Teacher Identity under Reconstruction: Positional Analysis of Negotiations in an International Teacher Education Programme

Satia Zen
Tampere University, Finland

Eero Ropo
Tampere University, Finland

Päivi Kupila
Tampere University, Finland

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Abstract: This paper explores the international learning experiences of Indonesian teachers participating in a Finnish master's degree programme as an identity reconstruction process. We study the participants' experiences based on dialogical identity construction to explore the positioning and repositioning occurring during an international learning experience. Given the conception of this experience as a boundary experience, repositioning is a way to create continuity and support the multiplicity of identity. From the narrative analysis of the participants' stories about the programme, we found that the participants' repositioning during the programme involved negotiation with temporality, sociality and spatiality. Throughout this process, the participants' understanding of their identities and practices evolved. The post-conflict and post-disaster context in Aceh, Indonesia, manifests itself through a unique constellation of positionings and stimulates new understandings of its impact on teaching and learning processes. This study contributes to understanding the international teacher programme as a repositioning process for teacher identity reconstruction that supports local meanings and has practical consequences.

Introduction

The internationalization of teacher education and development has been increasing in recent years. Sieber & Mantel (2012) argued that the internationalization of higher education has stimulated mobilities of ideas, students and staff thereby increasing the global awareness of the instrumental role of teachers in determining the quality of student learning. The above situation has encouraged the trend of learning from others across borders, especially from countries such as Finland, where the quality of teacher education is cited as a factor decisive for the quality of its education (Sahlberg, 2011; Schatz, 2015).

International programmes exposing and immersing teachers in different cultures and education systems are believed to be the best tools to achieve this outcome (Kissock & Richardson, 2010). Based on their meta-analysis, Smolcic & Katunich (2017) and Çiftçi & Karaman (2019) associated international experiences with positive outcomes linked to intercultural, professional and linguistic competencies. They also highlight the need for further research on the dynamic, relational and complex change process in international teachers' experience.

Rizvi (2005, p.335) moreover points out that an essentialist notion of culture mostly forms the basis for assumed transformations during those experiences, where 'negotiations occur against the backdrop of cultural homogeneity'. Binary thinking used as a foundation in

studying those experiences also points towards antagonistic relationships between 'host' and 'home' because identity construction might be based on affiliation (Trent, 2011). This thinking applies particularly to situations where the discourse of international experiences is contradictory in nature (Rizvi, 2009). Consequently, there is a need to reconceptualize teachers' experiences in international contexts towards a less controversial process that supports relational perspectives.

In this study, it is even more important to use a more relational and less contradictory approach when the 'home' context is deemed to be challenging. The home context of this study is Aceh, a province in Indonesia with a long history of conflict from 1976 until the early 2000s. This conflict, related to the declared independence of Aceh from the Indonesian government, affected ordinary peoples' lives in many ways. Aceh was also devastated by the tsunami of 2004. This post-conflict and post-disaster context shaped a distinct educational landscape where teachers play a significant role. It emphasized the agentic roles that teachers played in social change and highlighted the need to consider the teachers' identity, which is also shaped by this context (Weldon, 2010).

Teachers in this region are already navigating various roles and expectations. They play a role in rebuilding an educational system that was destroyed by the tsunami and the 30 years of conflict that the teachers themselves had experienced (Schultz, 2008). Most of them are working in public schools to implement the national education agenda while at the same time being part of local communities with their own cultural and personal allegiances (Cardozo & Shah, 2016). Hence, in understanding teacher transformation in this study, we considered the additional dimension of being a private school teacher in Aceh.

The context of this study is an International Teacher Programme (ITP) implemented in Aceh, Indonesia. The participants in this study are teachers working in private schools under the auspices of the Sukma Foundation and a mission to sustain peace in Aceh through education. The programme was organized by Tampere University, Finland, and funded by the Sukma Foundation, Indonesia. In addition to its educational expertise, Finland also played a part in peace negotiations in Aceh in 2005 through the involvement of the former Finnish president Martti Ahtisaari as a mediator of the process. Hence, the collaboration to implement the teacher education programme in Aceh comes together by considering the wider socio-historical and institutional context in this area. The whole context is assumed to affect the processes related to the programme participants' professional identity reconstruction investigated in this study.

Based on a narrative constructionist perspective (Sparkes & Smith, 2008), we argue that international experiences serve as a catalyst influencing the reconstruction of teachers' narrative meanings concerning themselves as individuals and teachers. We assume that participating in the international programme creates an experience of 'otherness', leading to the questioning of both one's own basic assumptions about being a teacher as well as those of the 'others' (see, e.g., Mesker, Wassink, & Bakker, 2018; Trent, 2011). The stress and tensions of such 'encountering otherness' can be assumed lead to narrative identity reconstruction and repositioning (Marginson, 2014). Participants' experiences in the programme may function as 'encountering otherness' that stimulate questions about their own identities concerning where they come from and what their role is as teachers in the Acehnese context.

