module gave Lilac confidence as an aspiring online teacher. She contended, “I felt celebratory

when our classmates were able to complete the tasks without any issue” (Interview 2, L- 76-77).

Experience in the Individual Project: While discussing her experiences as an online teacher in the Individual Project, Lilac also reflected on how she was able to apply what she learned in the entire course in planning and designing her own individual module.

Lilac appreciated the opportunity to design the individual module using the planning template introduced in the course. She found the template useful because its format forced her to “dissect” the learning goals to make sure she was “tiering instruction in a way that promotes success on the part of the students” (F.R. L- 57-58). She also said that “using the OTL Planning Template provided a systematic process” that enabled her to plan for everything and allowed her to be thorough in designing her module (F.R. L- 184-185). This *experience as an online teacher* contributed to her growing confidence as an online teacher as she reported being very excited about her final product: “As I watched Blackboard be populated with each of my folders, I felt very successful” (F.R. L- 186-187)

Lilac also reported that the Individual Project helped her more fully to realize the value of backward design. Using backward design and working in the project enabled her to “stay focused” on what she wanted her PD students “to be able to do when they were finished taking that professional learning” (Interview 1, L- 456- 457). She contended that “having a design framework and also knowing upfront a few tools” was helpful for her (Interview 1, L- 457- 458).

After completing the Individual Project, Lilac felt prepared to teach online courses and apply what she learned in the course. In fact, she did so in a PD she taught the following semester, as she reported in her first interview:

I actually used that exact template to design that co-teaching and collaboration PD that I did mine on, I created that whole online professional learning for my school district this summer. So I transferred that whole thing except I had to change it so it would fit our format. (Interview 1, L- 185-189)

Comparing the two projects and talking about the sequence of doing the Group Project first and then the Individual Project, Lilac said:

I think starting with the group project was really helpful because a lot of the work we did in that was transferrable to the project we did on our own; even if I didn't use the same exact activities, the theoretical framework behind each activity was there. So it was definitely more intensive to do it on your own, but we also did peer editing too which was helpful for those individual projects. We each had a peer to help us with that project ... and we pushed each other on our thinking. (Interview 2, L- 114-119)

She further reflected on how the experience of participating in the Group Project and learning things from her peers prepared her for the Individual Project:

I would just say that because I learned some tools in that first group project that I felt like a different teacher going into the individual project that I was going into the project before I started the course and I had done an online course. So I felt that I had more familiarity with options and I had a few new tools in the toolbox so to speak. (Interview 2, L- 123-127)

Opportunities for Recognition

The course created several opportunities for Lilac to receive recognition by self in the form of reflections in the weekly journals and final reflection, and recognition by others through discussion boards and journals and others assignments. In this section I will discuss the recognition she received throughout the course and its impact on her identity development.

Recognition by Self. Lilac made good use of the opportunities created in the course to recognize herself as an aspiring online teacher through reflections. She also commented on how this helped her become the kind of online teacher she wanted to be.

Lilac mentioned in an interview that the personal reflections in the course were “really helpful” (Interview 1, L- 478). Her journals helped her to “summarize” the learnings of each module for herself, and it helped her “internalize a lot of things” (Interview 1, L- 489). Lilac also said that she enjoyed writing the final reflection, as it helped her to put all her ideas together.

The quotes reported in the previous pages from journals and discussion boards show the depth of her reflections, and how she used these assignments to make sense of what she was learning in the course towards building a strong understanding of the kind of online teacher she wanted to be. The following journal entry is another example:

I will be planning online PDs for my district and because I know in my professional learning environment, people do not read things thoroughly; I will need to "show" more than write more for them to read. If I can keep module homepages clean with the bare minimum, I think my audience will experience more enjoyment and success in completing them. (W.J.1, L- 21-24)

Recognition by Others. It is evident from what Lilac reported in the discussion boards and in the interviews that the recognition she received from her teacher as well as her peers in the forms of comments and feedback impacted the kind of online teacher she wanted to be. She also talked about the differences in the recognition she received from her teacher and her peers.

The following quote is a good example of how Lilac got recognition from one of her peers as an online teacher in a blackboard discussion board:

I like your statement of cognitive apprenticeship. Instructor can scaffold and promote students' learning under the guidance and modeling. I also love what you said, "student develop trust in the teacher when they sense that the teacher has faith in their ability to learn the content." It is true that teacher and students should trust each other in order to keep a positive cycle. Students would like to be more interactive and motivated if they trust their instructor. Thanks for sharing. (Peony to Lilac, DB 5.2, L- 258-264)

Here are two examples of the kind of recognition Lilac received from her teacher as an aspiring online teacher:

Lilac, you said "While you can't control every student's perception of the class and its educational value" and I find this to be quite true. As an instructor there is only so much control you have over the students and their personal motivation. All you can do is try your best! Weaving student interests into content and assessment can help. I'll share an example tomorrow in class. I like your checklist here. Very important points. Keep adding to this list as we go! (W.J.2, L- 101-106)

"Lilac - Nice analysis and breakdown of this module. It's obvious that you use this information in your daily life!" (W.J.2, L- 141-142).

Lilac contended that in addition to concrete benefits like helping to see where to improve and to create better products, peers can support the process of someone's development by also providing emotional support. She said,

I might just need a cheerleader right now in this point of the process. I can almost guarantee that my partner is going to be my cheerleader, you know, and if I look through something, my gut is going to tell me something if I'm really off and once I get past that point where okay my cheerleader helped me get to this point but I still know there's a flaw here then it's time for me to consult with the teacher. (Interview 2, L- 214-219)

Lilac recognized how the feedback she and her group members received on the Group Project created an opportunity for them to see where to improve and thus contributed to their development as aspiring online teachers. About the feedback they received in their Group Project, she wrote in a discussion board, "I did appreciate some

of the comments our 'students' gave last week in providing feedback on our module. I think we could improve for sure" (DB Module 8, L- 248-250). She further said in the second interview, "After our classmates participated in our online modules getting the feedback from them on what we did well, on strength and weaknesses on the module was really helpful. Overall I think the reviews were very positive" (Interview 2, L-49-51).

Lilac also discussed the difference between the feedback and recognition she received from her teacher and from her peers, while she also acknowledged, "I definitely think both are important" (Interview 2, L- 212). She said in the second interview,

This might sound shallow of me but I think that no matter how well you plan a course, the only person that can truly know what you're looking for because you're grading them is that teacher, that professor. You can give examples and until somebody goes through the process they're not totally clear until they negotiate that feedback, editing feedback, editing, revising process. So the only way you truly know you're hitting the mark is through the teacher. In the meantime, you know, students can help guide each other but they're guiding from their own interpretation. It is what it is, you know. (Interview 2, L- 203-210)

Other Factors that Affected Lilac's Identity Development

Lilac acknowledged the impact that the course readings had on her views about OTL. She referred to several reading texts from the course to reflect on those and to connect those to her practices. She also talked about how the negativity surrounding online education impacted her identity as an aspiring online teacher.

Lilac stated that out of all the readings in the course she found the learning theories to be "most valuable" (Interview 1, L- 511-512). She said that though she already knew about the learning theories, reading them again was a good "refresher" and in several cases "they were extended" and she got to learn new as well as "current" things

(Interview 1, L- 519-521). Below are two illustrations of how she drew implications from the readings for herself thinking about teaching:

Universal Design or Understanding by Design. I mean we read a lot of great stuff and this past semester I also extended some reading with James Gee which was really cool and really helped cement my understanding of constructivism and so I feel like those two things are essential if there were no other readings than those two. How do you get students to collaborate and produce things together and even before that point how are you going to design that learning so that they end up, or hitting the end goal of being able to learn how to produce whatever it is you want to produce, so, being clear on your objectives. (Interview 2, L- 236-244)

I had some training with understanding by design back in 2000 when I was working on my Masters, I used it throughout my career, but coming back and looking at it again in the context of the course was really valuable. Then, as I mentioned already, we talked about motivation, we talked about it in our class, we talked about learning theory, we talked about collaboration, we talked about a lot of things, but what stands out to me were just what I said, motivating students and helping them participate in the learning process as an empowered learner and not just a receptive learner, not just sitting there waiting to be fed everything, you know. And in terms of being both an online teacher and an online learner you have to be very self-directed, you have to be able to determine what I don't have. As a learner I need to know what am I not getting here and what do I need to do to make sure that I do get it. It's either am I going to reach out to a classmate or am I going to reach out to the professor. (Interview 2, L- 248-261)

Lilac also commented in one of her journals that she found the readings on motivation and learning to be "very interesting" (W.J.2, L- 48). She stated that in her professional life "education theory drives everything" (W.J.2, L- 49). However, she does not "necessarily consciously think about various learning theories" when she plans "units for children or for professional development" (W.J.2, L- 49-51). Therefore, she said:

My background as an educator placed me in the ZPD in that I was able to draw on my background knowledge of multiple learning theories allowed me to quickly refresh my memory while adding new ways to apply theories to motivating students in an online learning experience. (W.J.2 L- 59-62)

Talking about the negativity surrounding online education, Lilac shared how her own views were prejudiced, as revealed by her reaction when a friend told her she got enrolled at University of Phoenix for some online courses:

I remember when she told me about it I was surprised first of all that she was doing it ... I remember my own prejudice against it, thinking oh I don't know how good that education is going to be and what will she be able to get, what kind of job would she be able to get with that degree. (Interview 1, L- 629-632)

Lilac said when online education was first introduced very few universities offered it and "in order for it to be recognized it had to come from some very high status university" (Interview 1, L- 616-617). She took a course on Technical Writing at Syracuse University, which was asynchronous online since Zoom was not available at that time. She found the course to be "valuable" for her, however, she heard people saying bad things about it and she thought even in 2009 or 2010 online did not have "that great of a reputation" (Interview 1, L- 621). She contended:

Since now our kids have grown up with technology and have had those experiences and love learning online, I think they are going to bring the value, the perceived value of online teaching and learning up with it. They have no problem learning online, they think it's better if anything. (Interview 1, L- 621-625)

Summary

Lilac, a veteran teacher and current PD provider with some prior experiences of taking and teaching online courses, experienced some significant changes in her perceptions and developed a better understanding of the kind of online teacher she wanted to be. Lilac considered herself a life-long learner who wanted to collaborate with her colleagues as a professional.

Lilac went into the class thinking that she would experience a few learning activities in an “isolated” manner, and she was nervous about the two projects. But later, she was astonished to discover that planning the goals and objectives of an online course was “the same” as face-to-face courses. She contended it depends on people’s preferences whether they go for online or face-to-face education.

Lilac wanted to be an online teacher who builds a learning community by ensuring teacher’s presence which can be achieved by having synchronous sessions, offering in person meeting options, calling and emailing students regularly, creating opportunities for students to use tools like google docs, Padlet, google hangout etc. To increase students’ engagement and motivation, she would like to include engaging, interactive and enjoyable activities in her online courses. She would promote deep learning by eliciting her students’ prior knowledge, and by using an inquiry approach. Lilac would also like to promote collaborative learning by leveraging technology to create opportunities for her students to share their works, having “accountability partners,” and providing useful guidelines and conveying clear expectations about collaborative work. For assessment, Lilac would offer multiple assessment opportunities and she would allow her students to bring their own assessment ideas; and she would also use peer assessment and peer editing as well as discussion boards. She wanted to be an online teacher who designs her lessons following a backward design approach by first deciding on the goals and then designs the learning activities for enabling students to achieve those goals. She would utilize specific strategies such as making expectations clear, providing background reading, using protocols for group works, creating

opportunities for the students to synthesize their learning. In terms of the use of technology, as an online teacher Lilac would involve her students to create and curate digital sources and she would use different Web 2.0 tools. She would like to continue her own learning about technology where she thought she needed to grow.

As an aspiring online teacher in her specific field, Lilac recognized the convenience online education offers for professional development, which can be done after work hours.

Lilac's experiences as an online learner and as an online teacher in the course were very influential in helping her identify the kind of online teacher she aspired to be, as well as helped her develop valuable skills and best practices.

Lilac made very good use of the opportunities provided by the journals, discussion boards and final reflection to reflect on her experiences in the course and draw implications for the kind of online teacher she wanted to be. The course readings also contributed "recognition from the field," as she was able to use theories and research to make sense of her own experiences as an online learner and online teacher. Additional recognition for the kind of online teacher Lilac aspired to be was provided by the comments and feedback offered by her teacher and other participants in the course.

In her first interview, Lilac discussed some challenges that she anticipated she might be facing in future as an online teacher. These included, balancing the work load, finding ways to get students to know each other, and getting her adult students to read emails regularly so that they do not miss synchronous sessions.

Chapter 6: Cross-Case Analysis

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I reported on the case study of each of my seven participants – representing all but one of the students who took the section of EDE 484 that I studied.

In this chapter, I will report the key findings of my cross-case analysis to answer the two research questions for this dissertation study:

Research Question 1: What kind of online teacher did each participant aspire to be at the end of the course, and how did it differ from where they started?

Research Question 2: How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?

For each research question, I will identify key findings, report on related findings in the literature, support them with evidence from the individual cases, and finally have a brief discussion of the contribution of those findings to the literature. I will discuss the implications for the preparation of future online teachers in the final chapter of this dissertation.

Cross-Case Findings Related to Research Question 1

A. For all the participants, their online teacher identity was an integral part of their overall teacher identity - not a distinct identity

Connections with the Literature. There is consensus among scholars studying identity theory that identity is “multifarious” and multiple identities are interconnected (Danielewicz, 2001; Han 2017; Luehmann, 2007; Soreide 2006). However, most of the

empirical studies I reviewed in Chapter 3 studied the development of an online teaching identity somewhat in isolation.

Some of the studies reported in Chapter 3 discussed how experienced teachers resisted online teaching/ teacher identity, as they felt that learning to teach online only made them *become a novice teachers again* – and they were uncomfortable with that feeling (Baxter, 2012; Johnson, Ehrlich, Watts-Taffe & Williams, 2014). Richardson and Alsup's (2015) study also reported deconstruction and rebuilding of traditional teacher identity in the case of their participants. In contrast, Hurst (2014), in her self-study of the process of learning to be an online teacher, reported that she did not have to change as a teacher because of switching from face-to-face to online mode of delivery, because she thought teaching online was still teaching for her and she learned what to transfer from her face-to-face class to her online class and how.

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. In answering the question *what kind of online teacher the participants wanted to be*, one of the most significant findings of my study is, the participants did not look at their online teacher identity as completely separate from their traditional teacher identity. Being a traditional or an online teacher was not dichotomous to them; rather, they saw face-to-face versus online learning as complementary to each other, so their aspiration was to be the best teacher they could be in both modes. They did not see any significant difference between being an online or face-to-face teacher, though they recognized the importance of receiving specialized trainings, and deciding on what learning activities could be accomplished best online versus face-to-face. Ren expressed this belief very explicitly in his second interview

saying “being organized and being supportive and providing materials and being available for students” these are basics to “successful” teaching in general, irrespective of the mode of delivery or kind of course (Ren - Interview 2, L- 211-214).

Lupin too, did not think that any of the two modes was better than the other; in fact, he did not see any difference between the kind of online or face-to-face teacher he wanted to be. He believed that both traditional and online modes of instruction could appeal to different learning styles, and he also thought that the delivery method of a class should depend on “the focus and learning goals” of a class.

Another participant, Lilac, expressed a similar belief that in both online and face-to-face contexts while planning the courses “you will have to ultimately determine the goals of learning and what you want students to be able to do by the end of your course” (Lilac - W.J. L- 132-133). She thought that whether someone goes for online or face-to-face teaching depends on “personal preference” (Lilac - Interview 1, L- 609), but ultimately online courses can be equally effective in terms of teaching and learning because the “things that you take into consideration in teaching are exactly the same” in both of the contexts (Lilac - Interview 1, L- 606-607).

Iris shared her opinion that there was no significant difference between the kind of online teacher and face-to-face teacher she wanted to be. Based on her experience the only difference she could think of was that online teaching calls for much more details “compared to the face-to-face lessons” (Iris - F.R. L- 81-82). She contended that “whether it be traditional, or whether it be online, we are going for the ultimate goal, ultimate student learning, student achievement” (Iris - Interview 1, L- 480-481). From

taking the course she realized whether she teaches face-to-face or online she can “still make a difference” and she is responsible for students’ learning (Iris - Interview 1, L- 484-485).

Peony recognized the similarities between the two modes of teaching and thought that the “instructional approach” of teaching both an online and a face-to-face class was the same. She thought “OTL practices can not only be applied in online environment, but also can be used in face-to-face teaching” (Peony - F.R. L- 167-168). She contended that the theories she learned in the course about OTL would help her to motivate her face-to-face students as well. Peony also thought that what works and does not work in the two modes of teaching (F2F and online) depends on how the issues of “the course goals” and “what students are expected” to do are addressed “when designing instruction” (Peony - F.R. L- 152-153). She concluded, “The choice to use one over the other depends on student, instructor, and school needs and interests, and the appropriateness of course content for the format” (Peony - F.R. L-153-155).

Laurel did not talk directly about whether she saw any difference between the kind of online and face-to-face teacher she wanted to be. However, she indirectly answered this question by saying that she thought online could be used as an additional means of learning together with traditional classes especially in a large classroom.

Tulip also thought that the “pedagogies are the same” for both online and face-to-face classes, although the “goals” might be somewhat different in an online class.

From these considerations, it is clear that all the participants of my study considered themselves teachers first, and they thought that learning to teach online was

one more tool to become the teachers they wanted to be. The two identities could not be really separated.

Discussion. Seeing online teacher identity as a component of teacher identity, rather than a separate identity, is consistent with the tenet that identity is “multifarious” and multiple identities as interconnected (Danielewicz, 2001; Han 2017; Luehmann, 2007; Soreide 2006), and mirrors the findings reported in Hurst (2014), as mentioned earlier.

Seeing online teacher identity as a component of teacher identity helps explain the surprising finding in my study that even the participants with more than ten years of teaching experience did not show the tensions mentioned in the literature about experienced teachers fighting *becoming a novice teacher again* (Baxter, 2012; Johnson, Ehrlich, Watts-Taffe & Williams, 2014). Rather, since they were already familiar with learning and teaching theories and best practices in traditional classroom settings, they felt relieved as they realized that all those principles and practices continued to hold in an online setting. They thought that their knowledge about the two modes of teaching would just complement each other, and in fact, several of the participants mentioned that what they learned in the course to become an online teacher would enrich their face-to-face teaching as well.

B. There was need for “repair work” for several of the participants.

Connections with the Literature. Gee (2000-2001) and Luehmann (2007) discussed the need for “repair work” whenever someone is asked to take on an identity that may conflict with their previous beliefs and/or is not the “norm.” Luehmann (2007)

in particular discussed how prior experiences as a learner in traditional transmission oriented science courses may negatively affect the development of a reform-minded science teacher identity. None of the empirical studies discussed in Chapter 3, however, explicitly mentioned the need for “repair work” related to the teachers they studied.

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. Several of the participants of my study (Lupin, Peony, Laurel, Ren and Tulip) had bad prior experiences with online learning which contributed to their negative perceptions about online education. They came to the class with some doubts, confusions and expectations that needed to be addressed in the course, which fit the description of what Gee and Luehmann referred to as needing “repair work” as part of their identity work. The course offered the needed “repair work” as evident in the participants’ report that their overall experience in the course allowed them to recognize affordances of online learning they were not aware of before.

Based on her prior experiences in online courses, Peony thought online education was “boring” and it was not effective (Peony - F.R. L-147). Tulip shared similar experiences and feelings. Ren questioned the effectiveness of online counseling courses as a result of a previous experience where he felt the students and the teacher were not interacting. Lupin described his previous online course as “sub-par” (Lupin - Interview 1, L-435). Laurel talked about how her previous online experiences as a student made her question whether giving good feedback online was possible.

It is interesting to note, though, that even Iris, who had never taken an online course before EDE 484, came to the course with pre-conceived notions and significant

doubts about the effectiveness of online classes – which came from how colleagues talked about their experiences with online education.

As evident in all the individual case studies reported in Chapter 5, and well-illustrated by the selection of quotes reported below, all the participants experienced a turn-around in their perceptions about the affordances of online learning as a result of the course:

“Online teaching could be the same like the face-to-face” (Tulip - Interview 1, L- 322).

“There is no evidence that one [modality] is better than another ... they are just two different types of teaching, and both has its strengths and limitations” (Peony - F.R. L- 150-151).

Peony not only recognized that online education could have the same “result” or impact as the face-to-face, but also went on to say, “online teaching can be even more effective than face-to-face class” because it had advantages of technology and web resources (Peony - Interview 1, L- 286-288).

Several participants (Lupin, Laurel, Peony) explicitly stated that their perspectives about online teaching changed because of their experiences in the course – the way the course was designed, the way the instructions were given clearly and step by step and the way the community of learning was created – all contributed to their changes of perceptions.

