

## *The Framing of an EFL Primary School Teacher's Identity by Norwegian Pre-Service Primary School Teachers*

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### Abstract

This article focuses on how pre-service primary school teachers (henceforth, "participants") frame the identity of a teacher of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at a Norwegian primary school. The framing is investigated by means of a qualitative analysis of the participants' short reflective essays (mean number of words = 559) written by the participants in the English language. The participants ( $N = 10$ ) were enrolled in the English language program at a university in Norway. They were asked to write a reflective essay on the identity of an EFL primary school teacher at a Norwegian primary school. The participants were matched with a control group of 10 EFL non-teacher students at the same university, who were instructed to execute an identical task. The results of the qualitative framing analysis indicated that the participants framed their reflections by means of the frames "The Facilitator", "The Fun Organizer", "The Government Employee", "The Influencer", "The Knowledge Developer", "The Motivator", "The Professional", "The Relationship Builder", and "The Role Model". The controls' reflective essays were framed via the frames "The Fun Organizer", "The Influencer", "The Knowledge Developer", "The Motivator", and "The Role Model". These findings are indicative of the differences between the participants' and controls' framing of an EFL primary school teacher's identity.

**Keywords:** framing; English as a foreign language (EFL); primary school; teacher's identity

## 1. Introduction

This qualitative study seeks to elucidate how pre-service primary school teachers (henceforth referred to as “participants”) frame the identity of a teacher of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), who works at a primary school in Norway. In order to investigate the framing, the participants were asked to write a short reflective essay on the topic of the identity of an EFL primary school teacher. Assuming that discourse analysis is considered a means to understand teacher identity (Hall et al., 2010, p. 235), it is hypothesized in this study that the participants’ discourse represented by reflective essays would be informative of the professional identity of an EFL primary school teacher and the associated variables, such as beliefs related to the teaching profession, teaching roles, professional self-images, classroom practices in general, and EFL classroom practices in particular (Borg, 2001; Chan, 2008; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Dora To, Phoebe Chan, Lam, & Tsang, 2011; Farrell, 2011; Farrell & Lim, 2005; Yazan, 2018; Yazan & Peercy, 2018).

The issue of teacher identity is particularly relevant to pre-service teachers (Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006; Hong, 2010). In this regard, Bullough (1997) posits that teacher identity is “of vital concern to teacher education; it is the basis for meaning making and decision making. Teacher education must begin, then, by exploring the teaching self” (p. 21). Concurring with Bullough (1997), Ó Gallchoir, O’Flaherty and Hinchion (2018) suggest that by means of “engagement in reflection, pre-service teachers make sense of their practice and challenges to make sense of themselves as teachers and the various contexts in which they interact” (p. 140).

Whilst teacher identity has been recognized as a critical variable in teacher education (Ó Gallchoir et al., 2018, p. 138), there is still insufficient research that involves teacher identity of an EFL primary school teacher in Norwegian contexts (Søreide, 2006). The study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of that issue. The novelty of this study is twofold. First, the study involves a qualitative investigation of reflective essays on the identity of an EFL primary school teacher in Norwegian contexts. Currently, little is known about how pre-service EFL teachers view the identity of those EFL teachers who are employed at primary schools in Norway (Søreide, 2006). Second, another novel aspect of this study is associated with the application of the framing analysis to the corpus of the reflective essays written by the participants on the topic of teacher identity. It should be emphasized that the theoretical framework in this study is embedded into the tenets of a discursive approach to teacher identity as a discursive practice performed by a reflective professional (Farrell, 2014; LaPointe, 2010).

The concept of an EFL teacher identity constitutes a pivotal part in the present research. It should be emphasized that in general, identity is regarded

as an essential core of a person (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006), a construal that is improvisational, agent-driven and is "negotiated as individuals interact with various contexts" (Ryan, 2007, p. 345). Identity is thought to be construed in practice, where practice "involves the negotiation of ways of being a person in that context" (Wenger, 1998, p. 149). Seen from the vantage point of psychology, identity is conceptualized within the domains of experience, global and local contexts, as well as learning trajectories (Wenger, 1998, p. 149).

Teacher identity is a multidisciplinary construal that is informed by research in general education, philosophy, psychology, sociology, and sociolinguistics (Olsen, 2008, p. 24; Pillen, Den Brok, & Beijjaard, 2013; Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010; Werbińska & Ekiert, 2018, p. 308). One of the definitions of teacher identity is that of "social and cultural complexes and associations that constitute a framework for constructing educators' beliefs, values, ideas and attitudes" (Ajayi, 2011, p. 656). A similar definition is found in Yazan (2018), who posits that teacher identity is "an interface between individual teachers' investment, expectations, values and priorities and the social, cultural and institutional demands and expectations" (Yazan, 2018, p. 2017). Extending the aforementioned definitions, Mockler (2011) indicates that the teacher professional identity is associated with discursive practices. Seen within discursive parameters, the teacher professional identity involves:

the way that teachers, both individually and collectively, view and understand themselves as teachers. Teacher professional identity is thus understood to be formed within, but then also out of, the narratives and stories that form the 'fabric' of teachers' lives, what Connelly and Clandinin (1999) have termed "stories to live by". Professional identity has a "performative edge": the process of "storying" and "restorying" has the effect of both claiming and producing professional identity (Mockler, 2011, p. 519).