This study aims to analyse the way teachers from Indonesia reconstruct their positioning in their identity narratives through negotiations in which both the individual plots and positionings may change. The metaphor of the self as negotiated and dialogical space is used as the basis for the micro-level analysis of identity reconstruction (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011, p. 312). The concept of self is not applied in this study. However, we make an assumption that identity is also negotiated and dialogical in nature. We also aim to highlight

the similarity of positionings the participants adopted to create meanings from their international experiences as a group, taking into account the individual, institutional and local contexts of their past and present. The research questions for the study are the following:

- Concerning their teacher identity, what types of positionings are described by the participants in their narratives about the International Teacher Programme (ITP) experience?
- How does the post-conflict and post-disaster context manifest itself in the positioning processes described?

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The concept of identity has been defined and described in myriad ways and contexts in the research literature (see, e.g., Côté, 2006). Recently, teacher identity conceptualization has been shifting towards non-essentialist identity, describing the nature of identity as dynamic, relational, contextual and changing (Vanassche, 2018). Based on this notion, the dialogical perspective is used to scrutinize teacher identity in this study. Akkerman & Meijer (2011) proposed teacher identity as a dialogical relationship between multiplicity-unitary, continuity-discontinuity and individuality-sociality. Specifically, this study will describe the negotiation process between the three dimensions described above. Consequently, the study will apply positional analyses of teachers' professional identity reconstruction that emphasize subjective and discursive representations in the participants' narratives of their experiences in the ITP as its methodological lens.

Negotiation Process in Identity Reconstruction through Positioning

Earlier studies on teacher identity in the ITP report the distinctive features and dynamics of the teacher identity construction process during the international experience. Initially, the ITP highlights the changes brought about in teacher identity construction due to being in different places and interacting with different teachers (Collins & Geste, 2016; Leigh, 2019; Tangen et al., 2017; Trent, 2011). This may be due to the way geographical location is associated with different educational contexts that challenge the way participants view what they initially considered to be 'normal' (Collins & Geste, 2016; Leutwyler & Lottenbach, 2011).

From a dialogical perspective, this reflecting on differences and challenging 'normality' in the ITP may stimulate identity reconstruction through repositioning. During those processes identity evolves and changes due to internal reflections of experiences in response to varying social and other external contexts. The process can be described as a positioning negotiation within oneself and others (Harré, 2015). In understanding teachers' experiences in the international learning programmes, this approach promises to explore the identity construction process from the positioning negotiations.

Positioning has been recognized as an increasingly important concept in identity studies connected to the discursive and dialogical conceptions of a teacher's identity (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Ricoeur, 1991). Positioning forms the narrative capital of a person (Goodson, 2013; Ropo, 2019) as the basis for the narrative storyline (Harré & Langenhove, 1999). It represents a social force for resistance (Bamberg, 2000; Davies & Harré, 1990) and a narrative resource that individuals may share when deviating from expectations (Bruner, 1990; Hyvärinen, 2007). Hence, positioning may be viewed from the perspectives of historicality, spatiality and sociality (Harnett, 2010).

The implications of experiences in the ITP for positions may lead to 'unprecedented density as individuals start to participate in new groups and cultures characterised by differences, tensions, oppositions, and contradictions' (Hermans & Meijers, 2018, p. 9). Teachers who have experienced an international programme or being teachers abroad mentioned similar narrative resources that lead to a particular identity construction (Leigh, 2019; Trent 2011). Therefore, the ITP may have increased the density and diversity of positions in individualized identity construction processes while sharing similar positions collectively.

In this study, the concept of positioning will mainly refer to the discursive process of locating oneself in a story influenced by the storyline, role and various social forces (Harré, 2015). Position is a metaphorical concept containing rights and duties to perform specific actions that can be reassigned and dynamically negotiated in the light of storylines and social forces surrounding the context in the storytelling (Harré & Langenhove, 1999). Hence, the discursive process of taking or being in a new position due to changing storylines and social forces is repositioning. This process highlights the functions of positioning as more inclusive than the oppositional process, in which identity is reconstructed from gaining resources, learning, or accumulating capital for the future (Søreide, 2006).

Narrative as Discursive Medium for Identity Construction

The methodological approach of this study is based on the perspective of narratives representing the ways people make sense of their experiences and interpret them by creating meanings and making positional changes to their own story (e.g., Hyvärinen 2007). Narrative is the medium in which changes can be incorporated towards sameness through emplotment (Ricoeur, 1991). The relations between the 'old' and 'new' may be assumed to be complex. People draw upon symbolic meaning systems concurrently from personal and social, and negotiated cultural narratives that makes the process both personal and social (Bruner, 1990; Meretoja, 2014).

In terms of a teacher's identity, Alsup (2005) describes the relationship between narrative memories and metaphorical understanding of experiences as foundational, serving as a discursive foundation for positioning oneself as an educator. Concurrently, the relationship is also described as dialogical, where changes and the multiplicity of teachers' actions and responses are not viewed as inconsistent but are affected by particular contexts – be they physical, social or cultural (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). Positioning theory may be relevant in this context to explain the dynamics of individual responses or actions.