Ren recognized the importance of his experience in the course to counteract previous negative experiences as an online learner, as he had said in his first interview: “I think people teach how they were taught and I don’t necessarily know that people want to

get outside of a comfort zone and try to explore different pedagogical methods” (Ren - Interview 1, L- 70-72).

Discussion. The participants came to EDE 484 with prior experiences as online learners that were quite different from the kind of online teaching the course promoted – hence, they were in a position similar to what Luehmann (2007) described for the pre-service science teachers she was working with, who had only experienced a transmission approach and now were introduced to teaching science through inquiry. Therefore, there was a clear need for “repair work” – and indeed the course was designed to address this need by providing with opportunities for them to *try new identities through specific activities*. This included first of all initial *experiences as online learners* that would challenge their preconceptions of what online learning may look like and open up new possibilities about how to use online spaces and technologies to support student learning. *Experiences as online teachers* like the Group and Individual Projects were also purposefully designed to motivate the participants to “put effort” in participating in the activities, and created opportunities for experiencing “success” (Luehmann, 2007, p. 831) – for example, by having an authentic audience for the online module they created for their Group Project, and by putting in place complementary ways to support their work (as discussed in more detail in a later finding). The repair work impacted the participants’ identity in a positive way, as evidenced from the findings. Several participants mentioned that they started to look at the course as a model for them and the teacher as a model for them as well, that their perspectives changed significantly and most of them

acknowledged that these changes resulted from their overall positive experiences in the course.

Several of the empirical studies I reviewed also talked about how people had negative ideas regarding online education, thus showing there was a need for intervention, none of those studies discussed this in terms of Gee's conception of "repair work" – so, I believe my study can offer concrete ideas about what can be done to successfully counter negative perceptions of online teaching as part of the participants' identity development work.

C. At the beginning, some participants were concerned about whether they could have the kind of close relationship with students that they valued, but by the end of the course this concern was resolved.

Connections with the Literature. A similar concern about the kind of relationships that could be established in online courses was mentioned in several of the empirical studies that I reviewed. A participant in Johnson, Ehrlich, Watts-Taffe and Williams' study (2014) thought online learning created distance between teachers and students; the authors reported that she lacked technology skills to overcome the distance. Participants in Baxter's (2012) study were also concerned about making their online presence felt, and proposed the use of online avatars to make connections with the students. Hurst (2015) also shared that she had concerns regarding building relationship with her students and having "social interactions" in her online class – although she reported that her perceptions changed from her experience as she was able to develop strategies to connect with her students online.

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. At the beginning of the course, many participants of my study had concerns that online classes would be isolating, and that they would not be able to build relationships with their students or help build a relationship among the students. By the end of course, this concern was fully resolved for most of the students, and significantly diminished for the rest – although some participants still preferred hybrid online to fully online courses, as they thought the mixed format would allow them to better develop relationships with their students and build a strong learning community. Their own experiences as learners in this hybrid online course seemed to have most affected this outcome.

Iris had concerns in the beginning of the course regarding how to have bonding with her learners. She was also not sure if trust could be built between the learners and teacher in an online class. But by the end of the semester this concern was resolved for her because she realized that online created affordances for “socialization and building an online community” (Iris - F.R. L- 5-6) and she identified specific practices by which she could create a relation of trust with her students – including tailoring the course according to the needs of the students, by being available, by showing compassion.

Laurel also had some concerns regarding building connections with her students, but by the end of the course she found ways to build relationship with her students, for example, she would create “introductory videos” and assign students to create videos as well.

Peony had concerns regarding connecting with students and building relationship with them since in an online class students do not get to meet their teachers. However,

she also learned about ways to build a relationship with her students – by creating opportunities for dialogues, by posting personal introductions, by sending quick emails regularly and by being supportive. She thought that the “teacher’s pedagogies are the keys to build connection” (Peony - DB Module 5.2, L- 142) and that lecturing does not help build a relationship, rather having a collaborative and situated learning approach can help build relationship between teachers and students and between students to students.

For Ren, it was crucial to create a learning community and build a caring relationship with his students and he was not sure before coming to the class if this was possible in an online class or if he would be able to communicate well with his students. But at the end of the course, this concern was resolved for him as well because he learned about strategies to make it happen. He thought that teachers needed to be “intentional” and should give effort for building relationship with students in an online context. He wanted to build relationship with his students by ensuring his presence, by being “empathetic and aware” and by interacting with them. He would use tools like introductory video of himself for this purpose. He wanted to be relatable, and genuine to build relationship with his students.

It was essential for Tulip to “build a close relationship” with her students in order to be the teacher she aspired to be, especially for online classes (Interview 1, L- 80). She also thought in the beginning that it was challenging to build a relationship with students, because she had concerns if she could trust her online teachers. She thought for teenaged students, it might be difficult to trust her as an online teacher. She believed online teachers might also have difficulty in trusting their students. Therefore, she contended a

hybrid course might be ideal for her where she would get to meet her students sometimes. By asking for students' feedback on the class, by being open to students' ideas and by giving time, she believed she could build close relationship with her students.

Lupin said he wanted to pursue teaching because he loved to connect with students in face-to-face meetings which brought him "excitement and energy" and he thought he would miss this in an online context (Lupin - F.R. L- 19-20). However, this was resolved for him by the end of the course, as he recognized that "online teaching does offer opportunities for deep learning but in some different ways than in traditional classrooms' (Lupin - F.R. L- 26-27).

Lilac did not share specifically if building relationship with her students was a concern for her in the beginning of the class. But she did recognize that building close relationship with students in an online class is challenging and she also learned strategies to face the challenge which is discussed in her case.

Discussion. My findings are consistent with the findings of other empirical studies in that they show building a rapport with students as a key element of teacher identity for most people, as well as the concern about whether that can be achieved online. Unlike other empirical studies, though, which did not involve an intervention, my study suggested that novice online teachers can overcome this concern by identifying tools and strategies to create effective interaction and communication with students. Once again, experiencing the power of specific tools and strategies as online learners in the course went a long way to develop this new awareness and to change their perspectives.

D. At the beginning, most participants were concerned about the effectiveness of online courses, but by the end of the course this concern was resolved for all participants.

Connections with the Literature. From the studies I reviewed, Hurst (2015) initially did not want to teach online because she thought it could not be effective, but this concern got resolved for her after teaching her first online course when she realized that she could still achieve her learning goals and she received positive feedback from her students for her effective teaching. In Johnson, Ehrlich, Watts-Taffe and Williams' (2014) study one participant had negative ideas about the effectiveness of online education and agreed to teach online reluctantly; the authors reported that "Although her attitude toward technology and teaching methodology seemed to remain the same, there was some evidence of a shift from fear to comfort in teaching in the online environment" (Johnson, Ehrlich, Watts-Taffe & Williams, 2014, p. 46).

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. Several of the participants of my study came to the class with significant doubt regarding the effectiveness of online education, in most cases because of their prior bad experiences with online courses. Their own experiences as learners in this hybrid online course, as well as specific readings, however, changed their perception.

Iris, who had no prior experience of online education yet came to the class thinking that online could not be effective, resolved her concerns after designing and teaching successfully an online module as part of her Group Project. After this experience

she stated that she now realized that online classes could be effective, and they “could have the same results” (Iris - Interview 2, L- 68).

Laurel had some not so good prior experience of online learning but did not really doubt the effectiveness of online education, and the course also changed her perspectives as she contended by the end of the course - “I came to believe or to reinforce my belief that for some people online works maybe better than face-to-face” (Laurel - Interview 1, L- 192-194).

Lupin also had some negative perceptions about online education because of his prior bad experience of online learning. But by the end of the course he realized that “theories and principles that promote effective teaching and learning transcend delivery mode” (Lupin - W.J.1, L- 43-44), which means he contended that online could be equally effective.

In the first weekly journal, Peony wrote, “At first I doubted the effectiveness of teaching online because my previous online learning experience didn’t go very well” (Peony - W.J.1, L- 4-5). However, taking the course made her feel that “online teaching can also satisfy students’ need or it has the same result as...face-to-face classes” (Peony - Interview 1, L- 284-286). In fact, she concluded, “online teaching can be even more effective than face-to-face class because online teaching has many advantages” of technology and online resources (Peony - Interview 1, L- 286-288).

Ren also had doubts about the effectiveness of online education because of his bad prior online learning experience, he “did not think it was a great option” (Ren -

Interview 1, L-16). By the end of the course his view changed to a positive one and he realized that online education could be equally effective.

Because of her prior experience of taking three online courses in China before coming to the class, Tulip thought online had “lower effectiveness” (Tulip, Intro post). She also thought that “face-to-face was more effective” (Tulip - Interview 1, L- 321). She reported at the end of the course that her perceptions changed to a positive one which was an impact of her overall experience in the course. She concluded, “online teaching could be the same like the face-to-face one” (Interview 1, L- 322).

Discussion. My findings are consistent with those reported in Hurst (2015) with respect to changing initial negative perceptions about the effectiveness of online courses. Most of my participants had previous negative experiences with online classes which made them believe that online instruction could not be as effective as face-to-face, but their experiences in the course significantly changed this perspective for everyone. For some of the participants, like Hurst, it was their successful experience as online teachers in the Group Project that brought about this realization; for others, it was their own positive experiences as online learners in the course. It is important to note an important difference between my study and Hurst's study who did not attend a course or experience an intervention – she studied herself as an online teacher as she was assigned to teach an online course after being a traditional teacher for years.

E. At the beginning, several participants were concerned about their ability to master the technology needed to be a good online teacher, but by the end of the

course all participants recognized that only a minimum of technological skills was needed to be the kind of online teachers they aspired to be.

Connections with the Literature. Some of the literature I reviewed discussed how the participants had fear of technology and were concerned about engaging in online teaching because they believed it would require them to have great command over technology. For example, in Johnson, Ehrlich, Watts-Taffe and Williams' study (2014) a participant lacked technology skills and thought negatively about online teaching, and another felt that technology was a barrier for her to be an effective online teacher, and she started to question her competence as a teacher although she had been a successful F2F teacher for over 20 years. Another study by Thanaraj (2016) reported how one of the participants felt challenged because from being an expert face-to-face teacher with authority in her subject area she had to become someone whose limited technological skills made it challenging for her to teach online; another participant felt that online teaching required "knowledge and skills" beyond content knowledge (p. 45).

Comas-quinn (2011) reported that the training sessions she studied were more focused on the use of technologies and did not support the teachers to "reconsider their professional identities as teachers" in an online setting (p. 25). One of the reasons why the training focused more on technology might be because of the perception that online education means being experts in technology use.

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. One of the most significant findings of my study is that the participants thought that knowledge of technology and digital resources was important but it was not the most important thing for success in online

teaching; rather, they argued that content and pedagogic knowledge was more important. Most of the participants ranked the use of technology less than highest in the pre-interview survey. The participants recognized that knowledge of technology, especially for creating and curating digital resources, was important for an online teacher as it could enhance students' learning, and some of them (Iris, Lilac, Peony) even stated that they needed to improve their knowledge of technology, but none of them expressed any fear of technology as opposed to the findings of some of the studies discussed in the literature review. None of them thought that technology was too big a challenge for them to be the kind of online teacher they wanted to be. Rather, all of them – novice and experienced teachers alike – were enthusiastic about learning new technological advances. Lilac, Iris, Laurel and Ren specifically mentioned that it was important to have up to date knowledge of technology because technology changes every day.

Some of the participants of my study shared some concerns related to technology in the beginning of the semester, however, by the end of the semester they expressed their comfort, and Iris, Lupin and Lilac mentioned that they learned about some important digital resources and technology from the course. They thought that it is important to identify what digital resources are available for their students and what kind of access they have to support their learning better. Laurel clearly stated her view that creating and curating great online learning materials “is not quite of primary importance” (Laurel - Interview 1, L-125), since there are already numerous materials available in the web and she would like to use those first. Lilac would like to involve her students in the process of creating and curating online and digital resources.

Another participant Lupin, thought that technology could contribute to make him the online teacher he aspired to be, however, he also said that he was not sure if “it’s an absolute necessity for as much as some of those other pieces” (identified in the pre-interview survey) (Lupin - Interview 1, L- 117-118). He thought that technology should be used “wisely” and intentionally, and a teacher must not allow technology to rule over instructional decisions. He contended that an online teacher could “still create that constructivist approach” without the help of technology (Interview 1, L- 118-119). He held the view that even though technology was critical for online teaching, teachers could “get by without” technology, but if the teachers did not know the content it would be “hard to get by without that” (Interview 1, L-133-134). Lupin also stated, “I was pleased to see how intuitive and easy to use most of the online tools were but regardless, building content, activities, and assessments is time consuming” (F.R.L- 151-153).

Similarly, Peony also said that “I think compared to the content, technology is less important” and teachers should emphasize more on content (Interview 1, L-81).

In the beginning of the semester Ren discussed learning about technology among the challenges that he anticipated he would face as an online teacher, but as the semester progressed, his views on technology changed. He found strategies to counteract those challenges. He also believed that it is important to be “thoughtful” about the use of technology and not to use technology just because one has the knowledge of them. Like Lupin and Peony, at the end of the course, Ren also came to believe that teachers did not have to be technology experts or programmers to become effective online teachers.

The participants of the study acknowledged that technology could make global resources available, connect people world-wide, make classes interesting and add value to learning but they did not think it was the most important aspect of online teaching or that a lack of technology knowledge could pose too big a challenge for them to be the kind of online teachers they wanted to be. They also discussed some of the technology challenges across the world like access to online education, speed and privacy – which are more difficult to deal with.

Discussion. Technology concerns and a feeling of inadequacy stemming from it were mentioned in several of the empirical studies I reviewed – and these concerns were not always resolved for the participants in those studies. While most of my participants shared similar concerns at the beginning of the course, by the end of the course they did not feel technology was the most important part of online teaching and whatever concerns they had regarding technology was resolved by the end of the semester. The participants in my study also recognized that being online teachers, they would also be life-long learners and since technology changes, they would keep on learning too.

This finding seem also to support Comas-quinn's (2011) recommendation that the preparation of online teachers should focus less on providing technology training and more on supporting the teachers to reconsider their professional identities.

F. By the end of the course, all participants developed a much greater appreciation for the value of collaboration with other teachers, which became part of their identity as a professional.

Connections with the Literature. As mentioned earlier, identity theory suggests that people hold several identities at the same time – and those identities will likely influence each other. However, none of the studies I reviewed talked specifically about *being a collaborative teacher* as a component of the teacher identity they studied.

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. All participants of my study identified their Group Project as a transformative experience, highlighting the benefits of working as a team on designing online instruction. This experience made them realize the value of working collaboratively with other teachers in designing instruction – something they had not experienced before, but that became part of the kind of teacher they wanted to be.

The participants talked about how working in collaboration with others in the Group Project made them feel less stressed and reduced their anxiety. For example, Tulip said she felt less anxious because of working in the group; she also felt that because they all divided the risk, she felt less pressured. She also said that the diverse background of the group members helped her learn many things from them.

Ren said that though he typically hated group work, he recognized the benefits of collaboration from this course, and he said his experience was “different” in this course. He reported how collaboration with others benefitted him from the distributed expertise and by sharing responsibilities within the group, as well as from the exchange of ideas. He contended, “When you’re building an online course you should absolutely be talking to people throughout that entire process and just getting different perspectives” (Ren - Interview 1, L- 450-452).

Iris' experiences in the course taught her to value the practices of collaborating with her peers and colleagues to share "ideas" with and receive "feedback," and she would use those to revise and re-design her lessons (Iris - Interview 1, L-181-184). She wrote in her final paper, "I believe the most valuable affordances of online learning are socialization and building an online community" (Iris - F.R. L- 5-6). She decided to include collaborative work in her future classes.

Laurel also discussed how she benefitted from collaborating with others in the Group Project where they divided the work based on each team member's expertise. She appreciated the opportunity of uplifting each other, combining the members' efforts which she thought was motivating. Having the opportunity to have someone else's opinion on the tasks was beneficial for her which resulted from the collaborative efforts.

Lilac liked working in groups because she said that she worked well with others. She appreciated the opportunity to work with people who had "strong knowledge" to work on the different aspects of the Group Project. She thought that collaborative works offer us the opportunity to share "ideas or perspectives," and to learn from each other, to learn skills that one does not know. She also thought that collaboration makes "teaching enjoyable" (Lilac- Interview 2, L- 96).

Lupin's experience in the group project made him realize the importance of collaboration when designing and teaching an online course. Collaboration made the Group Project "a lot of fun" for him because the members had "different strengths" that added to the experience (Lupin - Interview 1, L- 252-253). He recognized "the benefit of multiple perspectives" afforded by collaborative works ((Lupin - Interview 1, L- 290). He

also thought that the collaboration resulted in a “better” product. Regarding their collaboration in the group he stated, “We’ve received some really positive feedback about the video ... I’m proud of our ability to work as a team to get it done in the face of some adversity” (Lupin - W.J.5, L- 150-153).

Peony said that collaboration in the Group Project allowed her the opportunity to talk to others, whereas, the Individual Project made her feel “less confident” because of being alone (Peony - Interview 1, L- 406). This experience made her decide to collaborate with “more experienced teachers” in future and learn from them about “effective ways of teaching” (Peony- Interview 1, L- 413-415). She appreciated the opportunity to learn from others when collaborating and said that she felt she was “under pressure” when she worked alone in the Individual Project.

In sum, all the participants valued the Group Project and developed a new found appreciation for collaboration as a result. Realizing the value of what they learned from each other in the Group Project and how that improved their product led them to express a desire to collaborate with their colleagues in designing instruction in future – something that was certainly not part of the kind of teachers they aspired to be before they started the course.

Discussion. This finding represents an interesting example of how the identity as online teachers developed in the course impacted the participants’ professional identity more generally – thus providing additional evidence that identities are “multifarious” and interact with each other.

G. The participants expressed their preference for teaching hybrid online courses.

Connections with the Literature. None of the empirical studies I reviewed addressed this issue – which is not surprising given that their participants were mostly teaching fully online courses.

Findings from Cross-Case Analysis. While the course did not attempt to influence participants' preference for a modality versus another, it is interesting that most of the participants spontaneously expressed their preference for teaching hybrid online courses. As mentioned earlier, by the end of the course all participants recognized that online education could be equally effective and some of them even said that they thought it might even be more effective than the face-to-face classes. However, several of them said that they would prefer to teach a hybrid course rather than a completely online course, as they valued being able to meet the students in person at least sometimes.

For example, Iris wanted to teach hybrid online classes so that her students could meet each other face-to-face and socialize (Iris - F. R. L- 19-20). Unlike her, Peony did not say if she specifically preferred hybrid courses, however, she said that she would have hybrid classes in future if she thought face-to-face meeting might be necessary.

Lupin clearly stated that for his own field, hybrid courses offer “real potential” (Lupin - Interview 1, L- 404). Based on his experience of teaching a fully online course (which included synchronous sessions) and a hybrid course on life studies that he taught after taking EDE 484 and before his final interview, he felt that the hybrid class worked “better.”

In Ren's case, because he recognized some limitations of online spaces for the kind of activities counseling students might engage in, he thought hybrid online

counseling courses might be preferable. Although he acknowledged seeing some potential for online courses in counseling, he said it was not yet embraced by people in his field; therefore, he concluded that hybrid classes might be best in counseling, because one could “get the best of both worlds that way” (Ren - Interview 1, L- 300). He also said that he was not “totally sold that you can do a counseling session online yet” (Ren - Interview 1, L- 292).

Tulip thought building relationship with students would be easier in a hybrid class because the teacher and the students would be able to see each other sometimes which would increase the “bonding of each other,” and students would get to “experience different learning methods” (Tulip - F.R. L- 35-38). She thought some of the things she wanted to achieve as an online teacher can be done in a hybrid class situation. After taking the course, she felt that she was capable of teaching a “fully online class;” however, she would prefer to teach a hybrid online course because it was still new to her and to the students she would teach in China.

Discussion. My participants' preference for hybrid online courses is not surprising, as it is a logical consequence of their appreciation for the unique and complementary affordances of online and face-to-face instructional contexts reported in previous sections. Another reason why the participants preferred to teach hybrid classes might be – their experience in this well-designed hybrid course had impacted their perceptions positively. It is possible that they just wanted to replicate the course in future.

Regardless of its reason, this finding has significant implications for online teaching – as teachers' personal preferences will impact their future choices. For

example, depending on personal learning styles and preferences, a teacher may or may not teach online when there is an option to choose, and they might prefer some specific components of online teaching over others. Since few of the empirical studies on online teachers' identity development have paid attention to the distinction between teaching fully online versus hybrid online courses, I hope this finding will inspire more researchers to study these different settings.

H. By the end of the course, the kind of online teachers the participants aspired to be aligned with the ten key principles promoted in the course – although with some variations.