It is inferred from recent publications (De Costa & Norton, 2017; Søreide, 2006; Werbińska & Ekiert, 2018) that teacher identity is a dynamic phenomenon that involves "a continuum of components rather than discrete, linear parts" (Olsen, 2008, p. 23). The continuum of variables involved in the teacher's identity is comprised of the teacher's professional self within historical, political, socio-cultural, and temporal contexts (Olsen & Buchanan, 2017; Samuel, 2008). A similar contention is found in Horowitz, Sorensen, Yoder, and Oyserman (2018), who posit that "even though identity (who one was, is, and might become) feels stable, identities are dynamically constructed in context" (p. 13). It seems possible to generalize that teacher identity is embedded into the professional reality of a teacher (Goodson & Cole, 1994). Arguably, the construction of this reality is a dynamic process that involves concurrent trajectories of personal and professional development (Beijjaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; Goodson & Cole, 1994).

Previous research indicates that teacher identity is comprised of a plethora of variables, such as, for instance, beliefs, motivation, and other factors (Dörnyei, 2003; Noels, Pelletier, Clément, & Vallerand, 2000; Stojiljković, Djigić, & Zlatković 2012). Teacher identity is dynamically adjusted according to the variables that involve race, gender, language, and age (Samuel, 2008). Given the dynamic nature of teacher identity, van Veen, Slegers and Van de Ven (2005, p. 918) argue that teacher identity is affected by classroom experiences, collegial relationships, organizational structures, and external situational pressures. Consequently, it is argued that no uniform identity of being a teacher is possible (Samuel, 2008, pp. 3-4). This argument is supported by Volkmann and Anderson (1998, p. 293-294), who suggest that teacher identity is “a complex and dynamic equilibrium between personal self-image and teacher roles one feels obliged to play”. It can be summarized that prior studies in applied linguistics and in teacher education argue that there is hardly a set of essential characteristics that are common to all teachers (Sugrue, 1997). On the contrary, professional identity of a teacher involves contextual and dynamic variables (Darvin & Norton, 2018). These variables are thought to compete in a complex and contradictory manner (Darvin & Norton, 2018), thus contributing to the unique properties of professional identity of each individual teacher (Samuel, 2008). Whilst teacher identity is complex and unique, it is, nevertheless, possible to analyze it by means of discursive practices, in particular, via the teacher’s reflective discourse (Farrell, 2006). Further in this article, reflective discourse associated with an EFL primary school teacher’s identity will be analyzed by means of qualitative framing analysis.

## 2. The framing of teacher identity: Literature review

In this section of the article, I will review prior literature associated with the framing of the teacher identity in reflective discourse (Crow, Christopher Day, & Møller, 2017; Ó Gallchoir et al., 2018; Korthagen, 2004). Framing has been amply applied to a wide range of discursive practices (Fairclough, 2003) that involve discourse on climate change (Dahl & Fløttum, 2014), corporate communication (Tengblad & Ohlsson, 2010), identity (Steinberg, 1998), mass media (Entman, 1993), medicine (Kapranov, 2017), and teacher identity (Crow et al., 2017; Ó Gallchoir et al., 2018; Korthagen, 2004). Following Tannen (1993, p. 4), “framing provides a fruitful theoretical foundation for the discourse analysis of interaction”. In accordance with a canonical definition of framing by Entman (1993, p. 52):

Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.

Arguably, teacher discourse is one of those areas of communicative interaction, where the concept of framing can be successfully employed (Pennington, 1999; Pennington & Hoekje, 2014). Illustrating this assumption, Pennington (1999, p. 54) posits that EFL discourse involves “genre-mixing and shifts in roles and participant alignments that can be described in terms of multiple and shifting frames of talk”. Elaborating upon the definition of frames in EFL contexts, Pennington and Hoekje (2014) indicate that a “frame is a way of perceiving and conceptualizing a situation, event, or activity that gives it a certain meaning and provides a basis for interpreting its significance” (p. 165). Furthermore, Pennington and Hoekje (2014, p. 165) distinguish two broad types of frames, that is, Work Frames and Sociocultural Context Frames. According to Pennington and Hoekje (2014), Work Frames involve “a set of frames of the work itself, that is, different ways in which ELT work can be characterized: as instruction, disciplinary field, profession, business, and service” (p. 165), whilst Sociocultural Context Frames “reflect the nature of the people who are directly involved in ELT – language learners, teachers, researchers, and administrators” (p. 165). It should be noted that the definition of frames which is formulated by Pennington and Hoekje’s (2014) is further used in the present research.