The concept of positioning as part of identity construction also serves the process of reconstructing one's ontological narratives (Søreide, 2006). These narratives are constructed and told 'in order to make sense of how we experience ourselves and how we would like to be understood in order to bring structure to our personal life' (Søreide, 2006, p.529). For this purpose, when experience is reflected on and narrated, it serves as a resource for an ongoing subjective positioning, increasing the person's narrative capital (Goodson, 2013; Ropo, 2019). Consequently, we assume that learning in the ITP supports positional self-innovation, and by studying the processes, we may gain insights into their impacts on teacher identity.

Methodology

The study is qualitative, applying narrative methods as a broad methodological approach (Stanley & Temple, 2008). Narrative methodology was applied in data collection,

analyses and interpretations. The following section will describe the site of this study and participants' details, followed by data collection and analysis.

Site of the Study

The study was carried out in an international teachers' master's degree programme (MDP), arranged as a collaborative venture between the Yayasan Sukma (Sukma Foundation) and Tampere University (TUNI). Yayasan Sukma is a foundation that manages three private schools, called Sukma Bangsa Schools (SBS), built in 2005 in the aftermath of the tsunami and conflict in Aceh Province, Indonesia. The schools aim to create a positive learning environment for children to overcome their trauma and contribute to rebuilding the educational system in the region (Baedowi et al., 2005).

Tampere University organized most of the degree programme courses in Bireuen, Aceh, and hosted the participants in Finland for five weeks during the 17-month-long programme. To support distance learning and online communication between the teachers and the participants, an online platform was also established. The Sukma Foundation and Tampere University also provided English-language support throughout the programme.

The programme participants were 30 teachers selected from the SBS. As teachers, their academic backgrounds and experience varied, as did the school level (elementary, junior and senior high school). Before their involvement in the programme, they had also held various positions in schools: teacher, head of division, principal, and even school director. Figure 1 below provides detailed information on the participants.
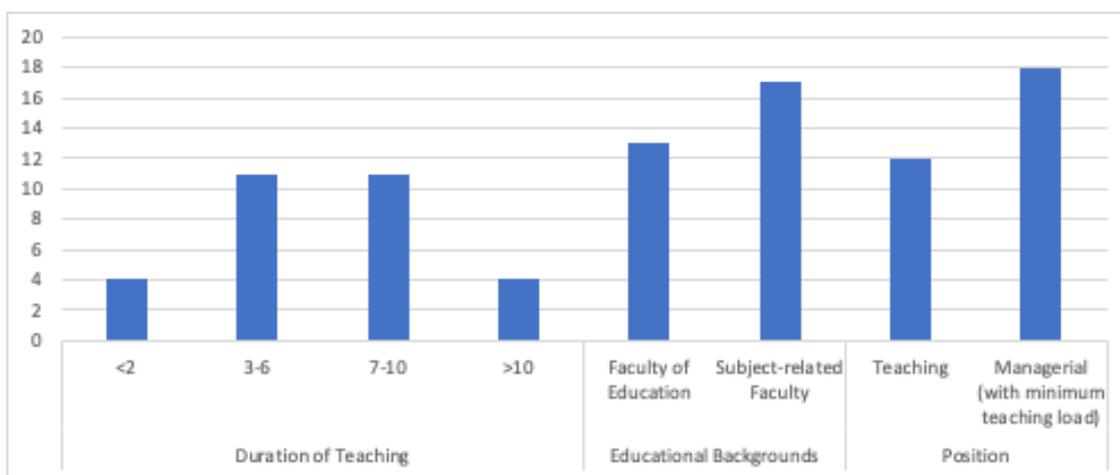

Figure 1. Backgrounds of the Participants

Data Collection Process

We used narrative interviews to gather the primary data for this study. These were conducted close to the end of the programme in 2017. All 30 participants were invited to participate in the study and 13 volunteered for the interviews. Hence, they were selected based on their willingness to be respondents. They represented a diverse mix of educational backgrounds, locations, academic backgrounds, positions, and levels of work experience in the SBS (Figure 1).

Conversationally each interview lasted 40–100 minutes, during which participants were asked to narrate their experiences of the programme. The time differences in the length

of the interviews were mainly due to differences in the interviewees' ways of narrating their experiences. The interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia by the first author thereby enabling cultural understanding between the interviewer and the interviewee (Tsang, 1998). The interviews were then transcribed verbatim, including emotional expressions such as laughter and crying. All names of the respondents have been changed in this report to respect the anonymity and confidentiality of the data.

Additionally, the authors' involvement in the programme made it possible to add ethnographic elements to the study. As coordinator of the programme, the first author lived with the participants, supporting the observation of their activities during the first six months of the programme implementation in Aceh. She has also worked as a teacher and school leader in the same context for more than ten years. Meanwhile, the second author was also involved in the programme as its director. Both the second and third authors were teacher educators in the programme. This involvement supports the contextual understanding of the programme leading to more profound interpretation processes of the time, scene and plot structures of the events narrated by the participants (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

Data Analyses

The analyses followed a narrative methodology to understand the individual plots, positions and common episodes (Polkinghorne, 1995). Following Nikander's (2008) suggestion, the analyses were performed using transcripts in Bahasa Indonesia, and the results were translated into English.