Connections with the Literature. The literature suggested that online teachers needed special skills and personalized trainings. As mentioned earlier, Comas-quinn (2011) cautioned against programs to prepare online teachers that focused essentially on technical training. Argument was also made for the importance of supporting the teachers in their identity development in teacher training programs (Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013). Similarly, Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) contended that “the development of a professional identity does not automatically come with experience, and that some form of deliberate action is necessary to ensure that new teachers begin their careers with the appropriate tools to negotiate” their identities (p. 767). However, none of the empirical studies I reviewed reported on specific interventions, nor did they discuss specific intervention needed to support teachers with their identity development in a professional development or teacher education context. In contrast, my study looked at identity

development in the context of an intervention that was aiming to prepare a certain kind of online teachers.

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the course I studied had the goal to create awareness and buy-in for a set of specific elements (as listed below) that taken together articulated the kind of online teachers they were trying to promote. Surprisingly, as documented in the individual case studies reported in Chapter 5, by the end of the course all the participants endorsed those elements for the kind of online teachers they aspired to be although at various levels. In some cases, the participants realized some of these components were challenging to enact in online contexts, but they still believed that those were achievable – provided one understands that those would require different practices and skills when teaching online versus face-to-face, and employs strategies that can help minimize limitations or challenges specific to online context. More specifically, by the end of the course, all participants shared the following aspirations as online teachers:

1. ***Seeing online and face-to-face learning as complementary:*** As already documented and discussed in detail as part of Finding A.
2. ***Increasing access and promoting equity and social justice by leveraging online learning:*** All the participants in the study wanted to be the kind of teachers that could promote social justice – so they all valued the affordances of online education to create opportunities for access to education for a wider number and diverse groups of people. They all identified and valued that online education has freed education from the brick buildings and has offered people time and place flexibility. For Iris, it also

offers the added potential to better support students with special needs (she had seen special need students excelling with the help of computers and technology). For the TESOL teachers, online education could have the added bonus of enabling language students interact with native speakers across the world. However, Tulip also cautioned that increased access does not depend only on what the teachers do, but also on the kind of access the teacher and the students have to specific technologies.

3. *Developing strong relationships with one's students, and student-to-student, even in*

online environments: All the participants greatly valued building relationships with their students, as well as between students to students, as they identified this as a critical element for student learning. Therefore, they wanted to be the kind of teachers who create a vibrant learning community in their classes. As already documented and discussed in the context of Finding C, at the beginning of the semester most participants showed concerns regarding the challenge of creating an interactive learning community online, but this concern was resolved by the end of the course.

4. *Increasing their students' motivation and engagement by leveraging online*

technology: All the participants thought that increasing students' motivation and engagement was critical for the kind of online teachers they aspired to be. They also identified many affordances of online technologies that could help achieve this outcome – including providing choices to students, using multi-media instructional materials, using diverse activities that can make learning more fun, such as videogames, and providing timely and encouraging feedback.

- 5. *Promoting deep learning by leveraging online technology:*** As aspiring online teachers, all the participants valued maximizing their students' learning. As a result of the course, however, they also seemed to have all embraced constructivist principles of learning and many of their implications in terms of teaching practices – most notably, the importance of eliciting and building upon prior knowledge, providing students with opportunities to engage as problem solvers and critical thinkers, asking open-ended questions and encouraging student inquiry. This was documented not only in what they said in their interviews or wrote online, but also in the choices they made as teachers in the online modules they designed for their Group and Individual Projects.
- 6. *Promoting collaborative learning by leveraging online technology:*** As future online teachers, and consistent with having embraced a constructivist approach, all the participants recognized how critical it is to promote collaboration among learners. From their experiences as learners in the course, they learned to value collaboration more, and learned specific strategies to create collaborative learning opportunities for their own online classes. Tools like discussion boards, Padlet and Google docs, for example, were identified by many as enabling group work and peer feedback in both online and face-to-face courses. The participants also acknowledged that collaboration was even more important as well as challenging in an online context than in face-to-face.
- 7. *Using technology to meet students' individual needs:*** While awareness of the affordances of online learning for differentiation was more varied across the

participants, all of them recognized the importance of meeting their students' individual needs and saw technology as offering some new tools to accommodate for students diverse learning styles within the same course as well as new opportunities to offer choices of courses to students.

8. *Using sound instructional design to create online modules:* The participants in the study discussed in detail how important it was for them to have a good instructional design for their classes and how they could achieve it. In the last weekly journals they all came up with their own tips on instructional design for online classes. Across the participants, they had similar strategies and steps that they valued. As part of designing effective online courses, the participants emphasized on giving clear instructional directions, using Bloom's Taxonomy, being goal driven and using backward design, making class interesting, creating a vibrant learning community, including activities to elicit prior knowledge, having multiple and various types of assessment, choosing readings carefully aligning with students interests, using journals and discussion boards, having group activities, using audio-visual media and other digital resources in delivering content and instructions, having synchronous sessions where possible, providing immediate and constructive feedback, creating relevant learning activities.

9. *Developing effective assessments and providing valuable feedback to their students by leveraging online technology:* After taking the course, as aspiring online teachers, the participants recognized even more the importance of ensuring effective assessment and providing on time feedback. There was agreement among the

participants about their desire to offer multiple assessment opportunities including both formative and summative assessment, and offering immediate and constructive feedback to help support student learning. Several participants also identified aspects of online learning and specific tools that would help them achieve those goals. Online assessments they experienced – such as online journals and discussion boards – were noted as something they would want to use in their future classes as well.

10. Seeing technology as a tool to enhance student learning, rather than a goal: As already documented and discussed in Finding E, all the participants recognized the importance of having knowledge of technology and its intentional and careful use to enhance student learning, but also subordinated this to good instructional design and best teaching practices.

Discussion. The finding that the course was indeed successful in influencing the identity development of the participants to include certain elements in the *kind of online teacher they aspired to be* can provide an important contribution to the literature, as the studies I reviewed argued for the importance of supporting identity development in teacher training programs but did not provide examples.

I. For some participants, their professional identity (as a TESOL teacher, special education teacher, counselor, instructional coach) impacted the kind of online teachers they wanted to be.

Connections with the Literature. As mentioned earlier, many scholars in identity theory had pointed out that identity is “multifarious” and multiple identities are interconnected (Danielewicz, 2001; Han 2017; Luehmann, 2007; Soreide 2006). An

implication of this tenet is that different identities that people already have might sometimes impact the development of a new identity in a positive or negative way. Interestingly, though, I did not find empirical evidence of how the participants' other professional identities might have impacted the development of an online teacher identity – as most studies did not identify the specific fields each of their participants belonged to, and in some cases the researchers studied a specific population, as for example, Soriede's (2006) study involved only elementary teachers, Han (2017) studied Korean English language teachers, and Luehmann and Tinelli (2008) studied school teachers teaching science.

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. There was evidence in the individual cases reported in Chapter 5 that the participants' field of specialization within teaching had some impact on the kind of online teacher they wanted to be. The impacts were more evident in some fields than the others. For example, this was especially important for Ren, as he felt that his field of counseling does not offer much scope for online teaching, yet he saw the potential for it – so, he wanted to advocate for online teaching learning in his field.

It was evident that Iris' field of special education had significant impacts on her online teacher identity; she saw online education as something that could offer important opportunities for special education. She thought many students with special needs like technology and they should be given the opportunity to benefit from it. From her experience, she shared that she had met many students with special needs that were “really good with technology ... for some reason they're not afraid, they don't have

inhibitions about it, they get on there and it doesn't take very long for them to pick up" (Iris - Interview 2, L- 176-178). She also provided examples of special education students she had known who did well with the use of technology, which in turn "builds their confidence" (Iris - Interview 2, L- 190). As a special education teacher, diversity and inclusion are high priorities for Iris, so she would like to support her students – as well as future online teachers – to develop respect for "differences and to embrace diversity" (Iris - F.R. L- 16-17).

Lilac's identity as an online teacher was affected by her role as an instructional coach and professional development provider. Lilac contended that since the teachers participate in PD after their work, online offers them more access because of time and place flexibility. In fact, she believed that OTL offers "a better chance for professional development" (Lilac - Interview 1, L- 18).

Lupin said that in his field of human development it is critical for people to share their "perspectives" and discuss "theories of development" (Lupin - Interview 1, L- 391). Though in the beginning of the semester he thought this dialogue would not be possible in an online class, after taking the class he realized that it is possible to ensure dialogues in an online class. However, he would like to add some synchronous zoom sessions because of some "immediacy of sharing perspectives and making connections" (Lupin - Interview 1, L- 401). Like some other participants of the study, Lupin also thought that in his field hybrid courses have significant potentials in terms of online education.

Tulip, an aspiring English language teacher originally thought that it might be challenging to teach skills like "speaking" online, but after taking the course she realized

that using Zoom sessions could help address this goal. She thought that online education offers the affordance of connecting and communicating with people world-wide and accessing digital resources in her field of language teaching – something she greatly valued as a language teacher. She saw online education as providing new opportunities to interact with native speakers of English which would enable authentic learning for her students. Therefore, as a TESOL teacher Tulip would like to promote online education in her country China. Similar considerations were expressed by the other TESOL teachers in the group.

In some cases, being an international student also affected how a participant thought about the realities of putting their aspirations as an online teacher into practice. Laurel, Tulip and Peony all mentioned unique constraints created by what technology might be available in their countries, as well as perceptions about the quality of online learning, teaching contexts and expectations that might be specific to their culture.

Discussion. The cases reported in Chapter 5 are clear evidence that each participants' field – and the professional identity that came with it – contributed to the development of their online teacher identity. Their specialization influenced what aspects of teaching were most important for them – and, therefore, how they valued and would make use of specific affordances of online technology, as well as influence their priorities as a future online teacher. As the interplay between online teacher identity and identity related to one's field of specialization has not been explicitly studied so far, this finding invites researchers to pay more explicit attention to this aspect of teacher identity development in their future research.

Cross-Case Findings Related to Research Question 2

J. The participants' *experiences as online learners* in the course were very impactful for their understanding of the kind of online teachers they wanted to be.

Connections with the Literature. This finding relates to Gee's (2000-2001) foundational concept of *participation in the activities and discourse* of the target community as a key element in developing an identity as a specific kind of person (in the context of my study- a specific kind of online teacher). Luehmann (2007) first explicitly connected this concept with the practice in teacher education of *experiences as learners* – that is, engaging prospective teachers as learners in activities that model the new teaching practices being promoted.

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. As evident in the individual case studies reported in Chapter 5, the course experiences that most influenced the participants' identity as an online teacher were their experiences as learners in the course. Their participation as learners in the class was what made them realize that online learning could be very different from what they had previously experienced or heard about. The participants also referred to the course instructor again and again as a model to be followed in future.

The participants appreciated the way the course was designed and several of them indicated that the overall design of the course and the way it was taught helped them to change their perspectives. They discussed how specific activities they participated in as learners (for example, the Group and Individual Projects) helped them to see how they

could enact similar activities themselves in their future classes. Seeing how to design and teach an online course helped them to see themselves as future online teachers.

The participants appreciated the course instructor for being available always, for being accessible, being understanding of their needs, not being judgmental, not thinking they were not “adequate” (as mentioned by Iris), being knowledgeable about the content, for eliciting their prior knowledge and being respectful for their prior knowledge. Iris mentioned more than once that if she was to teach an online course in future, she would follow the course instructor as her model and she would even replicate some of the practices adopted by the course instructor that she experienced in the class. Like her, Ren also stated that the course would “serve as a model” for him (Ren - F.R. L- 169).

Similarly, Lilac mentioned how she could feel the presence of the course teacher in the course, how she was accessible and available whenever needed which made her understand that this practice alleviated the sense of isolation among the students and she would like to follow this practice.

Discussion. This finding confirms the value of including carefully designed *experiences as online learners* in any program preparing online teachers to support their identity development – as suggested by Luehmann (2007) in the case of preparing reform-minded science teachers. This is especially important when trying to do “repair work” because of prior negative experiences that would otherwise interfere with the desired identity development.

K. The *scaffolded experiences as online teachers* in the course were also very impactful to help participants confirm the kind of online teachers they wanted to be and gave them confidence that they could be it.

Connections with the Literature. As mentioned earlier, Gee's identity theory emphasizes the importance of "participation" in professional activities as part of identity development. Luehmann (2007) applied this general principle to the importance of including *experiences as teachers* in the preparation of reform-minded science teachers; however, she also added that when promoting a teacher identity that is "against the norm," prospective and novice teachers need to be supported so as to ensure that they engage in the target practices and experience early success. She also pointed to the work of Nasir and Hand (2004) to argue that for activities to be supportive for identity development, learners need to actively participate in activities, they have to have some control over what they learn and how they participate in the learning, and learners have to be held accountable for their learning (Luehmann, 2007; Luehmann & Borasi, 2011). Luehmann and Borasi (2011) also argued that for participation to be meaningful for identity development, it is imperative that the expertise is distributed among the participants while taking part in the activity, and they receive timely formative feedback from the peers and from the instructor; and they have to have the opportunities for their work to be recognized, again by the instructor and by the peers, which they call "recognition."

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. From my preliminary analysis of the course artifacts, participants' written work in the course and interviews, it was clear that

the Group Project and Individual Projects – which were designed taking into consideration the principles identified above – provided them with unique opportunities for “participation” in the activities to design and teach online modules. Both the Group and Individual Projects were identified as very significant by all the participants for their identity development. While not everyone explicitly expressed it, the Group Project in particular seemed to be very influential in making the participants feel they could succeed as online teachers. The scaffolding provided in these experiences, including the multiple opportunities to receive feedback from the instructor and from peers, significantly contributed to this result.

It was evident from the findings that the experience as teachers was instrumental in giving confidence to all the participants in their ability to be online teachers. For example, Ren said that participating in the two projects was critical for him to have the confidence that he was able to teach online, and it also strengthened some of his beliefs about what matters most to be an effective online teacher and how to achieve those. On completing the projects he reported to have experienced a “sense of accomplishments” (Ren - Interview 2, L- 50). Laurel identified the two projects as what helped her most to see that she could be a skilled online teacher. She gained confidence and started to think that in job interviews she would be able to say that she is skilled in online teaching; she also said, “I felt ready to teach online without fear” (Laurel, personal communication, June 23, 2018). Iris also discussed how the experiences as a teacher in the Group Project made her feel that she “could do online teaching” and she could be equally effective

which caused the change in her perspectives from being a non-believer to a believer of online teaching learning (Iris - Interview 2, L- 75-78)

Talking about the Group Project, almost all of the participants mentioned how they divided their tasks among the group members based on their expertise and benefitted from it – how they learned from each other, valued and encouraged each other. The course teacher as well as their peers facilitated the scaffolding for the Group Project, whereas, they used the knowledge they gained from the course and from the Group Project in the Individual Project. The instructor provided the scaffolding for the Individual Project through feedback and support in their draft plans as well as in their weekly reflection. Each of the participants recognized the value of the overall experience which resulted in their appreciation of collaboration that has been discussed in another section of this chapter.

Completing the Individual Project independently was also important to make the participants feel that they were capable of teaching online on their own. For example, Lupin reported feeling confident – after completing his Individual Project, he felt “it came together pretty well” and that experience made him realize that he could teach online (Lupin - Interview 1, L- 299). Though he designed just one module but he could “see how that same approach to that module could apply to a full course design,” and this made him feel that he was competent to teach online courses (Lupin - Interview 1, L- 309- 310). He felt confident that he was capable of using different theories and tools intentionally. Lilac reported that she benefitted from the opportunity to use a module planning template provided by the instructor to design the individual module, as it

allowed her to be systematic in designing her module, and she said, "I felt very successful" (Lilac - F.R. L-187).

Each of the participants acknowledged the value of doing the Group Project first and mentioned that they were able to learn things from the other group members and they utilized the knowledge and experience gained from the Group Project in completing the Individual Project. For example, Laurel mentioned that having the experience of the Group Project, she felt prepared and confident when it came to do her Individual Project; it did not "overwhelm" her because she had already had gone through the process in the Group Project. She felt that having the Group Project first and scaffolding learners through the Group Project to prepare them for the Individual Project was "a good strategy" (Laurel - Interview 2, L- 102). Peony said that in the Group Project she could learn from her group members which she thought had impacted her teaching; working in the group also allowed her to see her "strengths" as well as her "weaknesses" (Peony - Interview 2, L- 42).

Discussion. This finding shows the value not only of including *experiences as online teachers* in the preparation of novice online teachers, but also the importance of designing those experiences by following the guidelines provided by Nasir and Hand (2004) and Luehmann and Borasi (2011) to ensure that these experiences will lead to success and maximize their effects on the participants' identity development.

L. All participants made good use of the many opportunities for reflections provided in the course as "recognition by self."

Connections with the Literature. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the second factor that Gee (2000) identified as critical for identity development to take place, apart from participation, is “recognition.” Based on Gee’s definitions and descriptions, Luehmann (2007) contended that “identity work occurs in the interpretation, narration and thus recognition of that participation” (p. 828). This recognition has to come from both the self and from others. Luehmann (2007) also suggested that identities are shaped by the “interpretation of one’s participation through reflective work” because it allows for “meaningful learning” (p. 828). Luehmann and Borasi (2011) also reminded that “it is in the interpretation or recognition of that participation, by self and others, that identities are actually formed” (p. 23). Luehmann and Tinelli (2008) also argued for the opportunities for recognition of participation by “self and others” (p. 331).

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. The course purposefully included many assignments requiring reflections (weekly journals, final reflection paper and discussion boards) as a means to provide opportunities for “recognition by self.” Indeed, the participants engaged in valuable reflections that enabled them to make meaning not only of their experiences of participation – both as learners and teachers – but also of the readings assigned in the course, and by doing so to clarify their beliefs and values. Even though explicit recognition and reaffirmation of the kind of online teachers the participants aspired to be might have been rare, these reflections definitely contributed to the development of each participants’ online teacher identity – as each of the participants reflected on the kind of online activities they liked, the challenges they anticipated, the doubts and concerns they had, the practices they wanted to promote, how they understood

certain theories or other concepts, what they valued as future online teachers. In this bigger sense, these reflections in the journals or final paper worked as recognition by self.

Here are some notable examples of recognition by self from the participants' online journals:

I learned from the theories how to ask questions that will access where students are in the learning process, and how I am going to move them forward. The theories help me reflect on best practices and ways in which I can present questions to engage my learners in the learning. Reading the theories has engaged me to think of how I would assist the learner, in thinking about the lesson, from another perspective. I always want to take the students to a higher realm of learning: where they are asking the questions of inquiry and I am the facilitator. (Iris - W.J.2, L- 49-54)

As a current/future instructor, I am realizing the importance of fostering intrinsic motivation, and to explain how learning skills in a course can be applicable to any career path, even if the course isn't necessarily related to the interests of certain individuals in the course. I have appreciated the courses that I have taken that were graded on a "satisfactory/unsatisfactory" continuum. I feel that it takes away the motivation to be performance oriented, and makes the course learning focused. (Ren - W.J.2, L- 66-71)

Discussion. This finding shows that providing opportunities for reflection as a way to promote "recognition by self" can be valuable. It is worth noting that recognition by self occurred not just in the reflection on *participation activities* but it also happened as the participants connected those with readings representing theories and best practices from the field.

M. All participants made good use of the many opportunities for "recognition by others" provided in the course.

Connections with the Literature. In addition to the importance of "recognition by self," Gee (2000-2001), Luehmann and Borasi (2011) also pointed to the importance of receiving "recognition by others." Luehmann and Tinelli's (2008) study also proposed

that “Developing an identity as a reform-minded science teacher involves *participating* and *being recognized* as a competent and contributing member of a new professional discourse” (p. 324). They showed how the practice of blogging helped their participants (pre-service science teachers) receive recognition that contributed to their identity development as reform minded science teachers.

Though none of the studies I reviewed discussed how “recognition by others” impacted their participants’ identity development, however, Taylor (2017) discussed how the teacher in her study used language carefully to position the participants as teacher researchers to support their identity development. Similarly, Irwin and Hramiak’s (2010) reported that the way the teacher referred to the participants showed how she saw them; and it influenced how the participants saw themselves, contributing to their identity development.

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. The course EDE 484 was designed to provide the participants with multiple opportunities to engage in discourse about online teaching with other students in the course as well as with the instructor through discussion boards, and in-class discussions. The design of the Group and Individual Projects also included structured opportunities to receive feedback from the peers as well as the instructor. All participants actively engaged in discussion boards and received feedback and greatly valued all the input they received from both the peers and the instructor. Even though the participants themselves rarely recognized those opportunities as “recognition by others” of the kind of online teachers they wanted to be, the individual

cases reported in Chapter 5 show that these exchanges contributed to the development of their online teacher identity.

