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MENTORSHIP AND RECIPROCITY AS FRAMES TO CONSTRUCT TEACHER'S IDENTITIES AND PERFORMANCE

**TUTORÍA Y RECIPROCIDAD COMO MARCOS
PARA CONSTRUIR LA IDENTIDAD Y EL DESEMPEÑO
DE LOS DOCENTES**

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Mentorship and Reciprocity as Frames to Construct Teacher's Identities and Performance

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the reciprocal influence of mentoring on the formation of teacher identity during an internship for pre-service teachers of a bilingual education program offered by a private university in Bogotá, Colombia. It examined how mentoring shapes the performance and identity of preservice teachers, while analyzing how the performance of these teachers influences the professional practice of mentors. The research used a qualitative case study, based on data collected through field notes, artifacts and questionnaires completed by a teacher in training as activities of the reflective component during 18 sessions of an intensive English course. The results highlight the importance of collaboration between mentors and students in the joint development of teaching identity and the improvement of teaching practices. Likewise, this study highlights the value of creating reciprocal learning environments in which mentors and students can grow professionally together, thereby enriching teaching practices and contributing to ongoing debates about teacher education.

Keywords: foreign language instruction, intellectual cooperation, mentoring, teacher education

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Tutoría y Reciprocidad como Marcos para Construir la Identidad y el Desempeño de los Docentes

RESUMEN

Este estudio exploró la influencia recíproca de la mentoría en la formación de la identidad docente durante una práctica para profesores en formación de un programa de educación bilingüe ofertado por una universidad privada de Bogotá, Colombia. Se examinó cómo la mentoría moldea el desempeño y la identidad de los maestros en formación, a la vez que se analizó cómo el desempeño de estos maestros influye en la práctica profesional de los tutores. La investigación empleó un estudio de caso cualitativo, basado en datos recogidos por medio de notas de campo, artefactos y cuestionarios diligenciados por un maestro en formación como actividades del componente reflexivo durante 18 sesiones de un curso intensivo de inglés. Los resultados ponen de relieve la importancia de la colaboración entre mentores y alumnos en el desarrollo conjunto de la identidad docente y la mejora de las prácticas de enseñanza. Así mismo, este estudio subraya el valor de crear entornos de aprendizaje recíproco en los que mentores y alumnos puedan crecer profesionalmente juntos, enriqueciendo así las prácticas docentes y contribuyendo a los debates en curso sobre la formación del profesorado.

Palabras clave: cooperación intelectual, enseñanza de idiomas, formación de docentes, mentoría

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INTRODUCTION

Within the complex landscape of educational development, the mentor-mentee relationship in teacher training plays a crucial role in shaping the professional identities and pedagogical practices of both pre-service and in-service teachers. (Lanas & Rautio, 2014; Aslup, 2018). This research delves into the nuanced interplay between mentorship and its influence on teacher identity and performance within the context of a pre-service practicum experience carried out during an English as a foreign language (EFL) summer course in a Bilingual Education program at a private university in Bogotá, Colombia. Hence, this study anchors its focus on the premise that mentorship plays a critical role in the preservice teaching practicum, as much as in the inservice teaching development.

In this context, the result of the teacher mentor-mentee relationship is frequently underestimated as in-service teachers usually lack the time and will to guide their trainees; thus, the enriching amount of learnings, ideas, practices and idiosyncrasies that could transform into teaching practice enhancement may be hindered. Besides, on the pre-service teachers' side, their lack of experience may be conducive to an evasive dialogue in which not many deep insights could be shared as a strategy to avoid judgment or criticism (Garten et al., 1994 ; Dominguez, 2023).

In the light of the aforementioned, the questions that guided this study are: What is the influence, if so, of mentorship on a preservice teacher's performance and identity? And how does a preservice teacher's performance influence in-service teacher's professional practice and identity? Subsequently, the goals of this research are to unveil the influence of mentorship on a preservice teacher's performance and identity and to elucidate the forms a preservice teacher and an in-service teacher's performances reciprocally influence their professional practice and identity. By achieving these ends, the educational community could boost the reciprocal influence of professional practices and identity construction of both parties by promoting more dialogic processes in a safe atmosphere where these interactions contribute to the co-construction of pedagogical identities and performances, thereby enriching the educational practices and professional trajectories.