The first phase of the analysis focused on finding the episodes by the temporal reorganization of events and experiences described in the narratives. An episode might contain what the participants recounted about one or more events and their positionings within the event (Harré & Langenhove, 1999). The second phase focused on thematic threads that functioned as individual plots linking the events into a meaningful and understandable story (Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2007; Polkinghorne, 1995).

The third phase aimed at identifying positionings and repositionings (Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014) that are not always expressed explicitly but possibly implied within the participant's description of a particular action during the episode.

The last phase aimed at restorying each individual's verbal story and comparing them based on the participants' episodes. The results are individual restoried narratives for each participant based on the individual plot and summary of similar episodes comprising a common positioning and repositioning. These results inform the type of positioning throughout the narrative of the participants' learning experiences while describing manifestations of the post-conflict and post-tsunami situation in the positioning process.

Findings

In the above, we posed two research questions. The first dealt with the types of positionings in the participants' stories. The second question concerned how the post-conflict and post-disaster situations in Aceh were represented or manifested in the positionings. We will start by reporting the findings relevant to the first question.

Teacher Identity Reconstruction Process through Gaining New Positions and Series of Repositioning

The primary focus of the analyses was to determine how the informants positioned themselves as teachers before the programme and how the positioning changed during the programme. Based on the analyses, we were able to identify various positions described by the participants in different episodes throughout the programme. As the participants' narratives progressed, we were also able to identify changes in their positions resulting in and indicating negotiation processes taking place during the programme. These positions are found both in participants' narratives about past teaching and learning experiences in Indonesia and current learning experiences in the ITP that may be associated with the Finnish context. Participants then used these positions as narrative resources to reconstruct their teacher identities.

The following section will describe the repositioning process based on three episodic themes found in the narratives. All three were related to the timeline of the programme. The first theme concerns the beginning of the ITP programme starting from the initial preparation and admission process. The second theme was based on the way the programme helped the interviewee to reposition as a different learner and teacher. The last theme concerned their graduation and five-week study period in Finland. Students seemed to reconstruct their teacher positions and identities during this period based on their observations and experiences in Finland.

Dynamics of Repositioning from Being A Teacher to An ITP Participant

In this episode, the participants described themselves regarding their pathways in being a teacher and their capabilities that motivated them to participate. The following quote is an example of the positioning process by Sinta about her admission episode.

> *Initially, I had doubts about my suitability – my English is not very good and I have not graduated from a faculty of education. Before this programme, I was working as a member of the administrative staff at the school. However, my desire to be a teacher is very strong. So, I continued participating in English preparatory courses. At the same time, my principal also gave his support. When they accepted me for the programme, I felt that this was a sign that my desire to be a teacher is blessed. Then, it is up to me to learn as hard as I can to qualify for the degree. (Sinta)*

From the above excerpt, Sinta's initial positioning is of someone who wants to teach but has no teaching credentials, so she tries to acquire them through the programme. At the same time, she also describes herself as someone who does not have the language abilities to study in the programme. As an employee, she also receives support from her principal to join the programme, which motivated her to learn English. After being accepted, Sinta repositions herself as a participant and takes her acceptance as a sign that her desire is fulfilled and blessed. She then repositions herself as someone who will learn further to qualify for the degree. Several storylines contain different positions in this episode – such as 'teacher', 'language user', 'employee' and 'student' – and the social forces reflected in each position.

In other participants' narratives, similar initial positionings related to their competences, knowledge and credentials emerged. Some participants positioned themselves by expressing a lack of knowledge and feeling that they did not deserve to be teachers. These positions are explicitly apparent for those participants who had not graduated from a faculty of education. Table 1 describes other similar positions concerning their desire to improve their teaching, bridging the gap between elaborate planning and day-to-day teaching, inability to engage and motivate students.

'Inadequate teacher'	'I was disappointed with the results of the Teacher Competence Examination: I had a low score. I realised that I do need to learn more about teaching and learning because as a teacher, this is basic knowledge that I should have.' (Tina)
'Teacher who is lacking credentials'	'I also realised that I need to improve myself as a teacher because I didn't graduate from a faculty of education.' (Nardi)
'Teacher failing to engage students'	'When I started working in the SBS, I didn't have much experience in teaching and limited knowledge about education. During my teaching in SBS, I feel like I failed to motivate and engage my students to learn.' (Jaka)
'Teacher wanting to improve practice'	'Learning in the ITP provides relevant links in my teaching, something that I felt I was lacking before. Previously, I learned many theories without knowing how to put them into practice.' (Maya)

Table 1. Participants' initial positioning before admission

The participants also received scholarships from the foundation, which formed an additional incentive to participate in the programme and new institutional expectations (Table 2).