Throughout the semester, the participants recognized the participation of their peers as a specific kind of online teachers in their community of practice. They shared ideas, best practices, concerns, challenges; they encouraged each other, asked questions – all of which culminated in recognition to their peers as participants of a community of practice. In the process, in many cases the participants expressed their agreement, their likings, sometimes surprise – which also show their practices, values, choices, and decisions being validated by their peers. This in effect was recognition from the peers as specific kinds of online teachers. The following is an example of recognition from peers:

I like your point that class discussion on presenting our different approaches is a good way of connecting knowledge clusters, which can enrich students' concepts and would not feel isolated. I also agree with you that [the guest instructor] nurtured our intrinsic motivation by competency based approach. She encouraged us to find ways to calculate the area of the fish without a standard answer to improve problem solving ability which could apply in the real world. (Peony to Ren, DB Module 3.1, L 31- 36)

The following excerpt is another example of recognition from peers:

As a teacher, we need to find a way to motivate students or help them reduce the anxiety on those subjects. [The guest instructor's] fish activity is a good example of how to teach math in an interesting and fun way. During the activity, we shared our ideas with each other and we were not afraid of making mistakes. I like you said that the class paid more attention to learners' diversity. Different people from different countries were all engaged in the class and no one felt isolated. I think that would be perfect if we use this concept to our online course design. (Tulip to Iris, DB Module 3.1, L- 233-239)

Also, there were numerous discussions in the discussion boards, and there were other interactions between the instructor and the participants in the course where the instructor recognized them as online teachers in the forms of approving their works, or

sometimes challenging them to improve or sometimes by asking further questions. For an example, the teacher wrote to Ren in a weekly journal: "I personally learned a lot from your module. And found it engaging, relevant and interesting!" (W.J.6, L- 358). In another case, the course teacher wrote to Peony in a weekly journal,

It sounds like you had a great group experience - what kinds of advice would you give to the learners in YOUR course about group projects and how to succeed based on your experience? I also like your reflection about use of Zoom. Why do you think you are less motivated in Zoom than in face-to-face? And how can your peers and your instructor help you in that space? (W.J.5, L- 186-190)

The course instructor wrote in a weekly journal posted by Lupin,

Based on your experience, it sounds like one thing that you learned from the student experience was that attention to detail is extremely important - imagine a group of undergraduates in their first online class and having good, but not clear instructions. It's probably something that you will always consider in the future! (W.J.5, L- 187-190)

The design of the Group and Individual Projects included multiple opportunities for the participants to receive significant individualized feedback from the course instructor as well as from their peers. All participants greatly valued the feedback they received as a means to improve the design of their online modules, although none of them explicitly identified those as "recognition from other" of their identity. However, many stated that the feedback they received – especially from the instructor – helped them see how they could improve as an online teacher, it can be said that it had some impacts on them for the kind of online teachers they wanted to be.

Discussion: This finding supports the importance of "recognition from others" (Gee, 2000-2001; Luehmann & Borasi, 2011, Luehmann, 2007) as discussed earlier. The findings of my study show that interactions in the course through blackboard discussion

boards created opportunities for recognition from others similar to those reported in Luehmann and Tinelly (2008) – although in my case the participants only shared their online reflections within the course, rather than sharing it publicly on the web.

N. The perceived *stigma* of online teaching in one's field negatively affected some participants – although it also turned some of them into advocates!

Connections with the Literature. The literature did mention that there is negativity among people concerning online education in general, but none of the studies talked empirically and specifically about how this negativity might impact the identity development of individual participants. There was no discussion on the field specific stigma either.

Findings from the Cross-Case Analysis. Some of the participants of my study spoke elaborately on the negativity and stigma surrounding online education in general, and more specifically in their fields. It seems there is some negativity surrounding online education no matter which field the person is from, although in some fields the negativity is more prominent than in others. These negative perceptions created a challenge for some participants – almost acting as a *negative recognition* from their field. In some cases, though, this actually spurred the participants to want to take proactive roles as advocates of online teaching and learning in their fields.

Some participants spoke elaborately on the negativity and stigma surrounding online education. For example, Ren felt this strongly, as given the negativity regarding online learning prevalent in his field of counseling, there are not many opportunities for him to teach online courses. He mentioned that educators in counseling think that there is

“no place” for online education in their field, and they frown upon the use of “internet” for anything other than “research,” and some of them even hesitate to use blackboard. He said, “This stigma is essentially the idea that an online education cannot compare to that of a brick and mortar education” (Ren - F.R. L- 176-177). It was important for Ren to find validation in some of the readings in the course. His take on the negativity surrounding online was:

I think that online education has progressed to a point where there are a lot of people who think that it's nonsense and there are a lot of people in universities that think that this is the greatest thing ever. I am not sure that the negative side of it, so no knowledge of it is a bad side right and if you have the ability to transform your teaching or take a pedagogical method and present it in a different way and put that online so that more students are able to engage with that or interact with that idea or particular teaching method I don't really care about the negativity of somebody else saying that this isn't the way to go because I found that the negativity is often linked with something just like unfamiliarity or just an unwillingness to be reflective or just push yourself to learn something new. It's just this idea of we've always done it this way in the past, we haven't bothered to change it so why invest in a new tool, so I think that's just not a great way to go about teaching in general. (Ren- Interview 1, L- 564-576)

Similarly, Lupin also acknowledged the negativity surrounding online education which actually made him determined to be an advocate for online education. He shared his take on this issue in the first interview:

I get the Chronicle of Higher Education, and Inside Higher Ed I get the e-mail subscriptions to both of those and every once in a while I will see something about research finds around online courses and some of them are around the challenges of online teaching and how it can't accomplish the same things that face-to-face can and now through this experience it's funny because I take exception to those things ... I don't feel online learning gets a fair shake and I think it's largely because people may approach it similar to how I would have approached it prior to this course which is maybe uninformed and so I do think that there are some negative connotations out there still. My take is that those come from a place of really not appreciating really again the theory and best practices that can exist online and may more speak to some of these sub-par kinds

of experiences like I had prior to taking EDE484. (Lupin - Interview 1, L- 420-436)

Iris also talked about her concerns regarding how others would accept her as an online teacher both in her first interview and in her Blackboard posts. She was concerned if her colleagues would think that she was a “legitimate teacher” or would take her “seriously” (Iris - Interview 1, L- 514, 518). She said that it had some impacts on how she viewed herself – “it would make me question me as a teacher” (Interview 1, L-541). She added, “I can’t help but be affected by it because I’ve been a teacher longer than I’ve been an online person so I still go back to that world; it does impact me how my peers look at me” (Iris - Interview 1, L-557-559).

Lilac also thought that online education has less value among people. She said that people around her did not have good impressions about online even in the years 2009-2010. However, she thought that children now a days are growing up with internet and online learning and they “are going to bring the value” to online education (Lilac - Interview 1, L- 623). She believed, “they would prefer it because they have more control” (Lilac - Interview 1, L- 625-626).

Peony too had very “negative perception” about online education which she said had changed into positive one after taking the course (Peony - Interview 1, L- 540-541). Like Ren she also wanted to be an advocate for online education, “I will try my best to change others’ perceptions, especially students” (Peony - Interview 1, L- 541-542). However, she thought it would take time. She said that the way others look at online teaching learning did not impact her idea of the kind of online teacher she wanted to be.

Tulip stated that people in her country China are not that familiar with online education, online technology is not that developed there yet. She thought it would take time for the people in her country to accept online education; however, she was optimistic about it because she saw the value of online education from her experience.

Contrary to everyone else, Laurel thought online education was not “stigmatized” and she thought it depends on the teachers if they can design it well or not; if they give effort, they will be able to make online classes effective.

The participants of my study recognized the negativity and stigma surrounding online education as a challenge, but it was evident that they were not discouraged by the negativity. It was also evident that they did not think it had much impact on them as online teachers, only one of the participants mentioned to have questioned her value as an online teacher. All of them recognized that things are changing, and they also recognized the potentials of online education and their potentials as online teachers. They had gained significant confidence after attending the course. As a result, as aspiring online teachers some of them vowed to be advocates for online education to counter the negativity surrounding it.

Discussion. This finding suggests that negativity about online education in one's professional field can negatively affect a novice online teacher's identity development, and therefore, addressing this should be seriously considered when designing programs to prepare online teachers. It also suggests the value of focusing some research on it, as this challenge seems to have been ignored in the literature so far.

Chapter 7: Implications and Conclusions

Introduction

In this concluding chapter I will provide an overview of my dissertation study, summarize the key findings regarding my two research questions, discuss the contribution of my study more generally to understanding teacher identity of novice online teachers and its development, and then share some recommendations for designing and implementing professional development for preparing online teachers. I will also discuss the study rigor and limitations of my study, and directions for future research. I will conclude this chapter with my final thoughts on and take-aways from this research experience.

Overview of the Dissertation Study

The ultimate purpose of my dissertation research was to provide recommendations for designing and implementing effective courses and programs to prepare online teachers. Therefore, the overarching question motivating my study was- *How can we positively affect the identity development of novice online teachers?* To answer this question, in this study I investigated the identity development of online teachers in a higher education course designed to prepare online teachers.

Research shows that online education is growing fast; therefore, preparing competent online teachers to teach our students better has become critical. The literature on teacher identity suggests that supporting identity development also supports teachers' self-efficacy and competence (Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000). Yet a review of the literature showed that not as much research is done on programs preparing online

teachers and on the identity development of novice online teachers. Therefore, I expect that the findings from this study will help us find ways to support the identity development of online teachers in a professional development context. On a personal level, this study will also help me prepare myself to promote online education by supporting online teacher development in my own country, where online education seem to have potentials but is still in its infancy.

As a theoretical framework for this study, I chose to use identity theory as proposed by Gee (2000-2001) and explained and used by Luehmann (2007). Consistent with their definition of identity, in my study I focused on identifying *the kind of online teacher* each of my participants aspired to be and how that concept was influenced by specific experiences in the course. In particular, I was interested in exploring the opportunities for *participation* in activities and discourse about online teaching and for *recognition of that participation from self and others* (Gee, 2000-2001) offered to the participants, and how each participant utilized such opportunities.

My study context was a section of a 3 credit hybrid online course preparing online teachers offered at the Warner School of Education, attended by eight students, and where I was a Teaching Assistant. All but one of these students elected to participate in my study. They came from diverse backgrounds and various fields of specialization with various teaching experiences.

The research questions informing my dissertation research were:

Research Question #1: What kind of online teacher did each participant aspire to be at the end of the course, and how did it differ from where they started?

Research Question #2: How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?

In this qualitative study I adopted a case study approach for data collection and analysis because it would allow me to effectuate “understanding” that I expect to influence and contribute to improving “practice” (Merriam, 1998, p. 41).

The data for this study came from multiple sources: the participants' online posts and written assignments from the course, two semi structured interviews, other documents from the course and researcher memos. Utilizing these data and adopting a case study approach, I have produced individual cases for each of the seven participants (reported in Chapter 5) and a cross-case analysis (reported in Chapter 6).

Summary and Discussion of Key Findings

Research Question 1:

A. For all the participants, their online teacher identity was an integral part of their overall teacher identity – not a distinct identity.

One of the most significant findings of this study is that none of the participants looked at their online identity as separate from their teacher identity. Rather, because they saw teaching online and face-to-face as complementary to each other, being an online teacher became a part of their overall teacher identity. While they recognized that teaching online might require somewhat different practices and training, they also believed that the fundamental principles of good teaching – such as developing a good relationship with one's students, providing opportunities for deep learning, backward design, providing informative and timely feedback on students' work, just to mention a

few – cut across both modalities. And they strived to become the best teachers they could be in both online and face-to-face settings.

While this finding is consistent with the acknowledgement in the identity theory literature that identity is multifarious, it is interesting that most of the studies reported in Chapter 3 had instead tried to study online teacher identity as separate from “traditional” teacher identity, and in several cases reported a tension between the two – as for example, in the study by Baxter (2012) and Johnson, Ehrlich, Watts-Taffe and Williams (2014). In contrast, even the most experienced of my participants, who had been face-to-face teachers for over 10 years, felt that what they learned in the course to become an online teacher would enrich their face-to-face teaching as well. Based on the evidences reported in all the case narratives, it was clear that their own experiences as learners in EDE 484 – a hybrid course – as well as key readings in the course had profound effects on their perception of the complementary values of online and face-to-face teaching and learning. This also shows that the kind of training provided to novice online teachers will have powerful effects on their identity development.

B. There was need for “repair work” for several of the participants.

Five of my study participants had very negative prior experiences with online education; as a result, they had preconceived negative ideas about its effectiveness when they entered the course. The course had to offer some “repair work” for them and succeeded in doing so. Lupin, Peony, Laurel, Ren and Tulip all discussed in detail their prior experiences and how the course impacted changes in their perceptions.

This finding is consistent with the identity theory proposed by Gee (2000-2001) and advocated by Luehmann (2007) that discussed the need for repair work for developing a new identity, especially if that identity is *against the norm*. The course was trying to prepare online teachers with specific mindsets and skills which were different from their initial perception of what a typical online teacher should be like; therefore, the participants needed to be supported with what Gee called “repair work,” and the course was designed to offer such experiences.

C. At the beginning, some participants were concerned about whether they could have the kind of close relationship with students that they valued, but by the end of the course this concern was resolved.

As they entered the course, most of the participants expressed their concerns about building close relationship with their students in an online class, since face-to-face meetings would be missing. But the data showed that their experiences in the course led all participants to realize that building close relationship with students is possible in online courses. They learned strategies and techniques to build relationship with their students in an online context. However, some participants still preferred a hybrid format as they felt that some face-to-face time would help them build relationships with students and create a learning community.

Some of the studies I reviewed also reported similar concerns among their participants, which got resolved for some but not for others. Therefore, it is worth looking into what this course did to achieve this result for all participants.

D. At the beginning, most participants were concerned about the effectiveness of online courses, but by the end of the course this concern was resolved for all participants.

Most of the participants entered the course with significant doubts about the effectiveness of online education, which resulted from their prior negative experiences with online classes. All of them reported to have experienced a positive change of perspective in this regard and started to believe that online education could be equally effective; one participant even said that she thought online education could be more effective than face-to-face. This change seemed to have been achieved as a result of their overall experiences as learners in the course, as well as from reading texts that reinforced their beliefs.

A few studies in the reviewed literature also reported negative perceptions about the effectiveness of online education among their participants, which resolved eventually.

E. At the beginning, several participants were concerned about their ability to master the technology needed to be a good online teacher, but by the end of the course all participants recognized that only a minimum of technology skills was needed to be the kind of online teachers they aspired to be.

This is one of the major findings of my study. The participants came to the class with concerns related to the use of technology and the adequacy of their knowledge and skills related to technology, but by the end of the course they all reported to have realized that though technological skill is important for online classes, content and pedagogical knowledge, combined with best teaching practices are even more important for online

classes to be successful. They consistently ranked technology skill less than the other items mentioned in the list during the pre-interview survey. Some of them thought that they needed to acquire more technology skills, but they did not show any fear of technology and wanted to keep learning. They did not consider technology skills to be a big challenge for them to be the kind of online teachers they aspired to be.

On the contrary, some of the studies in the literature I reviewed (Johnson, Ehrlich, Watts-Taffe & Williams, 2014; Thanaraj, 2016) reported their participants to have fear of technology; some of those participants thought they needed to be experts in technology to become online teachers, some others thought that technology was the biggest obstacle for them to become successful online teachers. Even an experienced face-to-face teacher started to doubt her competence as a teacher because of her lack of technology skills, and another person also found it challenging to teach effectively because of lack of technology knowledge. One study (Thanaraj, 2016) reported that one of the participants thought online teaching required more than content knowledge. There was just one participant in another study (Johnson, Ehrlich, Watts-Taffe & Williams, 2014) whose good technology skills made her feel competent. This indicates that the approach taken in this course had a significant impact and we should learn to address this common impediment.

F. By the end of the course, all participants developed a much greater appreciation for the value of collaborating with other teachers, which became part of their identity as a professional.

This is another interesting and surprising finding of my study. All the participants developed greater appreciation for collaboration among colleagues which became a part of their professional identity. The Group Project experience mainly caused this result. Each participant talked highly of their experience in the Group Project, where they learned from the group members, appreciated the value of distributed expertise, felt more ready to take risks and appreciated dividing responsibilities among the members. They said they were able to create better products because of the collaboration and the support they received. As a result, they said, in the future they would like to collaborate with their colleagues when they design online courses since they thought it would allow them to have better ideas and better perspectives.

The studies I reviewed did not explicitly involve collaborative experiences, therefore, did not discuss *being collaborative* as a part of the participants' identity development as online teachers.

G. The participants expressed their preference for teaching hybrid online courses.

All the participants of my study reported to have a preference for hybrid online courses. While teachers might not always be able to choose the type of online courses they would teach, their preferences might have significant implications. Although all the participants of my study reported their belief that online courses could be equally effective as face-to-face courses, they expressed their inclination towards teaching hybrid online courses. For some of the participants it was because of their personal style of teaching, for others it was because they thought a hybrid course would allow them to benefit from the unique affordances of both online and face-to-face learning by allowing

them to choose the best modality depending on the content and goal. This preference for hybrid courses might also have been influenced by the fact that they experienced a well-designed hybrid online course which they reported to have impacted them significantly in shaping the kind of online teachers they wanted to be, and to have become their model for future online teaching.

The studies I reviewed did not discuss any issues related to the participants' preference of a hybrid online course over a fully online one, as the participants in those studies only worked in fully online contexts.

H. By the end of the course, the kind of online teachers the participants aspired to be aligned with the ten key principles promoted in the course – although with some variations.

The course aimed at creating a specific type of online teachers, and the participants seemed to have achieved at various levels all the key components of being effective online teachers the course wanted them to achieve. This helped them to understand the kind of online teachers they wanted to be, how to enact the best practices, the challenges to enact those, and strategies to counter the challenges. It is evident that all the participants internalized to a significant extent the key components of being effective online teachers the course had implicitly set as targets:

1. Recognizing the complementary value of online and face-to-face learning
2. Using online learning to increase access and promoting equity and social justice
3. Developing relationships with one's online students, and student-to-student

4. Increasing students' motivation and engagement by leveraging digital resources and tools
5. Promoting deep learning leveraging digital resources and tools
6. Promoting collaborative learning by leveraging digital resources and tools
7. Using technology to meet students' individual needs
8. Using good instructional design to design online instructional units
9. Developing effective assessments and providing valuable feedback to their students by leveraging digital resources and tools
10. Seeing technology as a tool to enhance students' learning, not as the goal.

None of the studies I reviewed in chapter 3 studied identity development in the context of an intervention; therefore, this study represents a new contribution to the literature.

I. For some participants, their professional identity (as a TESOL teacher, special education teacher, counselor, instructional coach) impacted the kind of online teachers they wanted to be.

Another important finding of my study is that the participants' identities as a counselor, special education teacher, TESOL teacher and others seem to have impacted the kind of online teachers they wanted to be. They had concerns and considerations related to their fields which they felt needed to be taken into account for becoming the kind of online teachers they aspired to be. For Ren, not having enough opportunities to teach online in his field of counseling brought challenges to implement the things he wanted to achieve as an online teacher; therefore, he decided to be an advocate for online

education in his field. For Iris, a special education teacher, it was especially important to leverage the affordances of online learning for students with special needs. Instructional coach Lilac especially valued the flexibility that online professional development offerings would provide to working teachers, and therefore she was willing to learn how to teach online even though her personal preference continued to be face-to-face teaching. In his field of human development, Lupin thought a hybrid course would be more beneficial to ensure the opportunity for sharing perspectives immediately on complex theories. Tulip, a TESOL teacher, saw synchronous Zoom sessions to be useful for teaching speaking and she also thought online courses would create opportunity for her students to connect with native English speakers globally. The participants with an international background also shared concerns specific to their country's situation about technology availability, as well as pre-conceived notions among people about the effectiveness of online education, class size, settings, cultural expectations which also impact the kind of online teachers they wanted to be and the kind of practices they could enact.

This finding is consistent with the idea of identity being multifarious (Danielewicz, 2001; Han 2017; Luehmann, 2007; Soreide 2006). Identity theory suggests that existing identities might impact individual's new identity development in a positive or negative way. However, none of the studies I reviewed addressed or discussed the implications of the fields of the participants in their identity development.

Research Question 2

J. The participants' *experiences as online learners* in the course were very impactful for their understanding of the kind of online teachers they wanted to be.

The opportunities created in the course for having *experiences as online learners* impacted the identity development of the participants most significantly. As stated by one of the participants, Ren, teachers teach the way “they were taught,” so the learning experiences in the course created a lasting impact on the participants' understanding of the kind of online teachers they wanted to be. Each of the participants explicitly mentioned their appreciation for the course design and implementation, as well as the course teacher; and they mentioned that they would like to use the course and the teacher as their models for teaching online in future. They also contrasted their past bad online learning experiences with the current one and shared that they now had a better idea of what online courses should look like.