Therefore, this work sets the stage for a comprehensive exploration of the intricate interrelationships and transformative potential inherent in the mentor-mentee engagement. The subsequent sections will delve into the literature review, methodological approach, and analytical frameworks that guide this



inquiry, ultimately aiming to contribute valuable perspectives to the discourse on teacher education and mentorship in contemporary pedagogical contexts.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Reciprocal Construction of Pedagogical Identities in the Interplay of Teaching Mentorship

The teaching profession offers diverse scenarios to prospective educators that continually shape and reshape their identity. As defined by Gee (2011), identity may be considered as the recognition of the self in a social group, and it is shaped by a discourse that is constantly being constructed and reconstructed. Such a construction, in the case of the teacher, is a transition into new roles within educational contexts, which leads to the enactment of actions and decisions that rule the development of a class (Aslup, 2018; Nguyen & Yang, 2018). In addition, as stated by Villegas et al., (2020), the set of values, beliefs and even practices carried out by an educator is the result of the Vygotskian sociocultural environment that involves a myriad of individual and social determinants namely, the interpretation of the self, agency, prior experiences, and the influence of mentoring. In light of that, the formation of the identity of an educator is a dynamic process shaped by professional experiences in the frame of social interactions with the environment, and the reciprocal relationships established with a mentor.

Following the aforementioned, in the pedagogical sphere, teachers are situated in a sociocultural scenario that is characterized by norms, values, life stories, and experiences that configure the forms in which the teacher perceives the self, acts and interacts in relation to a community. In these terms, the multifaceted dimensions of the educational context establish social obligations, roles and epistemological stances that are framed within social hierarchy that is deliberated and assimilated by the individual in the pursuit of a professional identity (Friesen & Besley, 2013; Oruç, 2013). Additionally, influenced by such sociocultural dimensions, the teacher also experiences multiple events structured by the interactions and relationships established with the students within the ecosystem of the educational domains; it forges and adjusts their perception of professional efficacy, their identity and pedagogical philosophies through introspective and reflective moments (Aslup, 2018; Nguyen & Yang, 2018; Villegas et al., 2020). With this in mind, Hunzicker (2017) assures that in such a process, the educator engages in leadership roles that foster a sense of agency in the evolving construction of



their identity. In essence, the interplay of student and teacher's cultural backgrounds, their personal experiences and their assumption of roles continually shape and reshape the teacher's sense of identification within the community.

Equally important, the teacher's agency is key in nurturing the discourse that aids in their identity crafting. As defined by Bandura (1999) agency is the faculty to make decisions and act accordingly to a social structure, which leads to the active participation of the individual in a social group. In this regard, traits such as self-efficacy, autonomy and reflection define the forms in which the teacher interacts in the diverse scenarios posed by the educational community where s/he operates, resulting in an eventual modification of perceptions and practices that are represented in a discourse; it allows the teacher to navigate, reinforce and transform the sense of the self (Gee, 2011; Norton & Toohey 2011; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018). Thus, the teacher's agency is posed as a determining factor when it comes to assuming roles and making choices that directly impact the evolving discourse in the educational milieu.

As a matter of fact, not only the teacher's identity construction is an individual transformation encouraged by the environment, for the case of novice teachers, mentoring stands out as an influential factor in shaping a professional identity. In hope that more experienced educators may serve as mentors, Izadinia (2018) explains that mentorship is an opportunity to guide, provide support and even pose challenges to sharpen the novice teacher's professional development. Moreover, for Hobson et al., (2009) mentoring could not be considered as a one-sided process in which the novice teacher solely gains advantage; rather, considering that the educational mean is constantly changing, novice teachers may also share their views, refreshing, in this way, pedagogical conceptions or approaches to address emerging challenges within a class. With this view, the interplay of new and experienced perspectives allows the emergence of a reciprocal dynamic in which the mentee makes the most of the mentor's expertise, and at the same time, the mentor has the chance to modernize their practices integrating new viewpoints given by the mentee (Hobson et al., 2009; Ingersoll & Strong 2011). In sum, the mutual and reciprocal exchange generated by the relationship established by mentorship is fundamental as it gives room to refine and co-construct teachers' professional identities.