Previous research in EFL studies and in the related disciplines is indicative of a variety of frames and framing strategies associated with the professional identity of a teacher (Crow et al., 2017; Ó Gallchóir et al., 2018; Korthagen, 2004; Søreide, 2006). For instance, Crow et al. (2017) discuss the framing of school principals’ professional identities, Ó Gallchóir et al. (2018) examine the framing of a pre-service teacher, and Korthagen (2004) seeks to establish a theoretical model for framing the question “What is a good teacher?”. In particular, Crow et al. (2017) argue that school principals frame their professional identities within the context of their school communities, personal backgrounds, and historical settings. The framing of professional identity by the school principals is influenced by the interaction with other actors and variables, for example, attitudes, culture, class, gender, practices, race, and values. Moreover, Crow et al. (2017) suggest that professional identity of a school principal is comprised of dynamic interactions among identity, educational policy environments, and the local community. It has been established by Crow and the colleagues (2017) that professional identity of a school principal is a cognitive activity, a dialogical struggle that is aimed at performing a ritualized role, which is expected in historical and cultural contexts. In addition, professional identities of school principals are deemed to be discursively positioned in time and space (Crow et al., 2017).

Ó Gallchóir et al. (2018) seek to examine pre-service teachers’ identity development within a homogenous group of white Irish males. The study by Ó Gallchóir et al. (2018) suggests that the pre-service teachers’ identity is framed

by such variable as physical depiction, since the pre-service teachers make salient those aspects of their identity that are related to the body. Another salient feature of the framing of their identity involves the lack of a standardized approach to mentoring pre-service teachers in school context in Ireland. Specifically, the pre-service teachers frame their identity by means of foregrounding the lack of support during their school placement. Ó Gallcháoir et al. (2018) conclude that pre-service teachers' identity involves a set of separate identities, such as a subject dependent identity and a location dependent identity, such as a teacher during school placement and a student while on campus.

Korthagen (2004) seeks to establish a theoretical model for framing the question "What is a good teacher?". Korthagen (2004) indicates that the framing of the essential qualities of a good teacher differs. According to Korthagen (2004), the framing depends on a cornucopia of variables, such as the environment (e.g., classroom environment), behavior, and the teacher's competencies (e.g., subject matter knowledge). It is inferred from Korthagen's (2004) approach that the framing of a "good" teacher is manifested by a network of complex interdependencies, where the environment can influence a teacher's behavior, whilst repeated behavior may lead to the development of the competency that is transferable to a variety of contexts (Korthagen, 2004, p. 79).

Whilst in a study by Søreide (2006) the notion of framing is not directly referred to, the aim of the research is to investigate how teacher identity is discursively construed. In particular, Sørdeide (2006) suggests that teacher identity in Norwegian school contexts appears to be framed by four identity construals. These construals are "The caring and kind teacher", "The creative and innovative teacher", "The professional teacher", and "The typical teacher", respectively. Whilst the construals "The caring and kind teacher" and "The creative and innovative teacher" are associated with the teachers' positive identification, "The professional teacher" and "The typical teacher" are related to uncertainty towards certain aspects of teaching (Søreide, 2006). Interestingly, Søreide (2006) reports that all of the four identity construals are present in the narratives of those teachers, whose discourse she investigated.

### 3. The present study and its design

The present study was embedded into a university course in EFL didactics that was offered at a large university in Western Norway to pre-service EFL primary school teachers and EFL non-teacher students. The course was based upon the course book written by Drew and Sørheim (2016) and involved an overview of different didactic approaches to EFL teaching and learning in primary schools in Norway. It was expected that the students who attended the course would take part in

classroom discussions and submit two argumentative essays in EFL didactics at the end of the semester. Additionally, the students were supposed to write short reflective assignments during the course. One of those short assignments was a reflective essay on the teacher identity of an EFL primary school teacher in Norway.

The study was based upon a contention formulated by Søreide (2006, p. 529), who indicated that “elementary school teachers, with the same access to the same narrative resources, might, therefore, construct several and different narrative job identities”. Extending that contention further, it was assumed that the participants’ reflective essays on the topic of teacher identity of an EFL primary school teacher would be indicative of such identity-related variables, as teacher beliefs associated with the teaching profession, teaching roles, professional self-images, classroom practices in general, and EFL classroom practices in particular. Following that assumption, three specific research questions were formulated:

1. How pre-service EFL primary teachers frame their reflections on teacher identity of an in-service EFL primary school teacher?
2. How EFL non-teacher students frame their reflections on teacher identity of an in-service EFL primary school teacher?
3. Is there a difference in the framing between both groups?

10 participants (i.e., pre-service EFL primary school teachers) and 10 controls (i.e., EFL university students, non-teachers) took part in the study that was conducted at a large university in Western Norway. The group of participants was comprised of 8 females and 2 males, mean age 24 y. o. Both the participants and the control groups attended the course in EFL didactics at the same university. Given the initial size of the controls, it was possible to reduce it by matching them with the participants in terms of the gender and age demographics (i.e., the control group was selected on the criteria of the closest age to that of the participants; in terms of gender, 8 female participants were matched with 8 female controls, and 2 male participants were matched with 2 male controls). In total, the control group consisted of 8 females and 2 males, mean age 26 y. o. There were no native speakers of English amongst the participants or controls. Whilst all the participants reported several teaching practice sessions at a range of primary schools in Western Norway, the control group never had any teaching practice sessions at primary schools.