This finding confirms Luehmann's (2007) claim that *experiences as learners* are an important form of “participation” towards developing a teacher identity and an important complement to more obvious forms of participation involving teaching. My study context was unique and no other studies that I reviewed reported the impacts of *experiences as learners* on the online teacher identity development of the participants.

K. The *scaffolded experiences as online teachers* in the course were also very impactful to help participants confirm the kind of online teachers they wanted to be and gave them confidence that they could be it.

The course created opportunities for *scaffolded experiences as online teachers* in the group as well as Individual Projects. In the Group Project they worked in teams to design and teach a module to their classmates, in the Individual Project (which followed the Group Project) they instead just designed (but did not implement) their own online module for a topic and audience of their choice. In the Group Project they received scaffolding from their teacher as well as from their group members; in the Individual Project they only received feedback from a thinking partner and from their teacher. These experiences allowed them to experience success, and the participants reported to have gained confidence and felt accomplished; they felt they were capable of teaching online. They recognized that the two projects allowed them to put into practice what they had learned throughout the course and acknowledged the value of doing the Group Project first.

This finding confirms the important role Gee (2000-2001) and Luehmann and Borasi's (2011) concept of participation plays on identity development. Luehmann and Borasi, referring to the work of Nasir and Hand (2004) also contended that participation activities might be especially conducive to identity work if they included distribution of expertise and receiving meaningful feedback, which was indeed the case in the Group Project.

L. All participants made good use of the many opportunities for reflections provided in the course as “recognition by self.”

My study shows that the participants engaged in reflections throughout the course because of the opportunities created in the weekly journals and final reflections. They

reflected on their experiences, their practices, on what worked and what did not, thus making sense of their *participation experiences* in the course. They also reflected on the course readings, which were chosen to invite the participants to make connections between the theories and best practices reported by experts in the field as well as their experiences – thus engaging in *professional discourse*. These critical reflections helped them make meaning out of their experiences and make sense of the kind of online teachers they wanted to be. Though none of the participants talked about the reflections as a means for self-recognition, and though they did not specifically say “this is the kind of online teacher I want to be,” the reflections indeed provided them with rich opportunities for “recognition by self” as they started to see themselves as a specific kind of online teachers.

This finding supports Gee’s (2000-2001) concept of “recognition by self” described in Luehmann (2007) and Luehmann and Borasi (2011) and how it can contribute to teachers’ identity development – as discussed in detail earlier in chapters 2 and 6.

M. All participants made good use of the many opportunities for “recognition by others” provided in the course.

It is evident that the participants utilized the opportunities for interacting with and receiving feedback from their peers as a means of “recognition from peers” which had significant influence in their identity development. They interacted with and provided feedback to each other in the discussion boards, in the Group Project and in class – and in the course of these interactions, they agreed with each other, asked questions to each

other, encouraged each other. In combination, all these worked as recognition for the kind of online teachers they wanted to be within the community of practice of the course, as participants validated each other's practices and identities.

The course also offered significant opportunities for recognition from the teacher, which influenced the participants' identity development. The teacher interacted with the participants constantly in class and via blackboard, and provided them feedback. All these interactions worked as recognition for the kind of online teachers they wanted to be, even if the participants did not explicitly talk about the teacher's feedback or interactions with her as a means of recognition for them as aspiring online teachers.

The importance of "recognition from others" (Gee's, 2000-2001; Luehmann & Borasi, 2011, Luehmann, 2007) for identity development is confirmed by this finding. Congruous to this finding, Luehmann and Tinelli's (2008) study also showed that, when their participants were given opportunities for interaction through blogging, it contributed significantly to their identity development as "reform minded science teachers."

N. The perceived *stigma* of online teaching in one's field negatively affected some participants, although it also turned some of them into advocates!

One of the surprising findings of this study is that almost all the participants reported to having felt some negativity and stigma surrounding online education in general, and specifically in their fields. Though in most cases this affected them negatively, by the end of the course all the participants reported to have found ways to deal with this challenge. In fact, recognizing the value and affordances of online

education and its effectiveness, in spite of the negative perceptions about online teaching in their fields, convinced several of them to become advocates for online education.

Stigma surrounding online education was mentioned in the literature, but the studies I reviewed did not examine how stigma impacts online teachers. It is also worth noting that this stigma might act as a *negative recognition* from the field, in the spirit of Gee's identity theory.

Contributions to Understanding Online Teacher Identity and Its Development

In this section I will build on the findings related to my two research questions, as summarized above, to further discuss what new insights they may contribute about what constitutes *online teacher identity* and what may influence its development – and why it matters.

The following diagram identifies key factors that my empirical findings suggest to have contributed most to the online teacher identity of my participants, as well as influenced its development throughout the course. I have divided them in two groups: (a) “internal” factors and (b) “external” factors.

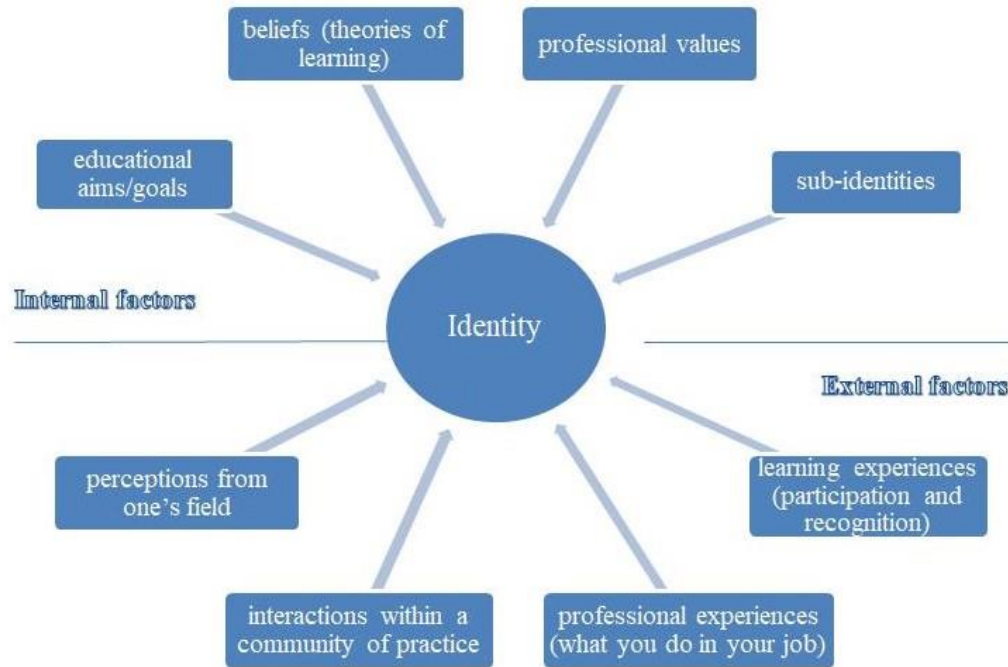


Figure 7.1: Factors contributing to online teacher identity

In what follows I will discuss in more detail what I have learned from my study about how each of these factors may impact the identity development of online teachers. It is my hope that this additional analysis will contribute to a more *operational* and usable definition of what constitutes an *online teacher identity*, as well as to the identification of the types of experiences that may most influence online teacher identity development – and thus, courses or other interventions aiming to prepare high-quality online teachers should consider including.

Internal Factors

- a) *Lessons learned about how teachers' **educational goals/aims** may affect their approach to online teaching*

What teachers hold as their larger aims for education has a considerable impact on whether and why they may want (or not) to engage in online teaching in the first place. It will also affect what they will be most concerned about as online teachers, thus impacting the kind of decisions the teachers will make when teaching online; and what aspects of their online teaching practice they want to improve and thus are willing to spend effort on. Below I have reported some notable illustrations from my study that support this conclusion.

A concern for equity – and, therefore, access to educational opportunities – was shared by most of my participants. Given this concern, once my participants realized that online courses could increase access, they became much more interested in providing this opportunity to students, even if this required them to make some compromise – such as overcoming their own discomfort with technology, or giving up the personal feeling of satisfaction they got from face-to-face interactions with their students. Valuing the access to education online courses could provide to all students, especially the most underprivileged ones, also led several of my participants to show concern about internet accessibility and other infrastructural facilities which might not be available to people everywhere in the world. It is also important to recognize the connection between this personal commitment of my study participants to equity and the fact that equity is one of the key values of the Warner School, the institution all these participants chose for their graduate study. Contributing to increasing equitable access to education through online teaching, therefore, may not be such a powerful motivating factor for students in other institutions.

Similarly, one of the participants showed a strong concern for providing educational opportunities that would help students compensate for specific disabilities—and saw online learning as a way to achieve that goal by letting the students avail the time and flexibility affordances.

b) *Lessons learned about how teachers' **beliefs about how people learn best** may affect their approach to online teaching*

Whether teachers would teach online or not, as well as the kinds of practices they would strive to become proficient at as online teachers, seem to be impacted by teachers' beliefs and assumed theories about how people learn. The learning theories teachers assume are also likely to greatly impact many decisions they will make in their everyday online teaching practices.

For example, as mentioned earlier, the desire to establish a relationship with their students was also common to several participants of my study. As prior experiences or common perceptions made them question whether it was possible to establish close relationships with students in an online course, many of them initially expressed their reservations about wanting to teach online, as well as their effectiveness as online teachers. It was only after they personally experienced the course and realized it was not the case, that they more fully embraced teaching online as something they wanted to do and thought they could be good at. This value also led them to proactively search for ways to establish relationships with their students in an online environment – for example, by making use of synchronous sessions, posting video introductions of the

instructor at the beginning of the course, or opting for a hybrid format whenever possible so as to have some opportunities to meet their students face-to-face.

Most participants of my study seemed to value the social aspects of learning – probably influenced by the social constructivist theories of learning they encountered not just in this course, but also in all of their other Warner School courses. Because of this belief, they looked for tools and strategies that would allow them to offer students opportunities to interact with their peers online. And once they realized – because of their own experiences as online learners in the course – that online could offer some unique opportunities for collaborative learning, some of which could even enhance what may take place face-to-face, it was a major turning point for them.

The participants also realized that establishing teacher to student relationship and student to student relationship could make students feel connected and create a sense of belonging that ultimately contributes to motivation since the students learn from each other as well as struggle together.

The importance of eliciting and building on students' prior knowledge (which is another core tenet of constructivist theories of learning) was another major take-away from the course for most participants, and it motivated them to explore ways to leverage online spaces to elicit students' prior knowledge (e.g. through journals if privacy was called for to encourage greater honesty and because of vulnerability, or discussion boards when students could benefit from what their classmates could contribute).

c) *Lessons learned about how teachers' **professional** values may affect their approach to online teaching*

The kind of things teachers value as professionals might also have a major impact on what types of practices they would like to engage in and what type of decisions they would make as online teachers.

For example, by the end of the course most participants stated that in future they would proactively seek opportunities to work with colleagues in designing instruction and to get their feedback on their online courses, which is often not the norm in today's schools and colleges. They wanted to do so because they believed that this would make their instructional unit and lessons stronger, especially in an online context that is less *forgiving* of poor planning than face-to-face instruction and where teachers may benefit from the product of multiple people creating instructional materials to support an agreed-upon design. It is worth noting that this appreciation was a direct result of their experiences in the Group Project and Individual Project, where they personally experienced the value of collaborating with colleagues in designing instruction.

The participants developed a similar appreciation for an iterative approach to instructional design involving multiple revisions, so as to achieve a better final product. Once again, they especially appreciated this practice in the context of online teaching, as in this case investing in a good plan and good online instructional materials may be critical to the success of the learning experience, and could also be beneficial in future offerings of the course, as well as being continuously improved upon after each implementation.

My study participants also recognized that being a teacher, especially an online teacher, required being a lifelong learner as well. They acknowledged that, as technology

changes and new best practices are developed, their practice as online teachers will also need to change. Another factor requiring continuous change is responding to the needs of one's students. As a result, my participants realized the need and value of continuing to learn new things to be more effective teachers for better student outcomes and were willing to commit to this practice.

It is also evident from the data that the participants of my study felt that they were a part of a community of practice (i.e., the teaching community in their field of specialization) which was especially reflected in the negative feelings some of them reported as a result of perceiving that their professional field did not value online learning ("stigma"). This might impact the teachers negatively; however, while my participants acknowledged the negativity surrounding online education in general and in their fields specifically, this did not impact them negatively and many of them even decided to be advocates for online education in their fields and in their own contexts.

d) *Lessons learned about how teachers' **existing sub-identities** may affect their approach to online teaching*

My study reinforced the key tenet, common in the identity theory literature, that a person's identity is the result of several sub-identities that coexist and interact with each other and sometimes may even be in conflict, thus causing tension. There were several illustrations, as already reported earlier in this chapter, that were consistent with this assumption – most notably the fact that each participant's field of specialization (i.e., counseling, TESOL, special education, etc.) affected the kind of field-specific learning goals the participants had for their students, and therefore, the kind of online activities

they thought would be most valuable and appropriate for them. My participants were also affected by the pre-conceived notions regarding online teaching in their fields – especially when it was negative. The participants' nationality also impacted their evaluation of the opportunities and limitations of online learning and, thus, what they aspired to be and do as online teachers.

The data from this study, however, did not show any conflict between the participants' new identity as online teachers versus their previous identity as face-to-face teachers as reported in other studies in the literature; rather, all participants felt that being able to use technology and teach online was just another tool in their tool box.

External Factors

*e) Lessons learned about **what kind of learning experiences** may affect the development of an online teacher identity*

Since my study took place in the context of a course preparing novice online teachers, it can provide valuable information about which of the many learning activities designed for the course seemed most impactful for the participants' identity development. Overall, my study supports Gee's claim that "all learning...requires identity work" (Gee, 2003, as cited in Luehmann & Borasi, 2011, p. 22), as indeed, the participants' desire and willingness to learn specific online teaching practices and tools was always grounded in an appreciation that doing so would help them realize their vision for the kind of online teachers they wanted to be.

The learning experiences in the course that most impacted the participants' identity development can be identified as follows:

- ***Readings*** – whether it involved reading about research results or accounts of experiences involving online learning and teaching, learning theories and pedagogical approaches, and whether the documents read were traditional texts or multimedia products.
- ***Experiences as learners*** – where the participants engaged with specific online teaching techniques and tools in the process of learning content related to the course.
- ***Experiences as teachers*** – where participants took on the role of the teachers in designing and implementing online experiences in scaffolded and supported situations.
- ***Reflections*** – where participants engaged in a number of different tasks designed to help them make sense of their experiences as learners and as teachers through a combination of shared reflections in journals and discussion boards, participating in in-class discussions and making connections with the readings.

It is worth noting that most of the course's *learning activities* included a combination of several of the above mentioned components. As a result, it was difficult to separate the effects of the “participation” versus “recognition” component of any one specific “learning activity” (following Gee’s theory), or the experiencing vs. learning vs. doing identified in Wenger’s (1998) theory. Rather, I would suggest that the strength of specific activities came from the combination and synergy among these complementary components.

- f) *Lessons learned about **what kind of professional experiences** may affect the development of an online teacher identity*

The *experiences as teachers* in the course (that is, the Group Project and the Individual Project) clearly had a major impact on the participants, suggesting that their future online teaching experiences would continue to affect their identity development. However, since my study took place in the context of a graduate course, the participants engaged in these teaching experiences as students rather than as part of their professional practice. So I would like to recognize that my study context did not truly provide the conditions to study the impact of professional experiences on the participants' identity development.

- g) *Lessons learned about **what kind of interactions within a community of practice** may affect the development of an online teacher identity*

Once again, since my study took place within the context of a graduate course, the only community of practice I could study was the class itself – as I did not collect data about each participant's interactions with his/her own professional community. It is evident, though, that interaction among the students in the class, and between students and teacher, were very important and influential in shaping each participant's vision for the kind of online teachers they wanted to be. This is revealed not only in the online discussion boards, but also in the conversations that took place in class and in their groups.

This interaction was important not only to provide feedback on specific products (although that was the most obvious and visible outcome and benefit) but also in

reinforcing the values and beliefs the participants were grappling with – as for example, values such as social justice and theories such as social constructivist learning theory that the whole Warner School community embraced.

h) *Lessons learned about **perceptions in the field** may affect the development of an online teacher identity*

As mentioned earlier, the stigma surrounding online education in the participants' fields did affect them negatively at first – as several participants expressed their concern about how their practice as online teachers would be viewed by colleagues who did not believe in the value of online learning; or the limited opportunities to teach online offered in their fields. The participants, however, did not seem to be discouraged by any of these challenges; rather they decided to be advocates for online education to tackle the stigma and negativity surrounding online education.

Recommendations for the Preparation of Novice Online Teachers

Based on the findings of my study, I would like to offer the following recommendations to teacher educators preparing online teachers:

1. Teacher education or professional development programs for online teachers should be intentional in supporting their participants' identity development – explicit discussions of the kind of online teacher each participant wants to be and how to achieve it may be valuable, but will not be enough.
2. There should be interventions to help support the identity development of the participants with programs that create opportunities for participation and

- recognition for their participants; and the most powerful activities will combine both of these elements, in a synergistic way.
3. Anticipated challenges to become the kind of online teachers the participants want to be and ways to address those challenges should be identified. The participants need to be equipped with strategies and tools to cope with these challenges, so they will not feel discouraged early on.
 4. The online teacher development programs should offer opportunities for *experiences as learners* to enable novice online teachers to experience what an effective online teacher and an online course can and should look like, along with opportunities to discuss what worked and what did not so as to determine their own path as future online teachers.
 5. Hybrid online courses are particularly valuable for teacher development programs, as they can give participants the chance of experiencing as learners best online practices and thus help counter prior negative experiences and perceptions. This will also help them create their online teacher identity as an extension of their overall teacher identity, rather than generating tensions between these two identities.
 6. Effective online teacher preparation programs should include activities where the participants actually engage in designing and implementing online learning experiences. To ensure the success of these experiences and thus a sense of confidence and affirmation that will contribute to identity development, these experiences should be carefully designed to include sufficient support and

- feedback. Nasir and Hand's (2008) analysis of what makes activities especially conducive to identity work should be taken into consideration in designing such experiences.
7. While participants should be equipped with appropriate technology skills and knowledge, the focus of programs preparing online teachers should not be on teaching technology skills only. Rather, programs should also address important competencies online teachers need to be good at, such as content development, content delivery, design and implementation of the course, assessment, feedback.
 8. The designers of programs and courses preparing online teachers should take into considerations the participants' fields of specialization within education and the implications of those in their identity development.
 9. Since the negativity and stigma surrounding online education seem to have implications for online teachers' identity development, these should be acknowledged and addressed to allow the participants to discuss their concerns and learn ways to deal with those.
 10. There will be value in including a discussion or an assignment where participants explicitly talk about the kind of online teachers they want to be. Although this was not done in the course I studied, my participants' appreciation of the reflections opportunities during my interviews suggest that such an explicit assignment might allow the participants to think more deeply and in detail about what practices they value, and what practices they want to avoid. If done at the

beginning and at the end of the program, it will allow the participants as well as the instructors to better see the changes that resulted in their identity development.

The following table shows the connection between the findings of my study and the recommendations I have made based on those findings.

Table 7.1:

Connection between Findings and Recommendations

Findings	Recommendations
RQ 1: What kind of online teacher did each participant aspire to be at the end of the course, and how did it differ from where they started?	
Participants' field of specializations impacted the kind of online teachers they wanted to be.	Considerations should be given to the participants' fields of specialization in courses and programs preparing online teachers.
Though at first the participants were concerned about their technological skills, by the end of the course they recognized that only a minimum of technology skills was needed to be the kind of online teachers they aspired to be – rather, they identified the importance of training about pedagogy and instructional design.	Courses and programs preparing online teachers should focus on competencies in content, design and delivery rather than just technology.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some participants were concerned about whether they would be able to build close relationship with their students • They were concerned about the effectiveness of online courses – These concerns were resolved by the end of the course as they learned strategies to deal with these. 	Challenges to becoming the kind of online teachers the participants want to be should be identified upfront, and strategies and tools to cope with those should be offered.
The participants' online teacher identity was an integral part of their overall teacher identity – not a distinct identity.	Hybrid courses should be offered in teacher preparation programs for online teachers for the participants to experience as learners the best of the two modes to counter prior negative experiences, which will also help them create their online teacher identity as an

	extension of their overall teacher identity.
The kind of online teacher the participants wanted to be by the end of the course aligned at various levels with the online teacher identity the course aimed to support.	Teacher preparation programs for online teachers should be intentional in supporting their participants' identity development.
RQ 2: How did the participants take on the opportunities for participation and recognition offered in the course to support their identity development?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Experiences as online learners</i> and <i>Scaffolded experiences as online teachers</i> were very impactful • The participants made good use of the opportunities for reflections as a means for "recognition by self" and "recognition by others." 	More interventions with "participation" and "recognition" opportunities should be created in teacher preparation programs and courses for online teachers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was need for "repair work" for several of the participants. • <i>Experiences as online learners</i> in the course were especially impactful for participants who had prior negative experiences with online courses, and therefore needed that "repair work." 	Opportunities should be created for <i>experiences as learners</i> that allow participants to experience the power of online learning; hybrid online courses will be especially appropriate for offering these experiences in a scaffolded way.
<i>Scaffolded experiences as online teachers</i> were impactful, and gave participants confidence in their ability to teach online.	The participants of teacher preparation programs and courses for online teachers should be engaged in designing and implementing online learning experiences to give them sense of success and confidence.
The perceived <i>stigma</i> of online teaching in their fields negatively affected some participants.	The stigma surrounding online education should be acknowledged and addressed to allow the participants to discuss their concerns and learn ways to deal with those.
The participants made good use of the opportunities for reflections as a means for "recognition by self."	An explicit assignment or discussion about the kind of online teachers they want to be might allow the participants to think more deeply about what practices they value, and what practices they want to avoid.