Given these points, it could be asserted that the identity development process of a teacher is an intricate journey, which evolves within time and space. In accordance, it is imperative to acknowledge that such a process is highly influenced by the social sphere. It configures diverse experiences that are characterized by the roles that have been assigned, the portrayed attitudes and the personal agency exertion, which nurtures a professional discourse (Gee, 2011; Friesen & Besley, 2013; Aslup, 2018). In like manner, we have revised that when the teacher is supported by a mentor, such a relationship turns into a symbiotic dynamic that may benefit each party (Hobson et al., 2009). It becomes essential that the educational milieu understands such a complex process to facilitate scenarios where educators can transform their practices by means of collaboration, and then, configure their sense of the self by enhancing, as a result, their performance and boosting their guidance to students.

METHOD

This research adopts the design of a qualitative case study to investigate the forms in which the construction of teachers' identities are shaped by the symbiotic influence between a mentor teacher and his mentee along the process of internship (Merriam, 1998; Hobson et al., 2009; Sampieri, 2018). Accordingly, our analysis delves into the ways in which such a relationship may influence the performance of the mentee in their role as a pre-service teacher, as well as how mentoring and reciprocity facilitate the transformation of teaching practices within the mentor as an in-service teacher. The study was conducted at a private university north of Bogotá, Colombia. Specifically, this research was carried out at an intensive intermediate English course aimed at interdisciplinary students who seek English proficiency as a prerequisite for the attainment of their bachelor's degree. Furthermore, this course was associated with the undergraduate bilingual education credential program, where final-semester students (pre-service teachers) complete their practicum. Within this process, one of the participants was a teacher candidate who received guidance and support from the second participant, an in-service teacher who served as a mentor throughout the process and an evaluator teacher who assessed the pre-service teacher's performance during the course.

Additionally, the present investigation comprised a total of 18 sessions, each lasting 4 hours. During these sessions, the in-service teacher (mentor) led the first half of each session, while the pre-service teacher (mentee) observed. Subsequently, the roles swapped, with the pre-service teacher taking over

the remaining 2 hours, followed by feedback from the mentor, and the teacher evaluator, who was in charge of assessing the pre-service teacher's lesson planning and material design. This approach allowed for the examination of the dynamic relationship that emerged between them as they collaboratively co-constructed the classroom environment and mutually assisted one another.

We included field notes made by the in-service teacher and the teacher evaluator to document the pre-service teacher's performance within the actual class context; these notes were subject to analysis to elucidate the possible influence of mentorship on performance (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2017). Also, we included artifacts (lesson plans and reflective papers with the corresponding feedback provided by the teacher evaluator), as they served as tangible data sources, providing glimpses of the pre-service teacher's identity, including his beliefs, attitudes, expertise, and pedagogical philosophies, among others as well as his process of improvement within his planning and performance processes. These artifacts played a pivotal role in facilitating understanding of the evolution of pedagogical practices applied during the instructional sessions (Smith, 2007; Goldschmidt & Congdon, 2018). Finally, a questionnaire was conducted when culminating the course, with the objective of gathering information pertaining to the pre-service teacher's perceptions, emotions, and reflections on the experience and professional development as an educator (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

To achieve the end of this study, an interpretative analysis of data sources was conducted. This included examination of the questionnaire, the evaluation of artifacts including reflective papers and lesson plans, and review of field notes. These elements were carefully scrutinized through the triangulation of data and data collection methods to support the assertions given within this research work, considering the criteria of reliability, validity and legitimation (Moon, 2019).

The analytical approach adopted open coding as a methodological tool to identify themes related to the construction of a preservice teachers' identity and the reciprocal relationship established among the mentor, mentee and their performance. This process was supported by the use of Atlas TI. The following table illustrates the a priori codes evidenced within the experience:

Table 1. A priori codes emerged from analysis

Code	Explanation
Mentoring	A developmental collaboration where one individual imparts knowledge, skills, information, and insights to support the personal and professional development of another person (Lunsford et al., 2017)
Reciprocal relationships	A balanced and equal partnership where both mentor and mentee actively participate, share responsibilities, and contribute to a trusting and mutual exchange (Shelmerdine & Louw 2008)

Note. Self-elaboration

In the final stage of analysis, a careful examination was conducted to ascertain recurring patterns across the data. This process facilitated the classification of the data into two main categories as presented according to the research questions in table 2

Table 2. Research questions and categories

Research questions	Categories
1. What is the influence, if so, of mentorship on a preservice teacher's performance and identity?	1. The agentic process of the pre-service teacher's identity construction influenced by mentorship
2. How does a preservice teacher's performance influence the inservice teacher's professional practice and identity?	2. Reciprocity for the development of professional identity and performance in the frame of mentorship