All the participants and the controls signed the consent form allowing the author of the article to use their reflective essays for scientific purposes. To ensure confidentiality, the real names of the participants’ were coded as P1, P2, ..., and P10 (i.e., Participant and the number). The identical procedure was applied to the controls, whose real names were coded as C1, C2, ..., and C10, respectively.

The participants and controls were asked to write a short reflective essay of approximately 350 words on the identity of an EFL teacher at a Norwegian primary school. It was allowed to exceed the word limit, if necessary. The task of essay writing took place at a seminar at a large university in Western Norway. The participants and controls were given one hour to complete their reflective essay writing. The corpus of the study was comprised of twenty short reflective essays in total. The descriptive statistics of the corpus were summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 The descriptive statistics of the corpus

N	Statistical Measure	Participants	Controls
1	Total number of words	5 602	3 738
2	Mean number of words	559	370

The theoretical premises of the study were based upon the contention that reflective practice could be conducted in different formats (Farrell, 2006). A reflective essay was assumed to be one of those formats, whose discursive space could be analyzed by means of qualitative framing analysis. It should be noted that framing was deemed to be valid research methodology that could be applicable to the present corpus. The framing methodology in the study was applied in accordance with theoretical premises proposed by Pennington and Hoekje (2014), who posited that a "frame is a way of perceiving and conceptualizing a situation, event, or activity that gives it a certain meaning and provides a basis for interpreting its significance" (p. 165).

Based upon the definition of framing by Pennington and Hoekje (2014), the methodology of qualitative framing analysis in the study involved the methodological procedure developed by Dahl (2015). In accordance with Dahl (2015), the reflective essays were manually examined for the presence of key words, recurrent phrases, stereotyped expressions, and sentences that provided thematically reinforcing clustering. Then, the essays were manually examined for the presence of appraisal elements associated with attitudes, feelings, and values used to construe attitudes, engagement, and intensity in order to construe the frames. The labelling of the frames was executed by the author of the article.

#### 4. Results and discussion

As previously mentioned, the specific research questions of the study involve the framing of the identity of an EFL primary school teacher by the group of participants and the respective control group. Table 2 summarizes the participants' and controls' framing in alphabetical order. The presence of a particular



frame is marked by the plus (+) symbol, whilst the frame's absence is indicated by the minus (-) symbol.

Table 2 The Framing of the Identity of an EFL Primary School Teacher

N	Frames	Participants	Controls
1	"The Facilitator"	+	-
2	"The Fun Organizer"	+	+
3	"The Government Employee"	+	-
4	"The Influencer"	+	+
5	"The Knowledge Developer"	+	+
6	"The Motivator"	+	+
7	"The Professional"	+	-
8	"The Relationship Builder"	+	-
9	"The Role Model"	+	+

It is observed in Table 2 that the framing of an EFL primary school teacher's identity appears to involve a qualitatively different set of frames. Specifically, the following frames are absent in the framing by the controls: "The Facilitator", "The Government Employee", "The Professional", and "The Relationship Builder". Arguably, the qualitative difference between the participants and controls is suggestive of a dynamic nature of EFL contexts that has been referred to in the introductory part of this article (De Costa & Norton, 2017; Olsen, 2008; Søreide, 2006; Werbińska & Ekiert, 2018; Yazan, 2018).

In the participants' reflective essays, the framing of an EFL primary school teacher's identity takes different dimensions compared to the control group (see Table 2). Additionally, the dynamic and context-sensitive nature of the framing exhibited by the participants is manifested by notable differences that are in contrast to the previous research studies by Crow et al. (2017) and Ó Gallchóir et al. (2018), respectively. Unlike in Crow et al. (2017), the framing of a teacher's identity in the present research findings does not seem to involve the considerations of class, gender, or race. Contrary to the results of the study conducted by Ó Gallchóir and the colleagues (2018), there are no references to the teacher's physical depiction as a part of the teacher's identity in the present data. Additionally, the participants do not mention the lack of support during the teaching practice as a part of the teacher's identity in this data set.

However, the present data appear to be qualitatively similar to the previous research by Korthagen (2004) and Søreide (2006), respectively. Whilst there is no direct correspondence between the findings in this study and the results that are reported in Korthagen (2004), it is, nevertheless, possible to note the identical framing of the teacher's identity that involves the teacher's competencies, in particular subject matter knowledge. In the present study, the frames "The Knowledge

Developer" and "The Professional" are evocative of Korthagen's (2004) findings that are associated with the framing of the teacher's identity via the lenses of subject matter knowledge.

It is observed in Table 2 that the findings in this study provide partial support to the results described in Søreide (2006). Presumably, it seems possible to draw parallels between a set of construals of the teacher's identity found in Søreide (2006) and some of the frames reported in this study (see Table 2). Specifically, the construal "The caring and kind teacher" (Søreide, 2006) appears to be in concert with the frames "The Fun Organizer", "The Influencer", "The Relationships Builder", and "The Motivator". The construal "The creative and innovative teacher" (Søreide, 2006) seems to correspond to the frames "The Fun Organizer" and "The Knowledge Developer", whilst the construal "The Professional Teacher" (Søreide, 2006) is analogous to the frames "The Professional" and "The Knowledge Developer". However, there is no framing in the present data set (see Table 2) that is comparable to Søreide's (2006) construal of "The Typical Teacher".