Study Rigor and Limitations

The rigor of my qualitative case study results from the combination of these complementary strategies:

- I was able to develop cases for all but one of the students in the course (all those who responded to my request), which eliminated the need for me to make any selection about who would participate in the study.
- My data was derived from multiple sources – course artifacts, student assignments and Blackboards posts, two semi-structured interviews and researcher memos.
- I conducted a systematic analysis of these data, which included multiple reading and coding, some open and some informed by categories derived from theory.
- For member check, the initial case narratives were shared with the participants before the second interview; all participants said that these reports reflected what they had shared and experienced.

One of the limitations of my study is that because my data collection started after the course was complete, I was not able to trace the participants' identity development as they engaged in the course. In particular, I was not able to interview the participants in the beginning of the semester, before they started the course. Even though the preliminary assignment they completed provided some information about their perceptions about and experiences of online teaching and learning prior to taking the course, an interview at the beginning of the semester could have been much more informative.

Another limitation of this study is that it was done with students after taking only one course aimed at preparing them to teach online. Studying the participants' identity development after taking more than one professional development course to teach online would yield better results; the trajectories of their identity development would have been traced better over a longer period of time. However, I believe my study of this particular course has already yielded significant results to understand the participants' identity development as novice online teachers, especially given that I did not find a similar study of an intervention in my review of the literature.

When considering the transferability of the findings of this study, it is also important to keep in mind that my study took place within an institution that recognizes the value of online education and promotes it, has a particular approach to leveraging online learning as a tool that can help innovate and transform instruction, and has an explicit commitment to equitable access. The school culture and its approach to online education, and education more generally, is likely to have influenced the participants of the study. Therefore, it cannot be concluded that the same course will necessarily achieve the same results in a different institution.

Possible Future Research

As identified in my literature review there are still not many research studies available on teachers' identity development – especially in the context of online teacher preparation – so, my study tries to fill that gap. Many more research should be done on online teacher's identity development; I would like to suggest a few possible future lines of research here:

1. There can be research done to follow the participants in another implementation of the same course from beginning to end, where they can be interviewed in the beginning of the semester and at the end, to trace their identity development as it occurs.
2. There can be research done on participants enrolled in a full set of courses preparing online teachers (like the sequence of three courses preparing online teachers offered at Warner School, of which the course I studied was the first one), so as to trace the participants' identity development trajectories over a longer period of time.
3. There can be future research to document the experience of novice online teachers in a more traditional training focused on the technology, and compare results with this one.
4. While several authors in my literature review discussed the importance of paying attention to teachers' identity development, as it will impact teachers' decision making and student outcomes, the set-up of my study did not allow me to collect data that would provide empirical support to this claim – as I could not collect data about how the participants of my study designed and taught an online course based on what they learned in the course. Being able to make this causal connection would indeed be very valuable, and calls for future research that actually follow what students from a similar course may do in their own online teaching practice afterwards, so as to show how their new identities as online

teachers affect specific instructional decisions – and thus their online teaching practice.

Concluding Thoughts

In a world where Internet, technology and online education are growing fast, higher education institutions need to focus on preparing competent online teachers who have a clear idea and vision of the kind of online teachers they want to be, and are equipped with pedagogic knowledge, strategies, knowledge of theories and tools to enable them to enact that lesson successfully. I believe that the findings of my study will contribute to improve teacher development for online teachers by enabling better support for the identity development of the participants.

This dissertation study was not about investigating online teachers' identity only; it was also a discovery of my own identity as a researcher. I learned about and experienced a full scale research from beginning to end, learned to make decisions as a researcher and to find ways to face challenges that came in the way. Apart from learning from the process itself, I learned invaluable things from my advisor about doing research, as well as supervising, mentoring and providing meaningful feedback. All of these are instrumental to my development and I will use my learning for my future research and teaching. I also learned many significant things from my participants – about teaching, pedagogy, best practices, assessment, feedback, philosophy of teaching – which will be a treasure for my own teaching. The participants surprised me with their ideas, philosophies, commitment, passion, skills and competence. I believe this experience has not only made me a competent researcher but also a better teacher.

References

- Akkerman, S. F., & Meijer, P. C. (2011). A dialogical approach to conceptualizing teacher identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(2), 308-319.
- Allen, E. & Seaman J. (2011). *Going the distance: Online education in the United States 2011*. Wellesley, MA: Babson Survey Research Group.
- Allen, E. & Seaman J. (2013). *Changing course: Ten years of tracking online education in the United States*. Wellesley, MA: Babson Survey Research Group.
- Allen, E. & Seaman J. (2014). *Grade change: Tracking online education in the United States*, Wellesley, MA: Babson Survey Research Group.
- Allen, I. E., Seaman, J., Lederman, D., & Jaschik, S. (2012). *Conflicted: Faculty and online education, 2012*. Babson Park, MA: Inside Higher Ed & Babson Survey Research Group. Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/IHE-BSRG-Conflict.pdf
- Baxter, J. (2012). The impact of professional learning on the teaching identities of higher education lecturers. *European Journal of Open, Distance and E-Learning*, 2012(2), 1-11. Retrieved from <http://oro.open.ac.uk/34717/>
- Beijaard, D. (2019). Teacher learning as identity learning: Models, practices, and topics [Editorial]. *Teachers and Teaching*, 25(1), 1–6.
- Beijaard, D., Meijer, P. C., Vermunt, J. D. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20(2), 107–128.
- Beijaard, D., Verloop, N. Vermunt, J. D. (2000). Teachers' perceptions of professional identity: An exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective. *Teaching and Teacher Education* 16(7), 749-764.
- Bloomberg, L. D, Volpe, M. (2016). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road map from beginning to end*. (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Boettcher, J. V., Conrad, R. (2016). *The online teaching survival guide: Simple and practical pedagogical tips* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*, (pp. 42-71). London: Sage.
- Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Connelly, F. M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research* (1st ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cohen, J. L. (2010). Getting recognised: Teachers negotiating professional identities as learners through talk. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(3), 473-481. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2009.06.005>
- Comas-quinn, A. (2011). Learning to teach online or learning to become an online teacher: An exploration of teachers' experiences in a blended learning course. *ReCALL*, 23(3), 218-232. doi:10.1017/s0958344011000152
- Danielewicz, J. (2001). *Teaching selves: Identity, pedagogy and teacher education*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Denzin, N. K., Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Faulk, N. (2010). Online teacher education- what are the results. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 3(11), 21-28.
- Flores, M. A., & Day, C. (2006). Contexts which shape and reshape new teachers' identities: A multi-perspective study. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(2), 219-232. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.09.002>
- Friesen, M. D., & Besley, S. C. (2013). Teacher identity development in the first year of teacher education: A developmental and social psychological perspective. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 36, 23-32. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2013.06.005>
- Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T. & Archer, W. (2000). Critical inquiry in a text-based environment: Computer conferencing in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 2(2-3), 87-105.
- Gee, J. (2000-2001). Identity as an Analytic Lens for Research in Education. *Review of Research in Education*, 25, 99-125. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1167322>
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books.
- Gill, P., Stewart, K., Treasure, E. & Chadwick, B. (2008). Methods of data collection in qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups. *British Dental Journal*, 204(6), 291-295.
- Goldenberg, S. (1992). *Thinking methodologically*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences. Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*, (3rd ed., pp. 191-215). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Hammerness, K., Darling-Hammond, L., Bransford, J., Berliner, D., Cochran-Smith, M., McDonald, M. & Zeichner, K. (2005). How teachers learn and develop. In Darling-Hammond, L., Bransford, J., LePage, P., Hammerness, K. & Duffy, H. (Eds.), *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do* (pp. 358- 389). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Han, I. (2017). Conceptualisation of English teachers' professional identity and comprehension of its dynamics. *Teachers and Teaching*, 23(5), 549-569. doi:10.1080/13540602.2016.1206525
- Harland, T. (2014) Learning about case study methodology to research higher education. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 33(6), 1113-1122.
- Hatch, J. A. (2010). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Hong, J. Y. (2010). Pre-service and beginning teachers' professional identity and its relation to dropping out of the profession. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(8), 1530-1543. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.06.003>
- Hurst, B. (2015). Making the move to online teaching: One reluctant professor's informal self-study. *TechTrends*, 59(6), 35-40.

- Irwin, B., & Hramiak, A. (2010). A discourse analysis of trainee teacher identity in online discussion forums. *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 19(3), 361-377. doi:10.1080/1475939X.2010.513767
- Johnson, H., Ehrlich, S., Watts-Taffe, S., & Williams, C. (2014). Who am I here? Disrupted identities and gentle shifts when teaching in cyberspace. *Journal of Instructional Research*, 3, 43-54.
- Johnston, J. (2012). Using identity as a tool for investigation: A methodological option in the researcher's toolbox. *International Journal of Arts and Sciences*, 5(5), 1-20. Retrieved from http://epubs.scu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1914&context=educ_pubs
- Lindlof, T., & Taylor, B. (2010). *Qualitative communication research methods* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Lortie, D. C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Luehmann, A. & Borasi, R. (2011). Identity development as a lens for learning. In A. Luehmann & R. Borasi (Eds.), *Blogging as change: Transforming science and math education through new media literacies* (pp. 22- 26). New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc.
- Luehmann, A. L. (2007). Identity development as a lens to science teacher preparation. *Science Education*, 91(5), 822-839. doi:10.1002/sce.20209
- Luehmann, A. L., & Tinelli, L. (2008). Teacher professional identity development with social networking technologies: Learning reform through blogging. *Educational Media International*, 45(4), 323-333. doi:10.1080/09523980802573263
- Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. (2011). *Designing qualitative research* (5th ed.). London: Sage.
- Merriam, S. B. (1985). The case study in educational research: A reviews of selected literature. *The Journal of Educational Thought*, 19(3), 204-217.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Meyer, K. (2014). An analysis of the research on faculty development for online teaching and identification of new directions. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 17(4), 93-112.
- Miles, C., & Mikulec, E. (2008). Negotiating teacher identity and power in online poly-synchronous environments: A heuristic inquiry. *International Journal of Instructional Technology and Distance Learning*, 5(2). Retrieved from http://www.itdl.org/Journal/Feb_08/article02.htm
- Nasir, N.S. & Hand, V. (2008). From the court to the classroom: Opportunities for engagement, learning, and identity in basketball and classroom mathematics. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 17(2), 143-179.
- Nykvist, S., & Mukherjee, M. (2016). Who am I? Developing pre-service teacher identity in a digital world. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 217, 851-857.
- O'Connor, K. E. (2008). "You choose to care": Teachers, emotions and professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(1), 117-126. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2006.11.008>

- Pillen, M., Beijjaard, D., & den Brok, P. (2013). Professional identity tensions of beginning teachers. *Teachers and Teaching*, 19(6), 660-678.
doi:10.1080/13540602.2013.827455
- Richardson, J., & Alsup, J. (2015). From the classroom to the keyboard: How seven teachers created their online teacher identities. *The International Review of Research In Open And Distributed Learning*, 16(1), 142-167.
doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v16i1.1814
- Ruohotie-Lyhty, M. (2013). Struggling for a professional identity: Two newly qualified language teachers' identity narratives during the first years at work. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 30, 120-129. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2012.11.002
- SØreide, G. E. (2006). Narrative construction of teacher identity: Positioning and negotiation. *Teachers and Teaching*, 12(5), 527-547.
doi:10.1080/13540600600832247
- Saldaña, J. (2010). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. London: Sage.
- Seidman, I. E. (1991). *Technique isn't everything, but it is a lot. Interviewing as qualitative research*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Shea, P., & Bidjerano, T. (2009). Community of inquiry as a theoretical framework to foster "epistemic engagement" and "cognitive presence" in online education. *Computers & Education*, 52(3), 543-553.
doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2008.10.007
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22, 63-75.
- Sprague, D. (2006). Research agenda for online teacher professional development. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, (14)4, 657-661.
- Stavredes, T. (2011). *Effective Online Teaching: Foundations and Strategies for Student Success* (1st ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Storandt, B. C., Dossin, L. C. & Lacher, A. P. (2012). Toward an understanding of what works in professional development for online instructors: The case of PBS Teacherline. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 16(2), 121- 162.
- Taylor, L. A. (2017). How teachers become teacher researchers: Narrative as a tool for teacher identity construction. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 61, 16-25.
doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.09.008
- Thanaraj, A. (2016). Making a transition: The development of academics' role and identity in online teaching. *Practitioner Research in Higher Education Journal*, 10(2), 40-53.
- Thomas, L., & Beauchamp, C. (2011). Understanding new teachers' professional identities through metaphor. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(4), 762-769.
doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.12.007
- Timoštšuk, I., & Ugaste, A. (2010). Student teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(8), 1563-1570.
doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.06.008
- Vaill, A. L., & Testori, P. A. (2012). Orientation, mentoring, and ongoing support: A three-tiered approach to online faculty development. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*, 16(2), 111-119.

- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005). *Understanding by design* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Yazan, B. (2015). Three approaches to case study methods in education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(2), 134-152.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Appendices

A. Course Documentation

1. Course syllabus
2. Guidelines for success in online courses
3. Prompt for participants' introductions and preliminary journal
4. Discussion boards prompts
5. Reflective journals' prompts
6. Detailed description of group project
7. Detailed description of individual project
8. Directions for final reflection

B. Data Collection Tools

1. First interview protocol
2. Follow-up interview protocol
3. Pre-interview survey

C. RSRB Documentation

D. Data Analysis

1. Table for first pass of analysis

Appendix A.1

Course Syllabus

EDE 484
Online Teaching and Learning
(Revised as of 1/02/17)
Spring 2017
Instructor:

Contents:

Instructor's Contact Information and Availability

Brief Course Description

Technology Requirements

Conceptual Framework Informing the Course

Course Goals

Key Design Elements

Key Course Components

Course Requirements and Expectations

Learning Assessment and Grading

Instructors' Contact Information and Availability

Instructor Name **E-mail:**
Virtual office hours: by appointment

Class meeting time: Thursdays, 4:50-7:30 pm (NOTE: several of these class meetings will be substituted with a synchronous online session or asynchronous online work – see Course Schedule for details)

Brief Course Description

This course’s ultimate goal is to empower participants to design and implement effective online learning experiences for their students as called for in a variety of instructional contexts – including fully online, blended (or hybrid-online), and web-enhanced face-to-face courses in K-12 and higher education, as well as professional development programs, orientations, training sessions, etc. In the first part of the course, students will learn some fundamental principles of learning, motivation, assessment, teaching and instructional design relevant to online teaching and learning by engaging in a carefully designed series of learning activities including both in-class and online components. These experiences are intended not only to facilitate students’ learning of this important content, but also enable them to “experience as learners” a number of online instructional tools and online teaching practices. Explicit reflections on these experiences (both in class and online) will take place in parallel to enable students to generalize from these concrete experiences and gain insights about best online teaching

practices that can inform their own future teaching. In the second part of the course, students will mostly engage in supported “online experiences as teachers,” where they first design and deliver to the rest of the class an online learning module on content related to online teaching and learning as part of a group, and then they individually design an online learning module on a topic and for an audience of their choice.

While this course has been designed as the first half of a two-course sequence on teaching and learning online (to be followed by EDE 486: Designing and Facilitating Online Courses), it can also be taken as a stand-alone. Students will exit this course with a foundational understanding of the unique learning affordances of online spaces, as well as basic skills to design and facilitate “online learning modules” within the Blackboard Learn learning management system (BB hereafter). Students interested in developing skills to design full online courses and develop vibrant learning communities in those courses, as well as use other online tools and platforms besides BB, should consider taking the second part of the sequence (EDE 486).

This course is offered as a hybrid-online course, so as to enable students to personally experience several different types of online learning activities vis-à-vis traditional ones. The time slot of Thursday 4:50-7:30 pm should still be reserved for class activities – whether they will occur face-to-face in LeChase Hall or online.

No prior experience with online learning as a student or a teacher is required to participate in this course.

Technology Requirements

To make sure students have all the necessary technology to actively participate in all aspects of this online course, we have identified below all the hardware and software needed to fully participate in both synchronous and asynchronous course activities:

- *Access to a Mac (OS X) or PC-based Computer with:*
 - *High Speed Internet capability*
 - *Speakers, microphone, and video cam*
 - *Adobe Reader*
 - *Plug-ins for your preferred browser to play videos*
 - *Latest version of Java installed for your preferred browser*

Please verify that you meet all these technology requirements (and test them to make sure they work) before our first class meeting.

Note: Do not access Blackboard via the iPad app or Android app to post or update anything. Use only the Browser version of Blackboard through either Chrome or Firefox to write and/or upload your work and to interact with the course.

Conceptual Framework Informing the Course

Online learning is becoming increasingly common in our society. This is happening not just in higher education, but also K-12 schools and other informal educational settings - as an online format is increasingly used for training in industry and orientations, webinars are substituting for or enhancing traditional conference presentations and workshops, and students as well as customers expect to be able to find information and tutorials on the web so they can learn how to do all sort of things on their own. It is not surprising, then, that individuals seeking teaching positions, regardless of context and specialization, are increasingly expected to be able to teach online.

Online learning – as it occurs in a digital space rather than face-to-face, with most interactions taking place asynchronously (i.e., students can engage with the course materials at different times) – has some important differences from learning in traditional courses that meet regularly face-to-face, as well as many commonalities. Our position is that one modality is not necessarily better than the other, but rather that online and face-to-face learning each have different strengths and limitations. Therefore, online learning experiences may be more or less effective than face-to-face learning experiences depending on the type of content and instructional goals, on one hand, and the learning preferences and constraints of individual learners, on the other hand.

In practice, this means that to be a good online instructor, one needs first of all to understand and apply many of the same principles and best practices required to design any good learning experience. Yet, it is also important to be aware of the unique strengths and limitations of online learning, as well as the many powerful tools that can be used in an online space, in order to design the best possible online experiences for one's students. Figuring out which kind of instructional goals or learning activities are most suited to an online versus traditional format is an important skill for all teachers to develop.

In particular, it is important for online teachers to realize the unique potential of specific Web 2.0 tools to encourage and support co-construction of knowledge – as pointed out by scholars in New Media Literacies, among others. Becoming aware of the unique affordances of a few of these powerful tools, and learning how to best capitalize on that potential to support learning in formal context, is also something this course aims to offer.

It is also important to note that, while every instructor has had extensive experience of traditional teaching as a student him/herself, not everyone has experienced learning online in a formal educational setting – although more and more people probably engage in some form of online learning in the course of their everyday practice. Therefore, we believe it is especially important for future online instructors to experiences as learners themselves the power and limitations of online learning, so they can fully appreciate its potential for their own teaching.

Course Goals

Informed by the previous considerations, the course has been designed to **empower students to design and implement effective “online learning modules” for their students in a variety of instructional contexts using Blackboard.** *(NOTE: the understandings and skills developed in this course are necessary but not sufficient to design and implement full online courses, or to deliver online learning experiences using platforms and tools other than those available within Blackboard; as mentioned earlier, these goals will be specifically addressed in the second course in our Online Teaching & Learning sequence – EDE486: Designing and Facilitating Online Courses).* This translates in the following desired outcomes:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Given a learning objective and the constraints of one's instructional context, decide whether it can be best achieved through face-to-face learning experiences, online learning experiences, or a combination of both.
- When designing online learning experiences, identify “high-level” learning objective(s) and design learning activities and assessments that are consistent with those learning objectives.
- Utilize best practices in designing and facilitating a few common types of online learning activities.
- Use basic tools and technologies within Blackboard to implement these online learning activities.
- Design and implement high-quality online learning modules that capitalize on the affordances of online spaces and knowledge of how people learn best.