Note. Self elaboration.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This research aimed, first, at unveiling the influence of mentorship on a preservice teacher's performance and the construction of a professional identity, and second, elucidating the forms a preservice teacher's performance influences inservice teacher's professional practice. With this in mind, we examined a diverse range of actions and interactions within the relationship among students, the pre-service teacher (mentee), the in-service teacher (mentor) and the teacher evaluator. Such interactions facilitated the co-construction of a learning environment, key in shaping the pre- and in-teachers' identity. The formation of this identity was influenced by a convergence of intellectual,

cultural, emotional, historical, and social factors that enabled participants to engage in communicative actions, and also influenced pedagogical decision-making processes that enhanced learning. Consequently, this analysis delineated two primary categories that shed light on the formation of a teacher identity underpinned by reciprocal relationships, mentorship, agency and the resultant responses emanating from these pedagogical decisions.

The agentic process of the pre-service teacher's identity construction influenced by mentorship

The multifaceted process of the construction of a teacher identity is complex, influenced by an array of external and internal factors. Mentorship and support offer essential guidance, serving as a model for professional behavior and creating a nurturing space that encourages mentees to explore and solidify their roles within the educational landscape (Friesen & Besley, 2013; Hunzicker, 2017; Izadinia, 2018). In addition, the agency of the mentee, which is influenced by both mentorship and support, is crucial in making informed decisions that actively mold their professional path (Klemenčič, 2015; Aslup, 2018; Rojas, & Escobar-Alméciga, 2023). Considering the former, the pre-service Teachers' identity construction is further enhanced through the integration of various strategies aimed at developing their teaching practice. This includes modeling to boost teaching performance, the implementation of reflective spaces to make adjustments, and incorporating feedback to continuously improve their teaching methods.

In this particular case, the pre-service English teacher resorted to diverse strategies to establish himself as a leader in the communicative dynamics of the classroom, specifically, he seemed to emphasize on the approach when he had to lead the class by himself. First, he employed warm-up exercises to capture the attention of the students aiming at generating a connection with them. However, he struggled dealing with moments of prolonged silence, which arose from the structure of his lesson planning, including timing, the selection and sequencing of activities, and the balance between content and language instruction. To address these issues, he began changing his instructional conduct after regular discussions with his mentor that took place before or after the lessons, culminating in modeling some of the mentor's pedagogical strategies, specifically when it came to classroom management and the planning and implementation of communicative tasks that shaped the learning environment. With this

in mind, the next excerpt illustrates the influence of the mentor in the pre-service teacher planning and performance.

Table 3. Excerpt 1: Role of mentorship

How do you feel mentorship has played a role in your development as an educator during this teaching practice the last month?

Will: It has been significant because the tutorials were always done when necessary (...) the errors or successes made were broken down point by point in order to have a comprehensive vision of the teaching process in the course. (...) Likewise, the replication of key aspects of the tutor teacher adapted to my classes made me have a better development, such as the sequence of the topics and the structure of his class.

Note. Questionnaire, question number 2.

Table 4. Excerpt 2: New approaches and strategies adopted

What kind of specific teaching strategies or approaches have you adopted or modified because of your mentor's guidance?

Will: (...), I must say that my tutor influenced the organization of all the classes. Having been my teacher during the content-based instruction subject in the sixth semester, I was able to rescue a content-based methodology without English becoming boring. At the beginning of my teaching experience, I wanted to deliver a class hundred percent using content, but due to the length of the class and the assigned topics, it was an unfeasible option, so my tutor suggested that I should give an approach based on tasks (...) Such a suggestion allowed me to be flexible over time and give an applicable character to grammatical issues without losing the intention of the content.

Note. Questionnaire, question number 5.

As observed above in excerpts 1 and 2, the behavioral modifications undertaken by the pre-service teacher after his encounters with his mentor are strategically implemented with the objective of enhancing pedagogical effectiveness. Such a development in practice could be interpreted as an indicator of reflective pedagogy and openness (Castañeda-Trujillo & Aguirre-Hernández, 2018; Karimi,

& Mofidi, 2019). The prospective teacher exhibits a conscious effort to assimilate and model what calls his attention from the wisdom and efficacy reflected by the mentor (Akcan & Tatar, 2010; Nghia & Tai, 2017). Accordingly, this reflective practice is critical in the development of a professional identity, as it is influenced by agency, intersubjectivity and the nuances of mentorship. Therefore, during the course, the preservice teacher demonstrated having been conscious of what he performed when leading the classroom and what he observed by later reshaping his decisions.