'Scholarship recipient'	'So, when the foundation announced a scholarship for the ITP with Finnish universities, I thought, 'I should go for this'.… Getting this scholarship is like a godsend. A workplace scholarship is scarce.' (Sofia)
'ITP participant'	'I think learning in this programme provided a chance for me to turn a new page and gain a new direction in being a teacher.' (Nardi)

Table 2. Participants' positioning after admission

However, this position also implies improving their capabilities and starting a change process in the school. Once they were finally selected for the programme and received scholarships, they started to position themselves as 'ITP participants' ready to learn.

Repositioning as Learners and Orienting towards Teacher-as-researcher

As the participants started studying on the courses, they positioned themselves mainly as learners who reflect on how university teachers relate and communicate with them and how learning is organized. Towards the end of this episode, the participants started to understand their teaching and learning processes through research and to reorient their teaching. In this episode, the positions of learners and researchers seem to be added into the narratives to be part of their storylines of being teachers that stimulate new understandings. The following excerpt from Fitri reveals her learning experiences in the programme.

> *The university teachers encouraged us to collaborate, and the courses made me reflect on my previous teaching. I realised that I used to rank my students based on grades, which stimulates competition among them. It made me unaware of my students' needs and I neglected relationships with them as a basis for learning. I thought finding the correct method was enough. This is also partly the findings of my research about using a reflective learning journal. (Fitri)*

In this episode, Fitri is positioned by university teachers to 'collaborate' and 'reflect' on the programme. Through the process, she is aware of initially positioning herself as a teacher who 'ranks students', 'stimulates competition', 'neglects students' needs', and is 'concerned with finding the correct teaching method'. These positions reflect the positioning of being a teacher in the Indonesian context. Through learning activities in the programme, whose content and tasks stimulate her to reflect on her previous teaching, Fitri starts to describe herself as 'aware of her previous practices', 'building relationships with students',

'making the relationship the basis for learning' and 'researching her teaching'. In this context, she starts positioning herself differently and sees an alternative approach to her practice, where collaboration, a relationship with students and the exploration of methods are possible.

In addition to the above positioning described by Fitri, we found other positionings among participants that represent the way learner positioning might stimulate the participants' new understanding of themselves as teachers.

'Autonomous learner'	'Finnish university teachers are like "opening one-quarter of the door" for us, while we open "the other three quarters". We are the ones who need to explore and search more. If we can open three-quarters of the door, then we can achieve the objective of the course.' (Intan)
'Independent learner'	'University teachers provided guidance and support when we felt lost. They also provided additional resources. However, we are treated as independent learners.' (Sinta)
'Researcher'	'And even more, I would like to continue doing research, too. I think this process is crucial for my teaching.' (Fitri)
'Group member'	'When we started to interact more during learning and in different study groups, I noticed that the gaps disappeared. We were able to learn as one cohesive cohort who helps each member during the programme.' (Angga)

Table 3. Participants' positioning as learners

These positions are new learner positionings for the participants, which stimulate reflection on their previous learning experiences and their previous teaching, including their own students' learning experiences. As a result, they described their previous practices as follows:

'Mechanistic'	'I am now aware that I used to teach mechanistically, following routine while at the same time trying hard to engage students through games and gimmicks.' (Angga)
'Using gimmicks and games'	
'Grade-oriented'	'During learning, I reflected a lot on my previous practice and I realised that I made many mistakes. For example, in assessment, I think I concentrated more on "grading" than "assessing"'. (Zikri)
'Transferring knowledge'	I used to think that being a teacher is 'transferring knowledge'. I need to know many teaching strategies and implement the best in the classroom.' (Santi)

Table 4. Participants' positionings on previous practices

The process also stimulated new perspectives on the way participants viewed their students and their practices with students (see Table 5).

'Blaming students'	'I also expected all students to achieve the minimum grade. I used to blame my students for not keeping up with my standards and achieve the minimum grade.' (Maya)
'Labelling students'	
'Disconnected from students'	'Back then, I didn't even know that my student had been bullied since the first year. I realised how clueless I was about my students.' (Santi)
'Forcing students'	'Learning is not about limiting what they can or cannot do, but helping them explore independently. This understanding made me realise that I have been very selfish in my teaching before. I forced students to achieve the standards, to the point that I disregarded their needs and was blind to their uniqueness.' (Yanti)
'Selfish in teaching'	

Table 5. Participants' positioning concerning students

These descriptions represent the participants' previous practices and their positioning about the assessment process, relationship with students, responsibility in learning and accountability for teaching oriented toward their perception of reaching a particular standard. This perception of the standard may influence how they previously designed teaching and learning processes as regimented practices disconnected from classroom realities.

As part of the programme, the participants researched their practices or those of their colleagues. The research process repositioned the participants as researchers who use theories and research methods to systematically reflect on practices that consider individual, institutional and societal contexts. This research experience serves as a flexible interpretation process of a particular classroom situation. It helped participants interpret standards in light of existing learning theories and students' learning needs that would shape their practices. Besides, researching with a partner adds another position as a research partner and changes the dynamics of the research process to be more collaborative.