As stepping stones towards these outcomes, we have identified the following learning objectives:

1. Learn some fundamental principles about:
 - a) Motivation *(so as to develop learning experiences and online learning communities that can support students' sustained attention and engagement in an online environment)*
 - b) Learning and its implications for teaching – with special attention to online learning environments *(so as to be able to design online learning experiences that truly engage students in meaningful and effective ways)*
 - c) Student assessment *(so as to be able to measure what students learned as the result of a specific online learning modules and use this information to inform future instruction)*
 - d) Instructional design – with a focus on designing isolated learning modules (rather than an entire course) *(so as to be able to design online learning experiences that can lead to specific desired outcomes)*

2. Learn to use (as an instructor as well as a student) essential tools and technologies that are sufficient to implement most online learning activities, including:
 - a) Creating multi-media documents (using Panopto or PowerPoint)
 - b) Posting and accessing multi-media documents within Blackboard Learn;
 - c) Using assignments, journals, quizzes, surveys, discussion boards, and wikis within Blackboard Learn
 - d) Using Zoom for synchronous online sessions
 - e) Using Google docs

(So as to be able to design creative online learning experiences, while taking advantage of only a minimum number of tools)

3. Become aware of key decision points, options and “instructional tips” for the following six common OTL practices:
 - Introducing new online tools
 - Providing directions for independent work
 - Conveying content online
 - Sharing students' work online
 - Orchestrating online discussions
 - Synthesizing learning

(So as to be able to design online learning experiences that take full advantage of these practices, as most appropriate given the established learning goals)

4. Engage in scaffolded experiences of designing and implementing online learning experiences.

(So as to be able to design and facilitate high quality online learning modules by the end of the course)

Key Design Elements

As mentioned earlier, we think it is important to engage future teachers in “experiences as learners” of any innovative instructional approach they are asked to adopt. Therefore, this course was purposefully designed to “model” the use of a variety of online tools, learning activities and practices, that we believe future online teachers should consider. So, as students in this course will learn about principles of learning, motivation, instructional design, etc., we will make full use of many different online activities – and reflect on these experiences afterwards, to identify not only the extent to which these activities were successful in promoting learning, but also the diverse reactions of individual learners to the experience.

The literature on learning complex skills/practices (such as teaching online) suggests that individuals can learn such skills best by engaging in the following scaffolded sequence of experiences:

- a. Observing an expert engaged in the practice (possibly with the opportunity to ask questions about what is taking place and why).
- b. Participating in limited ways (“legitimate peripheral participation”) in the performance of the targeted practice in authentic contexts under the guidance of an expert.
- c. Engaging in the targeted practice independently, yet still benefiting from some support and feedback.

The online “experiences as learners” developed in the course, together with the critical analysis of several examples of online activities designed by various instructors for a variety of instructional contexts, will play the role of engaging our students in the observation of expert practice identified as the first critical step of this process. Given the constraints of a semester-long course, we are limited with respect to the extent we will be able to implement the other two components of this model. However, we have designed two “scaffolded experiences as teachers” as part of this course, with different degrees of support. In the first of these experiences, students will work in groups in designing and implementing an online learning module for other students in the course, with significant support from the instructors. In the second experience, each student will design an online lesson independently, making their own decisions with respect to the topic, scope, goals, contents and audiences for their lesson, while the instructors will act as “consultants” providing feedback and suggestions for improvement at a few key points in the process.

Key Course Components

1. *Getting the course started [Getting Started]:*

Before the first class, students will be asked to engage in a number of preliminary tasks online (intended to provide information about the course and its expectations, elicit prior knowledge, and get students to know each other) that we believe are beneficial to develop the foundations of a learning community in ANY course. At the same time, this preliminary assignment will allow students in this course to have a first “online experience as learners” and get familiar (in a low stake situation) with a few essential tools that will be used extensively in the course. These activities will be extended and complemented in the first face-to-face class session so as to provide students with a better understanding of what the course is about and develop clear expectations for it – along with a first demonstration of the power of “looking at models” and “experiences as learners” as means to learn about online teaching and learning (OTL hereafter).

2. *Developing the foundations for OTL [OTL Foundations]:*

Over a period of about 7 weeks, students will learn some fundamental principles of learning, motivation, assessment, teaching and instructional design relevant to OTL by engaging in a carefully designed series of learning activities

(including both in-class and online components) demonstrating the use of selected OTL tools and online learning practices. Explicit reflections on these experiences (both in class and online) will take place in parallel to enable students to generalize from these concrete experiences to inform their own future online teaching (*see OTL Practices component, as described below*).

3. ***Analyzing OTL best practices [OTL Practices]:***

As part of the *Getting Started* and *OTL Foundations* modules, students will have “experienced as learners” a number of online learning and teaching practices they may want to consider using in their own online teaching. To learn how to set up for and effectively implement these OTL practices, we will engage in a systematic analysis of key decision points, options and “instructional tips” related to each practice. These insights will be recorded by an instructor and/or diverse students in “synthesis documents” that all students in the class can take with them after the course ends. *NOTE: This component of the course will take place throughout the course, in parallel to relevant experiences as learners and as teachers.*

4. ***Designing and implementing an online learning module for the rest of the class in a group [Group Project]:***

As their first “experience as online teachers,” students will be assigned to groups of 3-5 students each, and given the task to design and implement an online learning module for the rest of the class on an assigned topic related to OTL. This teaching experience will be supported by the instructors in various concrete ways, including some direct participation in the planning as well as providing “just in time instruction” about relevant Blackboard tools as needed. Students will also participate as learners in these learning modules, and provide thoughtful feedback to the “teachers” (in a combination of online and face-to-face communications). The group who originally designed each learning module will then be expected to revise the design of their module taking this feedback into consideration.

5. ***Designing an online learning module for one’s own students (individual project) [Individual Project]:***

As their second “experience as online teachers,” and the culminating performance assessment for the course, each student will design an online self-contained learning module on a topic of their choice and for an audience of their choice. Each student will be expected to set up all the instructional materials required for their students to complete the learning module on Blackboard, as well as create an accompanying “lesson plan” that articulates their goals, why they think it is important for their students to achieve those goals, and the rationale for selecting that particular set of learning activities to achieve their stated goals. Each student will be supported throughout this process by a “thinking partner” – another student in the class with

whom s/he can brainstorm ideas and request feedback throughout the planning process. Other students in the class will also have the opportunity to review the final learning module and provide feedback. Each student will also have the opportunity to revise their learning module based on this and the instructors' feedback before receiving a final grade. *NOTE: This Individual Project will start concurrently with the Group Project, but will be due only after the Group Lesson has been completed – so as to enable students to benefit from the experience and insights gained from the previous group project, and yet give them enough time to think about the goals and content of their Individual Project.*

6. *Synthesizing learning about OTL [Synthesis]:*

Each student will also be expected to synthesize what they are learning in the course in a number of complementary ways, culminating in a Final Reflection Project. More specifically, each student will be expected to contribute a reflective journal entry at the end of each “learning module”/major project in the course, synthesizing what learned from that module/project in response to prompts set by the instructors. At the end of the course, each student will also be asked to look back at their performance and growth throughout the course to write a narrative that will identify key take-aways from the course.

Course Requirements and Expectations

Weekly Independent Work

A variety of independent learning tasks (involving reading, writing as well as other kinds of activities) will need to be completed each week, with specific intermediate deadlines, as articulated in detail in the module overview and schedule posted at the beginning of each Learning Module in the course Blackboard site. These tasks must be completed on time, as the following class session and/or subsequent tasks will often assume and make use of them.

These tasks will be organized every week (or couple of weeks) in a “Learning Module” posted on Blackboard, and will usually involve a combination of:

- **“Readings”** – where the documents to be read are not only traditional texts, but could also include videos, narrated PowerPoints, Panopto files, websites, etc. Except for a required textbook that students are expected to purchase, the rest of the required readings will be accessible online in the “Module Content” folder of each Learning Module.
- **Assignments** – these may involve writing as well as other kinds of tasks, and often result in a product that needs to be submitted online on Blackboard – either privately as an *assignment* that will be accessible only to the instructor, or publicly by posting them on a specific *discussion board*, as directed in each case by the instructor. Unless they are part of one of the major projects (as described later), these assignments are not intended to result in finished nor polished reports. Therefore, students will not receive a

letter grade for most assignments, although they will be assigned points for satisfactory completion that will affect the final grade in the course (as explained later in the Course Assessment section of this syllabus).

- ***Unstructured online conversations*** – students will also be expected to engage online with classmates on an on-going basis on issues related to OTL, by spontaneously contributing their reflections and insights in a shared collaborative space.
- ***Reflective Journal entries*** – at the end of each learning module, students will also be asked to synthesize the key learning and insights gained from that week's readings and other learning activities in a private journal, in response to an "essential question" posed by the instructor (although students are always encouraged to add additional observations and insights). Unlike contributions posted in Discussion Boards and social media, these journal entries will be accessible only to the student and the instructor. Students are expected to take advantage of and build on these journal entries in preparing their Final Reflection Paper at the end of the course.

Class Participation

The success of this course, and the extent of each student's learning, will depend on his/her full and timely participation. Thus, we expect that students will attend all the synchronous as well as face-to-face class sessions, actively participate in discussion boards and other types on interactive online spaces, and meet the established deadlines for each assignment. In case you are unable to do so in a specific week, please let your instructor know in advance and as soon as possible. Lack of participation in face-to-face classes, synchronous sessions, discussion boards or other interactive online assignments will result in missing class participation points, unless particular make-up arrangements have been made with the instructor ahead of time. Even more importantly, it will take away not only from your own learning in the course, but also from that of your classmates!

Major Projects

As culminating learning experiences and summative assessments, you will be expected to complete the following three "major projects" (as already described in the previous section entitled "Key Components of the Course"):

Group Project

Independent Project

Final Reflection

Detailed directions for each of these projects can be found in the Syllabus and Key Information section on Blackboard. Each of the "major projects" should show the student's "best work" and will be graded according to a rubric, provided along with the detailed description of the assignment.

Required and recommended texts

In addition to articles and other documents accessible online, you will be assigned to read sections of the following textbook:

- Thormann, J., & Zimmerman, I.K. (2012). *Designing and Teaching Online Courses*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press. (*to be purchased by each student*)

While not required for this course, students may also be interested in purchasing the following text, which is required for the second course in the sequence, and well complement the required readings for this course:

- Stavredes, T. (2011). *Effective Online Teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. (*not required*)

Course Schedule/Timeline

An agenda for each week's class session and a list of key tasks to be completed independently in-between each class session can be found in the Course Schedule section of Blackboard (directly accessible on the left-side Menu). This document will be continuously updated to reflect any scheduling changes that may occur in the course of the semester (although we expect these changes, if any, to be minor and rare).

Workload expectations

According to New York State Education Department, a 3-credit course should include a total of about 35 "contact" hours, plus at least about twice as many hours of independent work on the part of each student, for a total commitment of over 100 hours on the part of each student. Although this course will not have the same number of face-to-face meetings, it is our expectation that it will require students the same effort as a traditional course and, thus, total number of hours overall. Therefore, it is important that students set aside a total of at least 8 hours each week for a combination of class time and independent work.

Additional considerations about online learning

Taking a course online requires somewhat different practices than traditional face-to-face courses in order to achieve the same learning goals and outcomes. Especially if you have never taken an online course before, we recommend that you read the "*Guidelines for Success in an Online Courses*" available within the Getting Started in an Online Environment folder on Blackboard.

One thing in particular that we would like students in this course to keep in mind is that, in order to ensure interactions among students as required by specific tasks assigned as part of their independent work each week, there may be multiple deadlines to

submit assignments each week. Each module will run from Friday to Thursday and culminate in either a face-to-face or synchronous session. To help you organize your time, we have tried to make these deadlines predictable throughout the semester, by using the following guidelines:

- Monday – For work that requires classmates to respond later in the week.
- Wednesday at 5pm – For work that requires that the instructor review before class on Thursday
- Thursday at 5pm – For work that must be finished before class begins.

Learning Assessment and Grading

Half of your grade in the course will be based on class participation and weekly assignments, and the other half on your performance on the three major projects. More specifically:

- **Class participation: 15%** (based on points assigned to active participation in each face-to-face class/synchronous session attended, and on-going contributions to the “open” online conversations occurring through a shared collaboration space)
- **Weekly assignments** (including discussion boards and reflective journal entries): **30%** (based on points assigned for completing each assignment on time and satisfactorily, as indicated in the Directions for Independent Work for each learning module)
- **Group Project: 20%** (based on quality of the product, rubrics-based)
- **Individual Project: 20%** (based on quality of the product, rubrics-based)
- **Final Reflection: 15%** (based on quality of the product, rubrics-based)

For a complete and updated list of the maximum number of points associated to specific assignments and other components of the course, see the “Course grading scheme” document posted within the General Information Folder on BB.

Grading scheme:

A: 93-100%; **A-:** 90-92%; **B+:** 85-89%; **B:** 80-84%; **C:** 70-79%; **E:** <70

Appendix A.2

Guidelines for Success in an Online Course

1. **Read the Instructions!** - Because you will be accessing the course and its content frequently without the in-person presence of an instructor, it is essential to thoroughly read the overview for each module and make sure that you understand the content that you need to review, the activities that you will need to complete, and the associated deadlines with those activities.
2. **Course Schedule** - Unlike a face-to-face course, where the activity takes place in the face-to-face session and you might have assignments due for the next class session, in an online course there might be various activities that take place during the week. Again, be sure to carefully read the instructions for each module and plan **YOUR TIME** accordingly.
3. **Pacing** - An online course may seem to move faster than a traditional face-to-face course because there can be multiple deadlines within a module. Deadlines on holidays and weekends are not unusual; however you have the flexibility to submit earlier if you need.
4. **Keeping Up** - The key to success in an online course is keeping up with the work. You will find it is much harder to "catch up" when you fall behind than in traditional classroom settings. However, the advantage is that you can work at your own pace and time, in whatever schedule best meets your needs. You can expect to spend approximately **9 hours per learning module** on class activities for this hybrid online class which runs over a semester. If you are spending more than the expected hours per week and don't feel you are accomplishing the learning objectives, please contact me.
5. **Staying Connected** - Additionally, the constant connectedness to your course content and classmates can be overwhelming. It is possible to be connected to your course every day. At the same time, waiting until the last minute to connect can also be overwhelming because there will be much to catch up on. Find a happy medium between always connected and waiting until the last minute to connect. For example, get in the habit of checking Blackboard at least 3 times per week.
6. **Content Overload** - A word about the volume of materials in this course. In addition to the required materials, I have provided you with reference materials (files, readings, tools, etc.) that may be helpful to you if you have a particular interest in the topic, or need further information for one of your projects. That does not mean you need to review/read every single thing that is posted. I will try to be clear about what is required vs. recommended.
7. **Discussion Participation** - Due dates surrounding discussions are a significant component of module flow and impact instructor and peer interaction in an online course.

You should plan your interaction time with classmates so that you complete assignments on or before posted due dates. For example, if a discussion board assignment indicates that your first post is due on Monday, that's a key indicator that everyone will have posted by that date and peer responses can then begin as the second part of the assignment activity. Delays in making your first post by the due date and time will impact "class discussion." An analogy to this in a traditional classroom would be showing up an hour after class ended and expecting to participate in the in-person discussion - all of your classmates and the instructor have already gone home.

8. **Due Dates** - Weekly assignments and projects are due by Wednesday evenings in an effort to keep the entire class on track (so that means that for Module 1, your work will need to be completed by Wednesday evening so that you can begin Module 2 activities by the date on the course schedule). If you are falling behind or have not been contributing, you will receive a reminder email once. If you are unable to meet due dates, please contact me so that we can discuss the expectations for completion.
9. **Ask Questions!** - Whenever something seems unclear, send me a message to avoid letting your confusion become distress. I will either respond to you individually, or post an announcement to the entire class. You can also post questions to "Ask a Question" in the Discussion Board. Anyone can respond to those questions, but I will monitor and answer as well.

Appendix A.3
Prompt for Participants' Introductions and Preliminary Journal

Meet Your Classmates- Module 1

Post an entry here to introduce yourself to the rest of the class. Include the following:

- Your name
- Your program of study and how far along you are in your program
- What interested you about this course
- What experiences you have had with online teaching or learning

Weekly Reflective Journal – Module 1

This is your first journal entry. Before the class begins, we'd like to hear your initial thoughts on Online Teaching and Learning.

Jot down just a few paragraphs, just based on your experiences so far and what you may have heard/thought about online education, in response to the following questions:

- *What do you see as the greatest potential value of engaging in online learning for students?*
- *What do you see as the greatest potential value of engaging in online teaching for instructors?*
- *What are your major concerns as an online student?*
- *What are your major concerns as a future online teacher?*

Appendix A.4

Discussion Boards Prompts

Discussion Instructions - Module 3

Choose one of the following course activities for this discussion board activity:

- Developing shared images of online learning activities (example lesson review)
- "Fish" area experience
- This online module about learning and motivation

Answer the following questions, in light of the readings from this week.

- a) Which of the learning theories or principles you read about were reflected in your chosen activity?
- b) What motivation principles were used to increase students' engagement in the activity?

Be specific- identify specific components of the activity that reflect a specific principle and related readings.

Discussion Instructions- Module 5

Having reviewed the all of the course materials thus far, one might consider how to best build connections between students and content, students and teacher, and students and other students.

What concepts from previous modules, or even this one, do you think are important in building these connections (student to content, student to instructor, and student to student)?

Please make an initial post in **each** of the three threads provided.

Discussion Instructions- Module 8

Consider the "Ten Best Practices for Teaching Online" content and your experience in this course, as well as the group lessons.

(<http://www.designingforlearning.info/services/writing/ecoach/tenbest.html>)

Choose ONE of the best practices listed and provide one example that you saw demonstrated in either THIS course or within the group lesson OR a way that the course or lessons could have been improved if that best practice had been employed.

Appendix A.5

Reflective Journals' Prompts

Weekly Journal Entry- Module 2- Experience as Learners

Having been part of the discussion in our first face-to-face session, and after further reviewing sample online activities and completing this week's assigned readings, expand upon your initial thoughts about online teaching and learning.

- *In what ways has your thinking changed about online teaching and learning after just one week?*
- *What was the most surprising thing you learned in the past week?*
- *What new concerns do you have about learning in an online environment? About teaching in an online environment?*

Weekly Journal Entry- Module 3- Theories about Learning and Understanding Motivation

We are well aware that the readings and assignments you have done so far in this module have only “scratched the surface” with regard to what there is to know about learning theory and motivation and their implications for online teaching. We hope, however, that these learning experiences will not only have provided you with a foundation on which to build in the future, but also have made you aware of “what you do not know” and would like to learn more about. We think it will be valuable for you to articulate what are some of these things you would like to know more about – both for your own sake, and as a way to help the instructors identify possible topics you will be able to choose from for the Group Lesson you will be asked to prepare later in the course.

For this week's entry, please include your main takeaways regarding learning theories and motivation, including implications for your future practice as an online instructor. Additionally, identify some specific questions (at least two) that the readings and experience in this module have raised for you.

Weekly Journal Entry- Module 4- Assessment Strategies

Identify your main “take-aways” about assessment gained from this module - including, whenever possible, implications about your future practice as an online instructor.

Weekly Journal Entry- Module 5- Lesson Design and Online Community

In this journal entry you should consider how the content from this module applies to your individual lesson plan. Consider each of the following areas:

What would be possible worthwhile goals for your Individual Module? Think about this question especially as you do your readings from *How People Learn*, taking into consideration your chosen audience, and the amount of time your students will have to work on this module. For your reflection, identify at least one such goal, explaining why you think it would be worthwhile and achievable in your chosen setting. (NOTE: it is not important for this assignment that you choose the “most important” goal nor that you actually end up pursuing this specific goal in your Module – just pick one of the possible goals you came up with that you think is worth considering)

What would be desirable student learning outcomes related to your chosen goal(s)? Think about this question especially as you read the chapter from “Understanding by Design.” What would it mean to take such an approach for your module? What would be some concrete things that you want your students to be able to do/show by the end of your module? For your reflection, describe at least one concrete learning outcome that is consistent with the goal you previously identified, explaining why you chose it.

What kinds of learning tasks would help your students achieve the desired learning outcomes? Think about this question especially as you read the chapters on Web-based instructional design”, the chapter on the 5E approach, and the concrete examples of online assignments from our textbook. Identify among the proposed approaches/activities any that you think can be used to design a task that may help your students achieve one of the desired outcomes that you identified for your module. For your reflection, describe at least one concrete learning task that you think would help your students achieve the learning outcome you identified for the previous question, explaining why you chose it and making specific references to the readings.

How can you design your module to help develop a Community of Inquiry? Think about this question especially as you read the articles on “Community of Inquiry.” Are there some “practices/expectations” (rather than specific learning tasks) that you should consider as you design your module, to ensure that you develop sufficient teacher presence and student interaction? For your reflection, describe at least one concrete thing you plan to do in your Module to support the development of an online Community of Inquiry.

How will you address the three specific areas of COI - student-teacher, student-content, and student-student interactions? For your reflection, describe at least one way that you will address each of these areas.

Weekly Reflective Journal- Module 7- Group Lessons

Please reflect on your experience both as a student and an instructor.