Likewise, the experience in the classroom served as a source of reflection in relation to teaching values, which emerged from the relationship between mentee and mentor through observation, feedback provided by the in-service teacher and the teacher evaluator, and the pedagogical interventions per se. Reflections regarding the use of a teacher's professional discourse in different moments of the lessons, and his level of fulfillment in relation to his responsibilities in the roles as a co-teacher and as a student from a bachelor's degree seemed to prepare the path to build part of the ethical dimension of his teaching identity. This could be evidenced in the following extracts.

Table 5 Excerpt 3: Professional growth and development

This is the last week of practice and Will has been improving the punctuality to submit his assignments and their quality. I noticed he had been more descriptive and clearer when presenting his activities; they also seemed better organized. I visited him while he was not leading the class, and he mentioned that he had understood how planners had to be written and so it had been easier; he had also learned to design slides to present instructions and give examples, and he felt more confident when explaining things. Besides, the constant dialogue with the tutor had helped him a lot because he had found ideas for the classes.

Note. Evaluator's journal 4.

In this way, the act of adjusting and modeling after a mentor is more than just imitation. More than following suggestions from the feedback received in a unidirectional way, there seemed to be an interaction between reflection and feedback that was evidenced through his openness to adapting new ideas. Thus, it becomes a self-formative experience, key to the emergence of a reflective, competent, and professional educator (Lasky, 2005; Klemenčič, 2015; Chávez et al., 2023).



In sum, building the professional identity of an educator is a complex process that requires guidance from mentors and informed decisions that come from their own learning experiences, his reflective teaching and the assistance he is provided with. This end, rather than involving the adoption of several strategies that modify teaching approaches, promotes a transformative process that shapes the understanding of what is teaching, evolving in terms of techniques, skills and knowledge, leading to a richer view of education.

Reciprocity for the Development of Professional Identity and Performance in the Frame of Mentorship

Within the transformative process of shaping a professional identity, mentors and mentees provide mutual support, contributing to the academic enrichment of their relationship. The latter, rooted in reciprocity, is not simply an exchange of teaching practices, but a mutual sharing of knowledge, values, and norms that lead to growth and reflection towards professional learning and personal evolution (Lanas & Rautio, 2014; Ferguson, 2018; Çapan & Bedir, 2019). In this sense, as established by Cifuentes-Tinjaca et al. (2023), the mentor-mentee dynamic becomes a fundamental scenario for negotiating and constructing such identities, where reciprocity serves as a bridge of mutual respect, shared learning, and the exchange of experiences, intervening in their pedagogical decisions. Thence, mentors act not only as guides in the development of competencies and the reinforcement of confidence in their mentees, but also as recipients of innovative insights that enrich their own perpetual process of growth and self-improvement. It encompasses a reciprocal relationship that may boost pedagogical-instructional strategies within the classroom context

In this instance, the reciprocal relationship constructed between the mentor and mentee functioned to enhance their insights into instructional decision-making, thereby influencing their pedagogical choices. The mentor and mentee shared the experience of dealing with the intricate challenges a class poses; they opted to divide their teaching roles and duties within the sessions, and such a division gave the mentee the chance to lead the class on some occasions while the mentor observed, and vice versa, encountering scenarios that defied their praxis. Considering this, by means of a dialogic process and collegial support, they could develop a learning environment that promoted growth and innovation.

With this consideration, the next excerpt illustrates how reciprocity influences the development of such an expanded identity.

Table 6. Excerpt 4: professional growth and reflection

-I have observed that PST comes up with interesting topics to be treated in class, such as existentialism, romanticism, etc... the way he connects topics and joins grammar in a session has caught my attention, and even it has surprised me, as I believed that having a multidisciplinary and varied course would not pay attention to such specific topics. I noticed that such type of content also engages people and demands them to reflect and think using the target language, so, I consider I could make classes like those.

Note: Mentor's fieldnotes 1.