As outlined above, the findings summarized in Table 2 are in contrast to the previous research conducted by Ó Gallchóir et al. (2018) and are, partially, in agreement with the results reported by Korthagen (2004) and Søreide (2006), respectively. Arguably, this observation lends support to van Veen et al. (2005) and Samuel (2008), who posit that a uniform view of the teacher's identity is hardly possible, since it is comprised of complex and heterogeneous classroom experiences, relationships with colleagues, institutional conventions, organizational practices, and a host of external variables (Samuel, 2008, p. 3-4; van Veen et al., 2005, p. 918).

Whilst a uniform view of a teacher's identity appears to be impossible to apply to the whole cohort of EFL primary school teachers, there are, however, qualitatively identical frames that create a shared discursive space in the corpus of the participants' and controls' reflective essays. These frames are "The Fun Organizer", "The Influencer", "The Knowledge Developer", "The Motivator", and "The Role Model". Further in this section of the article, I will discuss the identical frames and then offer an outline of those frames that are specific to the corpus the reflective essays written by the participants and are absent from the controls' corpus, that is, "The Facilitator", "The Government Employee", "The Professional", and "The Relationship Builder".

#### 4.1. "The Fun Organizer"

The frame "The Fun Organizer" seems to be manifested in the reflective essays written by the participants and controls alike. For instance, Excerpt 1 that is written by a participant and Excerpt 2, which is written by a control, are united by the identical frame "The Fun Organizer":

(1) My understanding of a primary school teacher of English would be a *person that allows the students* to have fun during teaching. A tendency with teachers is that they tend to bore their students, forcing them to make their own fun while disrupting the class. Ideally, *a teacher would be able to create a balance between fun and studying*. This includes that the students manage to achieve both knowledge and fun, without disrupting others (P3).

(2) My view of a teacher is that a constantly serious teacher would strip away the students' eagerness to learn and to study the language. *An EFL teacher's role in a primary school classroom is to make the teaching of English fun and enjoyable. The teacher can play games with the students* so that they do not get bored, also they can sit in groups playing games, then they will feel more comfortable using the English language (C1).

It is evident from Excerpts 1 and 2 that both the participant P3 and the control C1 refer to fun as a means of counterbalancing boredom at the lesson, for example, "A tendency with teachers is that they tend to bore their students" (P3), and "The teacher can play games with the students so that they do not get bored (...)" (C1). Interestingly, whilst the participant P3 emphasizes the need to create a balance between fun and studying, the control C1 foregrounds the framing of fun at a lesson as a means of having the students feel comfortable using English. Notably, the framing of an EFL primary school teacher as a person who should organize fun at a lesson is seen in the passages taken from the reflective essay by the controls and the participants, such as: "... being able to joke, but also firm when needed, creates a positive environment for the students" (C6), and "As a future teacher I would like to teach English in such a way that children have fun while learning, preparing language games rather than just theoretical lessons" (P9). Arguably, these findings bear resemblance to the construals that are referred to by Søreide (2006) as "The Caring and Kind Teacher" (Søreide, 2006) and "The Creative and Innovative Teacher" (Søreide, 2006). Indirectly, the frame "The Fun Organizer" is evocative of the framing of a teacher's identity which is reported by Korthagen (2004), who has found that the framing of a "good" teacher is exhibited by complex interdependencies between classroom activities and the personality of a teacher (Korthagen, 2004, p. 79). Presumably, a teacher's personality traits that are associated with fun, fun-related activities, as well as humor, should map onto a classroom context to create a positive atmosphere. Assuming that humor and fun are reflective of "the nature of the people who are directly involved in ELT – language learners, teachers (...)" (Pennington & Hoekje, 2014, p. 165), the frame "The Fun Organizer" can be regarded as one of the manifestations of the Sociocultural Context Frames as posited by Pennington and Hoekje (2014).

#### 4.2. "The Influencer"

The frame "The Influencer" is common to the group of participants and their respective controls. This frame is illustrated by Excerpts 3 and 4 below:

(3) (...) being an English teacher is more than knowing the English language. *A teacher is also an influencer*. I look forward to my future as a teacher, and I hope I will be worthy of all students that come through my classroom (P4).

(4) When asking any person in the street about their school days, there is a significant chance that they will mention at least one teacher that they remember as significant for them. *The role of the teacher of the single most important factor that influences the students' experiences in their learning process*. This makes a 'good' teacher a key for any success the student will experience (C7).

It is seen in Excerpts 3 and 4 that a salient aspect of an EFL primary school teacher's identity is that of an influencer, whose identity involves facets that are "more than knowing the English language" (P4). It follows from Excerpt 3 that the frame "The Influencer" is complimentary to the frame "The Knowledge Developer", which will be further illustrated and discussed in the article. Arguably, a complementary nature of the frame "The Influencer" is exhibited by control C7, who frames an EFL primary school teacher as "the most important factor that influences the students' experiences in their learning process" (C7). In other words, in addition to the work-related and profession-related framing in the sense of Pennington and Hoekje (2014), the frame "The Influencer" involves personality and identity dimensions of an EFL primary school teacher that are embedded into Pennington and Hoekje's (2014) view of Sociocultural Context Frames. Specifically, it can be inferred from these excerpts that the role of an EFL primary school teacher extends beyond the concept of imparting knowledge and, especially, subject knowledge.