Reflect upon your experience as an **instructor** in this module. The following questions might be helpful in writing this reflection:

- What went well for you and your group?
- What problems did you and your group have?
- What would you do differently in the future?

Reflect upon your experience as a **student** in this module. The following questions might be helpful in writing this reflection:

- What worked well for you?
- What problems did you have?
- What information do you wish you had in order to make this lesson more successful?

Weekly Reflective Journal- Module 8- Evaluation of Online Teaching

Think about the group lesson you developed and taught. Now apply the "5 Steps to Assessing Online Course Quality" to your lesson. Provide thoughts on how these 5 aspects apply to the lesson you created.

Weekly Reflective Journal- Module 9- Wrap-up

Think about the video "8 Tips I Learned from Teaching Online." You probably have some of your own insights and thoughts, both from your experience as a student in this course and from developing your group and individual lessons. Create a bulleted list of the key insights that **you** have gained so far about online teaching and learning.

Appendix A.6

Detailed Description of Group Project

Brief description:

At about mid-point in the course, we will divide the class in a few groups of 3-5 students each and assign to each group the task of designing and implementing an online “lesson” on a topic related to online teaching and learning (OTL hereafter). The instructors will provide significant support in terms of identifying possible topics, learning goals, and content; however, each group will have full responsibility for deciding the lesson’s activities, preparing and posting all the needed online materials, and implementing the lesson with the rest of the class. After the lesson has been delivered, each group will receive feedback from the students who participated in the lesson as well as the course instructors, and revise their plan for teaching the same lesson more effectively in the future.

Purpose:

This project has been designed primarily to provide you with a first “experience as online teacher” in the course. Consistent with research on how complex practices are best learned, we believe that future online instructors can greatly benefit from engaging in some “scaffolded” online teaching – that is, take on most of the instructor’s role for an online activity, but with the support of an expert (the course instructor). This project will also serve to enhance everybody’s learning in the course, and provide a formative assessment of your learning about online instructional design and facilitation.

Additional details:

Topic and group selection: After completing most of the OTL Foundations component of the course, the instructors will identify a list of topics related to teaching online that students in the course may be interested in learning more about. Students will be asked to comment on the topics they are most interested in (and why), and even share some preliminary ideas about what a worthwhile lesson on that topic could be if they wish, in a special discussion board. Informed by this online conversation, the instructor will create the groups and assign each group a topic. Within the assigned topic, each group will then more specifically identify the goals for a meaningful “online module” for the rest of the class, as well as appropriate learning activities to address those goals within the time constraints.

Expectations for each module: Each module should be equivalent of about 5 – 7 days of independent work in this course (as students will be asked to participate in other lessons as their independent work for the same period of time), and address selected aspects of the assigned topic in a way that is appropriate to the level and interests of the students in this course. Within these guidelines, each group needs to determine the specific goals for the lesson and a set of learning activities that have the potential of enabling the participants to achieve those goals. The lesson needs to be done entirely online, asynchronously, using our Blackboard site for its delivery. The group in charge of

the lesson is ultimately responsible for the planning and implementation of the lesson – including posting all the needed materials online, providing instructions to the other students, and providing feedback to the participants' work.

Learning to use essential Blackboard tools as instructor: As a result of your experiences as a learner in this course, you will already be familiar with and able to use a number of basic Blackboard tools (such as multimedia content, assignments, journals, discussion boards, wikis, etc.) as a student. To complete this project, however, you will also need to learn how to use these same tools as the instructor in the course – that is, how to set up assignments, discussion boards, content, etc. that your students can access and use. To enable you to do this, we have posted a set of tutorials with instructions about how to do so for the more common Blackboard tools, and we will also offer an optional “hands-on demonstration” for interested students; we expect you to attend the lesson and/or review those tutorials first, before asking the instructor for additional coaching.

Module implementation: Each student in the class will participate in other modules, and provide feedback to the instructors. For logistical reasons, students will be assigned to these modules, and participate in them as learners the week before or after when they facilitate their module as instructors.

Revision: We believe that good teaching requires continuous reflection and improvement – so we want you to start the habit here! After you have implemented your lesson with your classmates, you will receive feedback and suggestions for improvement from both the instructors and the participants in your lesson. We expect you to review this feedback and make revisions in your original lesson plan that you think will improve it. While you will not be expected to teach again the revised lesson, your revised lesson plan will be evaluated by the instructors and receive a grade.

Group members' responsibilities: Managing the logistics of developing and delivering a lesson as a group is an unavoidable challenge, yet also a valuable part of your learning experience in this project. While we will discuss in class about group work dynamics, and share some tips, **we urge each group to plan carefully upfront how tasks will be distributed and coordinated across group members, when and how to meet, how to communicate decisions and drafts with each other, etc.** We also encourage you to explore and take advantage as appropriate of online technologies that may help support this process – including discussion boards, Google docs, Zoom, just to mention a few.

Instructors' support: To make the task of designing and delivering a first online lesson more manageable, the instructors will provide help in the following ways:

- (a) by reviewing the key goals of the lesson (so as to make sure it is a worthwhile learning experience for the rest of the class, and that the scope is not beyond the equivalent of about half a week of independent work);

- (b) by reviewing and/or providing suggestions about readings that could be relevant to the topic;
- (c) by providing feedback on initial ideas about the plan;
- (d) by providing detailed feedback and suggestions for improvement after the lesson has been implemented.

Timeline:

Given the complex nature of this project, you will be working on it over a few weeks following the following timeline:

- Module 4 – Synchronous Session - Group Project is introduced and list of possible topics shared and possibly refined.
- Module 5 - Students begin to share their interests and ideas around specific topics in a special discussion board; instructors assign groups and their assigned topic taking this input into consideration.
- Module 5 – Synchronous Session - Students will have time during this session to begin to work in their assigned groups. Students are expected to continue working together during the following week
- Module 6 - During this module, groups will work on their lessons. There are a number of checkpoints during this timeframe. Review the specifics in the online module folder.
- Module 7 - One of these weeks you will participate as a student in the modules prepared by other groups (as assigned by the instructors), doing all the required independent work, following up with written feedback about the module to the instructors. The other week you will facilitate your own Group Module.
- Module 7 – Face-to-face class meeting - Group will have time during class to meet to decide on revisions for your lesson

Appendix A.7

Detailed Description of Individual Project

Brief description:

As the culminating assessment for this course, and building on what you learned from the Group Project, you will independently design an “online learning module” on a topic of your choice and for an audience of your choice. You will need to produce a written plan as well as create and post on a special BB site all the online materials needed to implement this learning experience (but you will not be asked to actually implement it with students). The instructors and some of your classmates will review these documents and provide you with feedback, so you can make revisions before your online learning module is evaluated for a final grade.

Purpose:

This project has been designed as the culminating learning experience in the course as well as a summative assessment. As such, we expect each student to complete these tasks more independently, although still receiving some support from the instructors as well as a peer acting as “thinking partner”.

Additional details:

Topic and audience selection: You can choose any topic and audience you want for your online learning module. To make this assignment most authentic as well as useful for your future practice, however, we recommend that you choose something you may actually be teaching. We also recommend that you are not overly ambitious, and choose a reasonable scope for your online learning module; this will allow you to focus on fully developing a few innovative learning activities (for the equivalent of no more than two weeks of a course, and possibly less).

Expectations for each online learning module: The learning module needs to be designed so that it can be delivered fully online, although it may include a synchronous component (but only if you desire it). Within these constraints, the learning module itself could be thought of as a self-contained online professional development/ workshop, or part of a course offered entirely online or as a hybrid/online, or even as a homework assignment for a traditional face-to-face course. To complete this project, you will need to:

- Submit a written lesson plan that includes a clear articulation of:
 - context and audience
 - overall goals, as well as the concrete learning outcomes you want students to achieve after they have completed the module
 - the sequence of learning activities/tasks students are expected to engage in, and their rationale (i.e., how is each activity expected to contribute to [some of] the goals/outcomes for the module).

- Create and post all the online instructional materials needed to deliver your learning module in a special section of Blackboard (*more detailed instructions about how to do so will be provided later*).

You will not be expected to actually deliver this module for the purpose of this assignment.

Revision: Consistent with the value we place on revisions, we will ask you to make some improvements in your written plan and materials after receiving feedback from the instructors and a few classmates. Only your revised plan and materials will be evaluated for quality, using rubrics we will come up with as a class.

Instructors' support: To transition you to independently design online learning modules, unlike what happened in the Group Project, for this project the instructors' support will be limited to

(a) providing some initial feedback on the goals and key learning activities of your learning module (mostly to ensure that the learning module you are planning meets the expectations of this assignment);

(b) responding to specific questions you may have throughout your planning process;

(c) providing detailed feedback and suggestions for improvement after your complete lesson plan and materials have been posted.

"Thinking partner's" roles: While you will be fully in charge for all decisions related to your online learning module, in this Individual Project you will have the opportunity to work closely with another classmate as a "thinking partner." Thinking partners are expected to share ideas at various stages of the planning process, as well as to "engage as a student" (to the extent possible) in the partner's learning module when completed, so as to be able to give him/her in-depth feedback. You will be given the option to mutually select your thinking partner, or be assigned one by the instructors.

Appendix A.8

Directions for Final Reflection

Final Reflection Paper

Review your weekly reflection journal and comments from the instructor.

Using the outline provided in the attachment, write a final reflection paper summarizing your thoughts and experience in online teaching and learning. Be sure to answer all of the questions posed. Include citations and references where appropriate (APA 6).

Submit your final reflection paper here as an attachment.

Final Reflection Paper Outline

Purpose: This assignment has been designed to help you identify what you learned in the course and draw concrete implications for your own practice from what you learned in the course about teaching and learning online. As such, this assignment is also intended to provide a culminating summative assessment of your learning in this course.

Requirement: For this project you will have to submit a narrative "Final Reflection Paper" (4-6 pages **single-spaced**).

Identifying your role/perspective in your Final Reflection Paper: To provide the needed context for your reflections, please identify upfront in your paper your profession/role as an educator (i.e., teacher, principal, athletic coach, doctoral student, business professional, etc.) and the context in which you expect to be teaching online (i.e., type of institution, students' ages/levels, content areas, and any other special characteristics).

Breadth and depth of your reflection in your Final Reflection Paper: To ensure sufficient breadth and depth in your reflection, we recommend that you **SYSTEMATICALLY ADDRESS EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

- What do you think are the most valuable affordances of online learning, and how do you plan to capitalize on them in your future teaching?
- What do you think are the greatest limitations of online learning, and how could you minimize them if you were asked to teach an online course because your students do not live in the region?
- Which types of OTL practices are you planning to use with your students, why and how?
- What do you think are the greatest challenges for you with respect to designing high-quality online learning activities? What do you plan to do to address these challenges?
- How would you choose when and where to use online learning activities for your students?

- Looking back at your learning throughout the course, what stands out as main “take aways” and surprises?
- How did your perceptions about and approach to online teaching and learning change as a result of this course?
- How did each of the OTL practices you learned about in the course impact your thoughts about teaching and learning practice, generally, and how might you be able to apply these practices in your future practice – either in online teaching or in F2F teaching?

Additional tips: The following strategies may also help you with this culminating project:

- Review the revised *Course Goals & Key Activities* document to become more aware of the course learning goals and objectives, as well as specific activities you may want to refer back to.
- Look back at your initial ideas about *online teaching and learning*, as articulated in your very first assignment at the beginning of the course, as a “baseline.”
- Look back at all of your module/weekly journal entries in chronological order, as a way to trace your learning across the course; feel free to draw from that source as needed for your paper.

Format for the written report: Your paper should discuss in concrete terms how you plan to use what you have learned from this course in your future online teaching (in the specific context you have identified). Within these general guidelines, however, you can choose the organization and format you prefer to report the outcomes of your reflection.

Appendix B.1

First Interview Protocol

Investigating teachers' identity development in a hybrid course to prepare online teachers

Principal Investigator: Syeda Farzana Hafsa
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Raffaella Borasi

PI: Hello, Thank you very much for joining me today. My name is Syeda Farzana Hafsa and I am a PhD student at the Warner School of Education at University of Rochester. I am conducting a research study on teachers' identity development in a hybrid course to prepare online teachers. The purpose of my study is to understand how teachers develop an identity of an online teacher in the context of the course EDE484: Online Teaching Learning. As a student who took the course in spring 2017, you can provide valuable insight to my research project. This interview should last for about one hour to one and a half hours.

All of the interview questions will be related to your experiences of taking the course Online Teaching Learning. You are welcome to select your own pseudo-name. Although I had mentioned in the Information Sheet that this interview would be audio-recorded, I want to make sure, you are comfortable with that.

I would like to remind you that your participation in this study is voluntary. You can cease to participate in this study at any time without any impact on your employment or professional status. Before we get started, do you have any questions or concerns?

PI: I will begin recording this interview. Let's begin now.

Interview question 1: What experiences did you have of traditional and online teaching learning prior to taking this course?

Interview question 2: What kind of online teacher do you want to be?

- **Pre- Survey:** Ask to show their survey answers – if they did not do the survey, have them complete it now; ask to comment on their ratings – why did they choose specific statements as “most important” & “least important”?
- **(bridge to Question 3)** If I had given you this survey before the course, which of your answers would have changed the most? Why?

Interview question 3: [In what other ways] have your perceptions about online teaching and being an online teacher changed from before you started the course? Can you please tell me what caused the changes you identified?

Interview question 4: As you look back to the course, what experiences stand out as most influential, and why?

Probing questions: participation

- What about being an online learner?
- Participating in the group project -actually teaching online
- Individual project – designing on your own

Probing questions: recognition

- Your reflections – journals and final paper
- Feedback from teacher and peers
- Readings- confirmation from literature

Interview question 5: What are the biggest challenges you have encountered and/or expect to encounter in your journey to become the online teacher you want to be?

PI: Thank you very much for your time and participation in this interview. If you are interested in doing a second interview with me, I will go ahead and schedule one in another month. Also, in a few months when I have completed most of my data analysis, I would like to fact check my findings with you. If you have any questions please feel free to email me.

Appendix B.2
Follow-up Interview Protocol

**Investigating teachers' identity development in a hybrid course to prepare
online teachers**

Principal Investigator: Syeda Farzana Hafsa
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Raffaella Borasi

1. From reading your narrative, do you feel it well represents your experience in the course?
 - a. Is there anything that you think does not represent you correctly? Would you like to change anything?
 - b. Are there things you would like to add to any of the items?
2. This research is about identity development of online teachers and according to theories I am using, two of the most important components of identity development are- participation in practices related to the kind of online teacher you want to become, and recognition from self and others about the kind of online teacher you want to become. I would like to check with you my interpretation of your experience in the course along these lines. More specifically:
 - a. Tell me more about how your “experience of participation” when you took on the role of online teacher in the group project and individual project impacted the kind of online teacher you want to be. *Potential follow up questions:*
 - i. How did the sense of accomplishment you experienced in either of these projects affect how you perceive yourself as an online teacher?
 - ii. How different was it for you to have a group of people to do the group project with versus doing it alone in the individual project?
 - iii. How important was it to have the group project first and then the individual project? Why?
 - b. What impact did the feedback you received throughout the course have on how you perceive yourself as an online teacher? Was there any difference between the roles played by the teacher feedback versus the peer feedback?
 - c. Were there any readings in the course that impacted your views of the kind of online teacher you want to be? If so, tell us more about those readings and the role they played.

Appendix B.3 Pre-Interview Survey

Investigating teachers' identity development in a hybrid course to prepare online teachers Pre interview survey

Name:

Please read the following statements carefully and categorize their importance to you on a scale of 1-3 (where 3 means most important and 1 least important) - making sure you have at least a few 1's and 3's! Also add at least one additional statement at the end that describes the kind of online teacher you would like to be.

I aspire to be an online teacher who:

Statements	Your rating
1. Is knowledgeable about the content taught	
2. Is knowledgeable about the latest technology	
3. Is knowledgeable about digital resources students could use	
4. Is a life-long learner and innovator	
5. Is goal-driven/ Designs instruction to meet specific learning goals	
6. Fosters a caring and vibrant learning community in class	
7. Creates a personal relationship with the students	
8. Promotes deep learning, building on students' prior knowledge and providing students with meaning-making opportunities	
9. Creates opportunities for students to work together	
10. Designs motivating and engaging activities	
11. Meets students' individual needs and preferences	
12. Provides multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate learning	
13. Clearly communicates learning goals and expectations/ provides clear directions	
14. Creates and curates great online materials for students	
15. Collaborates with colleagues to design quality instructions	
16. Increases students' access to learning opportunities and resources	
<i>ADD YOUR OWN STATEMENT(S) describing the kind of online teacher you want to be:</i>	

Appendix C

RSRB Documentation

Information Sheet

Investigating teachers' identity development in a hybrid course to prepare online teachers

Principal Investigator: Syeda Farzana Hafsa
Doctoral Candidate, Department of Teaching and Curriculum

This form describes a research study that is being conducted by Syeda Hafsa and Dr. Raffaella Borasi from the University of Rochester's Warner School of Education.

The purpose of this study is to inform the design and implementation of more effective courses and programs to prepare online teachers. This is important in today's world because of the increasing demand for online teaching and the recognition that the quality of online learning depends highly on the quality of the design and facilitation of the online experiences. Therefore, we need high quality online instructors and we need to learn how to prepare them most effectively. To achieve this goal, this dissertation study will focus on how programs preparing online teachers can better support the development of their students' *online teacher identity* – by which we mean “what kind of online teacher one aspires to be.” The research on online teacher identity development is still very limited, and few online teacher preparation programs today explicitly consider this important component. To address this gap, my dissertation study will investigate what most affected the identity development of the participants in the section of the course EDE484: Online Teaching and Learning offered in spring 2017.

If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate in two semi-structured interviews (no more than 90 minutes each). You will also be required to permit the researcher to review the written works (artifacts) you have submitted as part of the course. The first interview will take place after an initial analysis of the artifacts collected from the course. The second interview will be conducted after having analyzed all the data to connect and cross check and to ask follow up questions for further details. After the analysis of the data, you will be invited to review the findings and share your thoughts. The interviews will take place at Warner School of Education. PI will conduct the interviews and those will be audiotaped. We estimate that approximately 8 people will take part in this study. Your participation will last about 6 months.

There is a very small chance that some of the questions may make you feel uncomfortable. However, you will always have the right to tell the PI if you do not want to have some of the information you shared to be used in the study. You may skip any questions you don't want to answer. There are no other expected risks to you for participating in this study. The reflections about your professional work that you will be asked to share in the interviews are considered by some as a benefit in their personal and

professional growth; otherwise, there will be no additional personal or professional benefits from participating in this study. You will not be paid for participating in this study. There will be no cost to you to participate in this study.

The University of Rochester makes every effort to keep the information collected from you private. In order to do so, we will make efforts to keep the personal information and all data confidential. Pseudonyms will be used and we will not identify the section of the course we have chosen to study, and any publications and/or reports that may result from this study will contain pseudonymous identifying information. We will store field notes and paper-based transcripts in a locked cabinet. Sometimes, however, researchers need to share information that may identify you with people that work for the University. If this does happen we will take precautions to protect the information you have provided. Results of the research may be presented at conferences or in publications, but your name will not be used.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free not to participate or to withdraw at any time, for whatever reason. No matter what decision you make, there will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

For more information about this research you may call Syeda Farzana Hafsa at 585-520-8447. Please contact the University of Rochester Research Subjects Review Board at 265 Crittenden Blvd., CU 420315, Rochester, NY 14642-8315, Telephone (585) 276-0005 or (877) 449-4441 for the following reasons:

- You wish to talk to someone other than the research staff about your rights as a research subject;
- To voice concerns about the research;
- To provide input concerning the research process;
- In the event the study staff could not be reached.

Appendix D.1
Data Analysis

Investigating teachers' identity development in a hybrid course to prepare online teachers

Table for first pass of analysis

Name of Participant

	"Pre-course assignment"	"Final reflection"
RQ1:		
Changes identified by the subject		
What kind of online teacher does s/he aspire to be (<i>general</i>)		
What kind of online learning & learning environment does s/he want to promote? Perceived values, limitations, challenges/ concerns about online learning		
What kind of online teaching practices does s/he envision using? Online teaching practices considered most important		
How is s/he envisioning using		

online learning in her/his teaching (future plans)		
<i>Other</i>		
RQ2:		
References to experiences as learners of online module (and their impact)	N/A	
References to discussion boards (and their impact)	N/A	
References to specific class activities (and their impact)	N/A	
References to on-class reflections (and their impact)	N/A	
References to group project (and its impact)	N/A	
References to individual project (and its impact)	N/A	
References to journals (and their impact)	N/A	
References to final reflection (and its impact)	N/A	
<i>Other</i>		
RQ3:		
Expected and/or actual challenges (and how they coped with them)		
<i>Other</i>		