Simultaneously, their narratives also contain descriptions of what they will change in their previous practices (see Table 6).

‘Being more positive’	‘In the future, I would like to be a better teacher. I want to be more positive, to accept the students. Sometimes we favour and give special treatment to good students – those who can meet the standards. We can't do that; we need to treat all students equally.' (Maya)
‘Engaging students in self-assessment’	‘I want them to feel secure and accepted. Maybe then my students will not feel like they have to act out to get my attention. I also would like to involve my students in their assessment.' (Yanti)
‘Accepting students' abilities and condition’	
‘Being more reflective’	‘During learning in the programme, we did a lot of reflection. I was able to reflect on my previous practices, and I realised I committed so many errors because of my lack of knowledge.' (Sofia)

Table 6. Participants' positioning for future practice

These descriptions relate to new positionings containing who they want to be and what they want to do in light of the opportunities in the local context. They also reflect on changes in their understanding of teaching and learning to be more orientated towards students.

Finnish Teachers as Models for Repositioning as Teachers in their School

On their visit to Finland towards the end of the programme, the participants took some courses on Tampere University campus and visited Finnish schools. As they learned in Finland and observed Finnish schools, they became aware of the contextual factors contributing to how Finnish teachership is different, such as the teachers' preparation, collaborative collegiality and school autonomy. The following is an excerpt from Jaka about his experience in Finland:

> *When I was doing an assignment for a course here on Finnish education, it made me realise the differences from our education. The way the curriculum is implemented, how teachers are prepared, and the teaching methods are oriented to the students' needs. In one discussion with a teacher, he did not have an elaborate lesson plan, but it contained all the necessary topics when he showed me the document. When I prepared my lesson plan, I used the template from the national curriculum, but it didn't help me when I failed to engage my students. ... Now, I have many things that I would like to try out in the classroom with my*

students. For example, I realised that not all of our students will go to university, they may have to earn their living [after graduation], so I think they will need to have an alternative plan. I can help them gain some necessary skills. (Jaka)

Jaka participated in two courses in Finland: 'The Finnish Education System' and 'Inclusive Education'. He was in a unique position to learn about the Finnish education system, observing the classrooms and talking with Finnish teachers in schools. In this excerpt, he positions himself as an 'elaborate planner', yet 'fails to engage his students'. He compares his methods to the practice of the Finnish teacher, who has a 'simple plan.' Nevertheless, Jaka observed the way learning focuses on the students' needs and engagement. His new understanding also informs this comparison of how the national curricula of Finland and Indonesia might position teachers differently. Based on this understanding, he repositions himself as a teacher who will help students to acquire relevant competences if they need to work, while engaging students in meaningful learning.

We found that the other participants repositioned themselves similarly as 'observers' and 'confirmers' concerning their visit to Finland.

'Observer'	'I observe the way Finnish teachers can be consistently appreciative and patient with their students. Now, I feel that I am more ready to accept my students and support them more.' (Alya)
'Confirmer'	'I found confirmation about making learning a positive experience for students. I realised that we should first always consider their needs and readiness to learn.' (Zikri)

Table 7. Participants' positioning when visiting Finland

The participants describe their observations in Finnish schools related to the Finnish teachers, students and classrooms. They describe the Finnish teachers using phrases such as 'patient', 'calm', 'autonomous' and 'collaborative'. Their observations of Finnish students contain descriptions such as 'quiet', 'passive', 'respectful', 'responsible' and 'independent'. These observations of Finnish classrooms and activities in the classroom are then compared to their classrooms in Indonesia. In this regard, they notice that teaching in Finland is more 'traditional', 'time effective', 'less lively' and 'using more technology', while the students do not always 'pay attention' or 'do something else', yet 'engage in different ways'. They comment on the way teachers respect and appreciate the students' input, facilitating and engaging the students with the content and with each other. These observations help participants connect their learning from courses by confirming it with classroom observations and reflecting on their own experiences.

At the same time, as representatives of their colleagues, the participants position themselves as collaborators and sharers of the new ideas and practices observed in Finland.

'Representative of colleagues'	'I tried to write in a journal to help me map ideas and remind myself to share them with my colleagues. I started sharing some of my observations here online and they are excited to try new things when I get back.' (Intan)
'Sharer of knowledge'	
'Collaborator for new practices'	'I realised that we could not copy and paste what we found here. But I do think some ideas are possible to implement if I can get my colleagues on board with these changes.' (Angga)
'Modelling practice'	'I will try to model some of the ideas I found here and instil learning independence in the classroom, which can serve as inspiration for other teachers and stimulate them to change.' (Zikri)

Table 8. Participants' positioning after the programme

In this episode, they identified some specific practices in the classroom that will be implemented in their classroom and shared with their colleagues for future implementation in schools.