These findings are reminiscent of the framing of a teacher's identity that is reported by Korthagen (2004), who has found that the framing of a "good" teacher is characterized by an interdependency between classroom activities and the teacher's personality (Korthagen, 2004: 79). Arguably, being able to influence the students in and outside of an EFL classroom is a feature of the teacher's identity that is inferred from the construal "The Caring and Kind Teacher", which is reported by Søreide (2006). It can be argued that Søreide's (2006) construal "The Caring and Kind Teacher" is in concert with the frames "The Influencer", as well as "The Fun Organizer".

#### 4.3. "The Knowledge Developer"

Similarly to the frames "The Fun Organizer" and "The Influencer", the frame "The Knowledge Developer" is present in the reflective essays written by the participants and controls. The frame "The Knowledge Developer" is exemplified by Excerpts 5 and 6 below:

(5) *A primary school teacher should have a professional responsibility for the development of the children's knowledge. (...) In a few years I see myself as an EFL teacher, who wants to stay curious and hungry for knowledge (P5).*

(6) *As far as a primary school teacher of English is concerned, I believe that it is important that the teacher is updated in the subject of English. I believe that this would help the children in learning English as a foreign language and developing their basic skills (C8).*

Interestingly, whilst in Excerpt 5 the participant P5 foregrounds the professional responsibility associated with knowledge development and mentions a metaphoric "hunger" for knowledge, the control C 8 views an EFL primary school teacher as a person, who seeks to deepen their subject knowledge. Arguably, by writing that "it is important that the teacher is updated in the subject" in Excerpt 6 the control C 8 implies that an EFL teacher evolves professionally in terms of the proficiency and competency in English. Consequently, by means of evolving as a competent speaker of English, the teacher helps to develop the students' English skills. These findings seem to lend support to previous research reported by Korthagen (2004), who argues for the significance of subject knowledge in the professional identity of a teacher. The present findings are also evocative of Korthagen's (2004) observation that the teachers' competencies, in particular, subject matter knowledge, are concomitant with the teachers' behavior. This argument is supported by the co-presence of the frame "The Knowledge Developer" with the frames that are associated with the teacher's personality traits, such as "The Fun Organizer" and "The Influencer", respectively. Additionally, it could be argued that the frame "The Knowledge Developer" provides further support to the findings by Søreide (2006), who reports the presence of the construals "The Creative and Innovative Teacher" and "The Professional Teacher". From the perspective of Pennington and Hoekje's (2014) approach to framing in EFL, the frame "The Knowledge Developer" is suggestive of the Work Frames that are associated with the EFL work per se, which involves such variables as instruction, disciplinary field, and profession (Pennington & Hoekje, 2014: 165).

#### 4.4. "The Motivator"

The frame "The Motivator" is found in the corpus of the participants' and controls' reflective essays. It is illustrated by Excerpt 7 below:

(7) *It is of paramount importance that the primary school EFL teachers are able to present the English language in a way that motivates the children. There is a substantial body of evidence to suggest that motivation is one of the key factors in determining students' level of EFL proficiency. This motivation must be aroused from the very start of the EFL learning in order to inspire their desire to learn the English language (P1).*

It follows from (7) that an EFL primary school teacher as a person who motivates the students to learn is deemed to be “one of the key factors in determining students’ level of EFL proficiency” (P1). It is evident from the above-mentioned quote that the participant P1 foregrounds the connection between learning and motivation. Implicitly, such a connection is embedded into the framing of an EFL primary school teacher as “The Knowledge Developer” and “The Influencer”. As seen in Excerpt 7, the present data indicate that the framing of the EFL primary school teacher as a motivator is common in the reflective essays of both the groups. This framing is evocative of the teacher’s professional identity as a motivator, who stimulates the students’ learning and maintains their interest in the English language, as visible in the comment: “the primary school EFL teachers are able to present the English language in a way that motivates the children” (P1). This finding echoes the results of the investigation conducted by Stojiljković et al. (2012) on the teacher’s roles. Stojiljković et al. (2012) indicate that motivation is an intrinsic facet of the professional identity of a successful teacher.

Interestingly, the frame “The Motivator” has not been reported in the prior research publications on framing in the contexts of a teacher’s identity. Specifically, the construal of a teacher as a motivator has not been identified in the study by Søreide (2006), which is also embedded into Norwegian educational context. This is especially noteworthy in light of the plethora of previous research literature that involves motivation and motivational factors as a facet of the teacher’s professional identity (Dörnyei, 2003; Noels et al., 2000). Presumably, the absence of the reference to motivation in Søreide (2006) is indicative of the context-dependent, dynamic and situated nature of the teacher’s identity as posited by De Costa and Norton (2017), Olsen (2008), Samuel (2008), or Werbińska and Ekiert (2018). Given that the identity of a teacher is a dynamic phenomenon, any change in the continuum of variables involved in the teacher’s identity impacts on the teacher’s professional self within socio-cultural and temporal contexts (Olsen & Buchanan, 2017). Following this line of reasoning, it can be argued that whilst the present study and the study by Søreide (2006) are both embedded into the contemporary Norwegian educational context, the difference in the results between them could be explained by the difference in temporal context. To specify, the research reported by Søreide took place in 2006 and the present study was conducted in 2018. Arguably, the change in the temporal context within the same educational context in the same country has led to the observed difference in the results.