Table 7. Excerpt 5: Professional growth through the process

During the second week, Will has attended all his sessions. I visited him while he was not leading the class, and he told me he had submitted his lesson plans on Monday because he had wanted to discuss some ideas with his tutor in order to include them in their lessons, so he had to wait until the end of the week to talk to him, and then he submitted the assignments. I explained I had provided feedback on the formats, so I really expected more elaborated texts. However, he expresses the need for some guidance to plan classes in this fashion. Also, he said that his tutor and he are co-teaching, which seems to make him feel very motivated; he says he is in charge of half of the class and the teacher is giving him freedom to work on what he likes: activities with photography and focused on speaking. I told him his teaching may have included features of task-based learning and he mentions that he often applies tasks.

Note. Evaluator's journal 2.

Therefore, as shown in the previous section, the symbiotic relationship established by mentoring served as a pillar for reciprocal professional development. On the one hand, the mentee mentioned as the PST (pre-service teacher) benefited from professional support to navigate the complexities of teaching, in this sense, as stated by Aslup (2018), it results in the ability to make well-informed pedagogical decisions that are supported by the confidence instilled through the mentor's trust and validation. On



the other hand, the mentor experienced a reflective growth process, inspired by the perspectives and efforts of the mentee to address such educational challenges. This experience not only promotes the enhancement of classroom performance but also fosters the development of larger professional identity, characterized by a forward-thinking approach to classroom challenges (Garten et al., 1994; Mullen & Fletcher 2012; Lunsford et al., 2017; Dominguez, 2023; Mosley-Wetzel et al., 2023). Thus, the relationship established highlights the transformative influence of reciprocity in leading and refining teaching strategies and the cultivation of a proactive professional identity.

In short, the mentor-mentee dynamic fosters professional development and enables pre-service teachers to approach teaching challenges with confidence under the guidance of mentors. This partnership enhances the pre-service teacher's ability to make insightful instructional decisions, while the mentor benefits from mentee's novel ideas, promoting reflective growth in both areas. Such a relationship not only improves teaching efficiency but also creates a progressive professional image focused on innovative teaching solutions. These actions promote teacher's agency and emphasize the importance of informed and independent decision-making processes for the further development of teaching practice. Hence, this model of reciprocal learning highlights the evolving teacher's identity and the critical role of autonomy in driving innovation in education and ensuring educators are adaptable and creative in an ever-changing teaching environment.

CONCLUSIONS

This research explored two phenomena that are co-determinant in the construction of teachers' identities and teaching professional practice development: mentorship and reciprocity. First, it was observed that mentorship provides a scaffold for pre-service teachers, enabling them to face the challenges of teaching, refine and expand their repertoire of pedagogical strategies, and continuously enhance their classroom performance. The mentors, serving as models and guides, facilitate a nurturing environment that supports and encourages mentees to introspect, adapt, and evolve their teaching philosophies and methods, which in turn allows mentees (PST) to improve their professional performance.

Likewise, the study highlighted the reciprocal nature of mentorship, where not only does the mentee benefit from the mentor's experience and guidance, but the mentor also gains fresh insights and perspectives. This reciprocal engagement fosters a collaborative learning environment, catalyzing



innovation and growth for both participants and enriching their professional identities and pedagogical approaches.

Hence, the findings of this study offer several pedagogical implications, especially in the context of teacher education and professional development. To begin with, bachelor's degrees may design and implement structured mentorship programs that facilitate meaningful interactions between pre-service and in-service teachers. Such programs should not only focus on the transfer of knowledge but also on facilitating scenarios for reciprocal learning and co-construction of knowledge and identities.

What is more, mentorship should be recognized as a critical component of professional identity development for teachers, so teachers' training programs should be tailored to encourage reflective practices, enabling both mentors and mentees to critically examine their beliefs, practices, and the impact of their teaching on student's learning. Thus, by encouraging a culture of reciprocal learning, where in-service teachers can also learn from the fresh perspectives and innovative approaches of pre-service teachers, can lead to a dynamic and evolving educational practice.

Finally, this research underscores the significance of a reciprocal and supportive mentorship in the realm of teacher education, emphasizing its role in shaping the identities and performances of teachers at various stages of their professional journey. As this study illuminates the intricate dance of mentorship in teacher identity formation and pedagogical performance, it beckons further exploration into this rich field of inquiry, promising insights that can refine and transform educational practices towards innovation and quality education.

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