Repositioning During Learning in the ITP Concerning the Post-Conflict and Post-Disaster Context

Our second research question focused on how the post-conflict and post-disaster contexts were manifest in the positioning processes described. Acehnese contexts shape the particular teachership, which reflects its socio-historical context. The participants in this study came from post-conflict and post-disaster areas, and this background is represented in their narratives by positions associated with being students, student teachers and teachers which highlight issues in the educational context in the area. Meanwhile, new positions acquired on the programme helped participants articulate how they will be different teachers in this particular context.

As teachers in the region, the participants are aware of the post-conflict and post-disaster impacts on the learning process and students' conditions because some of them may have experienced this themselves, either directly or indirectly. The following participants' narratives contain positions such as being victims of natural disaster and conflict accompanied by descriptions of disrupted schooling and traumatic experiences.

> *I was a recipient of a scholarship due to my status as a victim of the tsunami. My father told me that I would not be able to continue to senior high school because he could not afford it. So, when I was finally able to continue my schooling, I was thrilled. (Maya)*

Like Maya, the other participants in this programme have diverse experiences with the post-conflict and post-tsunami context that emerge through positionings in their personal and professional narratives. However, as the participants became teachers themselves, their narratives indicate the dominant position of teachers as civil servants and the minor position of a private school teacher in Aceh. This contradiction is reflected in narratives about the teaching profession in this region. These positionings also reflect the legacy of schooling during the conflicts, which the government essentially maintains through its public schools (Cardozzo & Shah, 2016). The following excerpt is from Sofia, who had previous experience of public school.

> *When I did my practicum in public school, I did not like it very much. Because they put me in charge of students who break the rules, I am supposed to act as a disciplinarian. I thought, 'all my knowledge will not be applicable here'. After I qualified as a teacher, I applied to SBS, a private school. During the interview, the interviewer asked about what I could bring to the school, and I thought to myself, 'this school is different'. (Sofia)*

Sofia describes the typical positioning in public schools for a student teacher during her practice as that of a 'disciplinarian'. She realizes in that position that her knowledge will be useless. When she applied to SBS, a private school with a specific mission regarding the post-conflict and post-tsunami context, the school positions her as a 'contributor' through which she can utilize her knowledge and skills as a teacher. As in Sofia's narrative, the participants describe their reflection on teachership in Aceh in light of their experiences in the programme. The participants describe the civil servant teacher as a 'more permanent job', yet 'having less freedom' and 'less creativity'. As teachers in a private school, the participants describe themselves as 'having more flexibility', 'having a learning orientation' and 'being creative'.

These positions associated with being private school teachers became more pronounced during the programme as they explored various issues in their research projects. They explored local language acquisition, inclusive education, the teacher-parent relationship, the motivation and relationships of students and school violence. This exploration engaged participants in systematically reflecting on the impact of conflict and disaster on the learning processes in this region. The following excerpt is a story by Yanti, who describes her research on local language acquisition through experimentation with a teaching method. She gained more insight during her visit to Finland, when she observed how Finnish is taught in the classroom.

> Our research on local language teaching is interesting; it made me look more closely at the language learning policy when I visited Finland. I notice how first-language teaching in Finland is excellent and helps to ensure the preservation of the local heritage. This is probably different in our context. In Aceh, some students' first language is not Bahasa Indonesia, but the local Acehnese language. When they go to school, the learning is conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, which drives many parents to use this language at home. I can only speak Acehnese but I cannot write it well. I am quite concerned about this, so for my thesis I decided to research local language teaching. (Yanti)

Yanti explored Acehnese language teaching in her research, and it made her more aware of mother-tongue language teaching when she visited Finland. She positions herself as a researcher and observer of this particular subject. Her positions as researcher and observer are new, yet they may be somewhat in line with her initial positions as a learning-oriented, flexible and creative private school teacher. As an Acehnese herself, Yanti positions herself as someone less fluent in the written form of the language. Through her research, she reflects on the way Acehnese language is currently used less due to the decision of parents to speak Bahasa Indonesia at home.

During the conflict, depending on the intensity of armed conflict in diverse regions in Aceh, using Acehnese language and the national language served as safety mechanisms in navigating social relations in a particular area. Historically, Lamb & Coleman (2008) report that Bahasa Indonesia was used as one of the 'centralising instruments' in education from 1966 to 1998. Although Bahasa Indonesia is considered to be 'the language of the central government, of national unity and of modernisation', its position as a second language does not serve as an identity marker as the first language might be assumed to do (Lamb & Coleman, 2008).

Local and national language usage was incredibly complicated during conflict in Aceh, where Acehnese needed to negotiate social interactions between rebel groups and the Indonesian army. During these interactions, they constantly switched identities through language use when interacting with these factions to ensure their safety. Recently, in the post-conflict era, schools in the region have the discretion to teach Acehnese language as 'local content' and in specific situations it may even be used as a language of instruction (Pemerintah Aceh, Qanun Aceh no.5 art. 34, 2008). However, in practice, the relationship between the teaching of the Acehnese language, Bahasa Indonesia and identity remains unclear.