#### 4.5. "The Role Model"

Analogous to the frames discussed above, the frame "The Role Model" has been identified in the corpus of both the participants and the controls groups. This frame is emblemized by excerpt 8 below:

(8) *Primary school teachers are very important role models for children in primary school. They are the first people in formal positions to convey English as a foreign language (EFL) to the children (C10).*

It can be argued that the frame "The Role Model" is reminiscent of Crow et al.'s (2017) view of teacher identity as a ritualized role that is expected in socio-cultural contexts (Crow et al., 2017). Judging from the present findings, it can be argued that the controls, as well as the participants exhibit awareness of the teacher's role. Moreover, it is inferred from the data that the participants and the controls relate the identity of an EFL primary school teacher to a role model. To some extent, the frame "The Role Model" is suggestive of the results reported by Korthagen (2004), who points to the essential qualities of a "good" teacher. Judging from the present data, it can be assumed that the frame "The Role Model" tends to be associated with the frame of a "good" teacher (Korthagen, 2004). Interestingly, the participants in the study by Søreide (2006) do not discursively construe the "good" teacher. Instead, they seem to refer to the "typical" teacher as a defining feature of the teacher's identity. In contrast to Søreide (2006), there is no explicit reference to the typical teacher in the present corpus. From the vantage point of the frames that are shared between the two groups, it could be argued that the frame "The Role Model" involves some aspects of the frames "The Fun Organizer", "The Influencer", "The Knowledge Developer", and "The Motivator". This assumption can be further explained by the idealized view of an EFL primary school teacher, who is regarded by the participants and controls as a person who organizes fun-related activities, who influences and motivates their students, and who facilitates knowledge development.

#### 4.6. Participant-specific frames

The frames "The Facilitator", "The Government Employee", "The Professional", and "The Relationship Builder" are specific to the corpus of reflective essays written by the participants. To reiterate, in contrast to the participants, the aforementioned frames are absent from the corpus of the controls' essays. The difference in the frames could be ascribed to the following: even though the participants and the controls attended the course in EFL didactics at the same

university, all the participants reported several teaching practice sessions at a range of primary schools in Western Norway, whilst the control group never had any teaching practice sessions at primary schools. Additionally, the participants attended courses in general pedagogy, and in early childhood pedagogy. It seems logical to assume that the participants' frames eventuate as a consequence of their direct exposure to the teaching practices at a primary school, as well as pedagogy-related university courses. Based on these experiences, the participants have framed an EFL primary school teacher's identity in a qualitatively different manner in comparison with the control group.

One of participants-specific frames is "The Facilitator". This frame is present in the reflective essays written by three participants out of 10. In particular, participant P2 writes that "All students have different ways of acquiring knowledge, so it is important that *teachers facilitate learning*" (P2). Judging from the data, the frame "The Facilitator" seems to be embedded into another participants-specific frame, namely "The Relationship Builder". The results of the data analysis indicate that the participants assign salience to the concept of relationship between the teacher and the student within the primary school context, where the professional identity of an EFL teacher is that of "The Relationship Builder". This frame is illustrated by Excerpts 9 and 10:

(9) I think *an English teacher in primary schools should have good, but serious, relationship with the pupils*. It's important that teacher and pupil trust each other and have mutual respect. It's important that the teacher is a good listener and is understandable. I think it's *important that an English teacher builds good relationships with the pupils* (P10).

(10) You need to care enough about the students to see the person behind the action and reflect upon the behavior as a more complex situation that may require additional attention. This is *an important basis for establishing a good rapport and relationship with each student* (P4).

Excerpts 9 and 10 emblemize the importance of good working relationships between the teacher and the student. Both the participants P10 and P4 appear to prioritize trust, respect, and attention that the teacher should provide. These findings lend support to the study conducted by Søreide (2006), who found that the teacher's identity in Norwegian educational contexts is discursively construed as "The Caring and Kind Teacher". As seen in Excerpt 10, participant P4 explicitly refers to the concept of care by writing: "You need to care enough about the students to see the person behind the action and reflect upon the behavior (...)".

In addition to the affective variables such as care and good rapport in the frame "The Relationship Builder", the participants frame an EFL primary school teacher's identity by means of the frame, which is characterized by the epiphenomenal status



of emotional and affective facets. Instead, the frame "The Professional" foregrounds the professional attributes of an EFL primary school teacher's identity. The frame "The Professional" is exemplified by Excerpts 11 and 12 below:

(11) It is important that *EFL teachers have good professional expertise*. Professional skills will help the teacher to use a variety of teaching methods and provide the children with adapted education (P5).

(12) A good *English teacher is someone who does their job to the best of their abilities*, they keep their private life private while they provide a safe environment for their students (P1).

As evident from Excerpts 11 and 12, a good and professional teacher is a person, who "*does their job to the best of their abilities*, they keep their private life private" (participant P1) and who has "*good professional expertise*" (participant P5). The frame "The Professional" is suggestive of the salience of the professional facets of an EFL primary school teacher's identity. It should be noted that this finding supports the results obtained by Søreide (2006), who found that teacher identity in Norwegian school contexts appears to be framed by the construal "The Professional Teacher". As seen in Excerpt 12, the participant's framing involves the backgrounding of the teacher's private life, as in: "(...) they keep their private life private" whilst on the job. Notably, the reference to the teacher, who "*does their job to the best of their abilities*" is indicative of the high level of professional standards to be possessed by an in-service EFL teacher.

In addition to the frame "The Professional", several participants frame an EFL primary school teacher's identity by means of the frame "The Government Employee". This frame is present in four reflective essays written by the participants. In particular, the frame "The Government Employee" in the participants' essays is represented by an explicit reference to the guidelines for Norwegian teachers set by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2018). For example, participant P7 writes that "According to Utdanningsdirektoratet, the course program should be in accordance with Christian and Humanist tradition (...) I should be well equipped to comply with Utdanningsdirektoratet's guidelines as a government employee without much effort" (participant P7). The frame "The Professional" is not, perhaps, fortuitous in the corpus of the participants' reflective essays, since teachers at state-run schools are considered to be employed by the Norwegian state. The participant P7 refers to "The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training" when framing herself as a future in-service teacher, who is employed by the Norwegian state. The framing foregrounds the need of an in-service primary school teacher to comply with the guidelines prescribed by The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training. It could be argued that the frame "The Government Employee"

corresponds to the Work Frames that are associated with ELT work, such as, for instance, instruction, disciplinary field, profession, business, and service (Pennington & Hoekje, 2014, p. 165).

## 5. Conclusions and implications

This qualitative study investigated how the participants (i.e., pre-service EFL primary school teachers) and their controls (EFL university students, non-teachers) framed the identity of an in-service EFL primary school teacher. The framing was investigated by means of a qualitative analysis of the participants' and controls' short reflective essays on the identity of an EFL teacher at a Norwegian primary school. The results of the qualitative framing analysis revealed that the participants framed their reflective essays by means of nine frames, that is, "The Facilitator", "The Fun Organizer", "The Government Employee", "The Influencer", "The Knowledge Developer", "The Motivator", "The Professional", "The Relationship Builder", and "The Role Model". The controls' reflective essays were framed via five frames "The Fun Organizer", "The Influencer", "The Knowledge Developer", "The Motivator", and "The Role Model". The controls framed their reflections on an EFL primary school teacher's identity by means of the frames that indicated the relevance of an EFL primary teacher as a person who should present a role model to the students, motivate them, develop their knowledge of the English language, and organize fun activities during an EFL lesson. However, the participants employed the framing of an EFL primary school teacher as a person, who is a government employee, professional, a role model, a person, who facilitates the transfer of knowledge, develops knowledge, motivates and influences the students, builds relationships with them, and organizes fun-related activities.

These findings signified the differences in the framing between the group of participants and the control group, which were ascribed to the participants' direct exposure to school practice sessions at a range of Norwegian primary schools and the participants' enrollment in courses in general pedagogy, and early childhood pedagogy. The qualitative differences between the participants and controls were considered to be indicative of the dynamic nature of EFL contexts. On the theoretical level, the present findings seemed to lend support to previous research (De Costa & Norton, 2017; Olsen, 2008; Søreide, 2006; Werbińska & Ekiert, 2018; Yazan, 2018) that emphasized a teacher's identity as a dynamic phenomenon that was discursively situated (Mockler, 2011).

Additionally, the findings in the present study revealed differences and similarities in comparison with prior research. Specifically, the present findings supported, to some extent, previous research studies by Korthagen (2004) and Søreide (2006), respectively. However, the findings in this study were in contrast

to the research results reported by Crow et al. (2017), and Ó Gallchóir et al. (2018). Contrary to Crow et al. (2017), the frames in the present research findings did not involve references to class, gender, and race. In contrast to the results of the study conducted by Ó Gallchóir and the colleagues (2018), neither the participants nor the control group mentioned the teacher's physical depiction as a part of the teacher's identity.

Since the present findings emphasized a dynamic nature of an EFL primary school teacher's identity, it appears possible to formulate the following implications that would be relevant to pre-service EFL primary school teachers. First, reflective practices on the identity of an EFL primary school teacher could be successfully employed by future EFL primary school teachers in order to gain insight into a dynamic discursive space of the teacher's identity construction. Second, future EFL primary school teachers should be provided with ample opportunities to reflect upon their own identity as a future EFL primary school teacher, as well upon the teacher's identity of an in-service EFL primary school teacher. Third, future EFL primary school teachers should be made aware of the dynamic continuum associated with the identity of an EFL primary school teacher, whose identity should be regarded not as a static phenomenon, but as a dynamic framing that could be reflective of a variety of work-related and sociocultural frames.

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