Yanti's positioning as an Acehnese who is a teacher and researcher introduce a new meaning of local language teaching when she observes first-language teaching in Finland to preserve local identity and heritage. Several storylines are included in this process: Yanti as an Acehnese, teacher, researcher and observer. Repositioning along with these storylines during learning in the ITP further helps her to reach a new stance on issues of local language teaching in the Acehnese context.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to describe Indonesian teachers' identity reconstruction processes while undertaking a Finnish international master's degree programme. It did so by analysing positioning and repositioning as part of complex negotiations with historical and socio-cultural contexts as they reconfigured the participants' perceptions and meanings. Specifically, the study's objectives were to describe the way various positionings were used during the programme to reconstruct teacher identity in their narratives and to explore the way the post-conflict and post-disaster area manifested in the process.

The first finding suggests a diversity of shared positions and repositioning in various episodes accompanied by changes in the teachers' understanding of themselves as learners and teachers and their practice. The second finding described a unique constellation of positions reflecting the post-conflict and post-disaster areas. Those positions still influence the way the participants in this study narratively reconstruct their identities. Trent (2011) described the international experience as a boundary experience that may cause discontinuity through oppositional affiliation based on an essentialist view on culture (Rizvi, 2005). Our findings support the notion that teacher identity construction in the international context is a complex negotiation of temporal, cultural and spatial contexts in dialogical relationships that challenge normality boundaries.

This negotiation may be possible when boundaries are viewed as dialogical phenomena, where socio-cultural differences indicated by boundary may lead to both 'discontinuity in action or interaction' and 'simultaneously suggest the sameness and continuity in the sense that within discontinuity two or more sites are relevant to one another in a particular way' (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011, p.133).

In this study, discontinuity might be perpetuated by the challenging context from which the participants came. However, in our findings, repositioning allows participants to negotiate and connect previous knowledge about themselves and their practice with current knowledge, hence providing continuity in teacher identity (Arvaja, 2016). For example, Yanti's story about researching local language teaching may discontinue her ambivalence about the teaching of local language based on her perception of the language grounded on conflict situations in the past. Nevertheless, through her research she found that continuity in teaching is based on the new meaning of teaching this language. Through the process, Yanti repositioned herself both as an Acehnese and as a teacher, where she found relevance in teaching the language from both cultural and institutional storylines.

By using narrative as a medium for teachers to make sense of their identity during learning in the International Teacher Programme (ITP), we gained a processual and relational understanding of identity reconstruction through repositioning along 'cultural and structural relationship in which they are embedded and by the stories through which they constitute their identities' (Sommers, 1994, p. 624). This is visible in the thematic episodes described in the first section of the findings, which contains diverse positions and repositioning along with different storylines. Repositioning is also made possible due to an increase in the narrative capital available for participants to reconstruct their identities, supporting the innovation of the self (Hermans, 2008). The capital includes resources, such as new positionings available during learning in the ITP. These positionings include positions, storylines and awareness of the social forces informed by the individual, institutional and cultural scripts (Holstein & Gubrium, 2000). The ITP provides an opportunity to reflect on these resources, which resulted in their revision and expansion. As participants reposition themselves, there are simultaneous changes in their perceptions of themselves, their practices and their teachership in a particular context. By making these narrative resources explicit, teachers are also supported to make changes with practical implications (Søreide, 2006).

In light of these findings, we can highlight how studying in an ITP may provide alternative understandings of learning and sense-making processes. First, using identity and positioning underlines the complex and ambiguous process of identity reconstruction in this context. However, this approach also highlights the way participants negotiate temporality, culturality and spatiality to create 'local meanings' (Harnett, 2001). Secondly, by looking at the boundary as dialogical, the teacher identity construction process is viewed as 'a pragmatic enterprise of both self and society that becomes true in its active realization' (Hermans, Konopka, Oosterwegel, & Zomer, 2017, p.510). In this study, participants and teacher educators negotiate the boundary between Finnish and Indonesian educational cultures through repositioning. This process helps participants to cross the boundary as they reconstruct their identities.

In this study, the international teacher programme might be viewed as an opportunity to gradually enlarge narrative capital and support productive negotiation between various positions during learning. An ITP can also serve as a learning process that supports both the discontinuity-continuity and unity-multiplicity of identity through the negotiation of various positions using narrative construction. However, this study is based on a limited number of participants and a specific programme arrangement. Hence, in this programme and other programmes, the narratives of other participants might provide different dynamics of repositioning. Additionally, findings in this study also highlight the permanence issue of teacher identity concerning its dynamic that will change continuously throughout the teachers' careers.

Research in this context will therefore also benefit from longitudinal post-graduation studies to explore if and how repositioning continues and how increased narrative resources are used after graduation. In conclusion, by exploring the narrative reconstruction of teacher identity in international programmes through positional analysis, we found that the possibility for change through negotiation is inclusive, varied, and – in some cases – productive. It serves as an opportunity to find new positionings and create a new, contextual identity of being a teacher.

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