TEACHING PRACTICUM IN THAI RURAL SCHOOLS: PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

SUMIT CHOEPHATRUEDI

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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THIS DISSERTATION IS A PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Dissertation Title: Teaching Practicum in Thai Rural Schools: Pre-service English Teachers' Self-efficacy and Identity Construction

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"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
(Jeremiah 29:11)

Sumit Choephatruedi

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how pre-service English teachers (PSETs) in Thailand develop teacher self-efficacy (TSE) and construct teacher identity (TI) during their teaching practicums in rural school contexts, with particular attention to the demands of English language teaching (ELT) in under-resourced environments. Although rural schools constitute nearly half of Thailand's educational institutions, empirical research remains limited on how rural practicum experiences shape PSETs' efficacy, professional identity, and instructional practices as English teachers. This gap is especially significant in English as a foreign language (EFL) context, where limited student exposure to English, low proficiency levels, and scarce instructional resources place distinctive pedagogical and emotional demands on novice teachers. Addressing this gap, the study was guided by three research objectives: (1) to examine how PSETs' self-efficacy develops during rural practicums; (2) to investigate how TSE contributes to the construction of English TI; and (3) to identify the ELT-specific challenges and opportunities within rural practicums that influence both processes.

Adopting a social constructivist perspective, the study employed a qualitative case study design involving three fourth-year PSETs enrolled in a Bachelor of Education (English) program at a university in northern Thailand. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations focusing on ELT practices, and reflective narratives. Using the three-phase coding method, the findings revealed that PSETs' self-efficacy developed in a nonlinear, context-sensitive manner. At the outset of the practicum, participants entered rural schools with optimism shaped by university coursework and aspirations to teach English, alongside anxiety related to classroom English use, pronunciation, spontaneous interaction, and teaching learners

with very low English proficiency. These initial beliefs were quickly challenged by a period of reality shock as participants encountered multi-grade classrooms, minimal ELT resources, limited exposure to English outside the classroom, and expectations to perform both instructional and non-instructional roles.

Over time, English teaching self-efficacy was gradually strengthened through small but meaningful mastery experiences, such as successfully managing classroom interaction in English, adapting ELT activities for mixed-ability learners, improvising teaching materials, and observing incremental student engagement and progress. Vicarious experiences emerged through informal learning from mentor teachers and colleagues, particularly in navigating classroom management and localized ELT practices. Social persuasion, especially encouragement, trust, and recognition from students, mentor teachers, and community members, played a critical role in validating participants' identities as English teachers. Participants' emotional and physiological responses, including stress, exhaustion, pride, and renewed efficacy, served as key interpretive cues for evaluating their instructional competence and professional growth.

The findings further indicate that TSE and TI are developed through a reciprocal but uneven process. While increased efficacy in English lesson delivery, classroom interaction, and student engagement strengthened participants' sense of themselves as English teachers, identity development did not continually advance in parallel with instructional efficacy. In some cases, participants demonstrated growing ELT competence while simultaneously questioning their long-term commitment to the profession due to emotional exhaustion, institutional pressures, and limited structural support. Notably, social persuasion and community recognition played a more decisive role in shaping English TI than mastery experiences alone. The rural practicum thus functioned not merely as a testing ground for pedagogical skills but as a transformative ELT identity space in which autonomy, emotional labor, and close community relationships accelerated professional growth. Contrary to deficit-oriented assumptions, resource-scarce rural contexts both constrained and strengthened PSETs' self-efficacy and identity by fostering adaptive, context-responsive ELT practices.

This study contributes to ELT scholarship by advancing an integrated understanding of the reciprocal relationship between TSE and TI in rural EFL

practicum settings. It highlights how English teacher development is shaped through interactions among linguistic competence, emotional resilience, social validation, and contextual realities. The study offers practical implications for English teacher education, including the need for rural-focused ELT preparation, intensified training in classroom English use, structured mentorship with experienced rural English teachers, and systematic reflective practices that focus on identity work. These findings underscore the importance of stronger university–school partnerships and targeted policy support to enhance the preparation, retention, and professional sustainability of English teachers in underserved rural communities.

Keywords: Teaching Practicum, Rural Schools, Pre-service English Teachers, Teacher Self-efficacy, Teacher Identity, Teacher Education, Thailand

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

"By sticking it out through tough times, people emerge from adversity with a stronger sense of efficacy."

(Bandura, 1994)

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the present study and establishes the foundation for the subsequent chapters. I will begin with a detailed background of the study, followed by a clear statement of the research problem. Then I will present the research objectives and questions guiding the investigation. Subsequently, I will discuss the significance of the study and specify the scope to clarify contextual, methodological, and participant-related boundaries. Next, I will define key terms central to the study to ensure conceptual clarity and consistency throughout the dissertation. Finally, I will conclude this chapter with an overview of the dissertation structure, providing a brief description of each chapter and illustrating how the study progresses logically from conceptual framing and methodological design to empirical findings, discussion, and implications.

Preamble: My Reflection

"Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; Good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher."

(Parker J. Palmer, 1998, p. 10)

My journey into teacher education was never planned. In fact, it developed through unexpected moments of discovery, doubt, and growth. Growing up in a small rural village in northern Thailand, I witnessed firsthand how education could transform lives. However, I never thought of becoming a teacher. For me, teaching seemed like a path for others, those who are naturally confident, knowledgeable, and prepared. I did not see myself in that role, nor did I believe I had what it took to stand in front of a classroom. However, that belief started to change when I volunteered at a local school back in 2019. At first, I saw myself as an outsider, more of an observer than a teacher.

Then, I met a group of pre-service teachers during their teaching practicums. They shared their excitement, fears, and the overwhelming reality of entering classrooms with limited resources, high expectations, and self-doubt. Their struggles resonated with me, not because I had experienced them myself, but because I understood what it felt like to be unprepared, to doubt one's abilities, and to fight with uncertainty.

Their stories left me with a lingering question: why do so many pre-service teachers still feel unprepared despite years of training? What are the problems? Also, what more can be done to better prepare them for real classroom experiences? These questions kept coming, pushing me to find answers. They also reminded me of a moment in my teaching journey: the first time I unexpectedly found myself standing in front of a classroom. I vividly remember the fear, hesitation, and pressure of expectations. I struggled to connect with my students and to discover ways to make learning engaging and meaningful. Some days, self-doubt nearly overwhelmed me. However, with support from a caring colleague, I started to see that teaching was not just about knowing methods or mastering techniques; it was about belief. Belief in one's ability to make a difference, even when facing uncertainty. That realization became a turning point. I later recognized it as "teacher self-efficacy" (TSE), the belief that one can teach, adapt, and persevere in the face of challenges.

During my master's studies in educational psychology, I became interested in this concept and its powerful influence on a teacher's beliefs, resilience, and professional growth. As I explored further, I was curious how it links to another key concept in teacher professional development: "teacher identity" (TI), which is the developing sense of who a teacher is and what they stand for. I learned that these two concepts affect not only how teachers view themselves but also how they approach classroom challenges. This insight motivated me to conduct this research to gain a deeper understanding of how TSE and TI develop during one of the most important stages of a teacher's development: the "teaching practicum" (TP). I was especially interested in Thailand's rural areas, which are overlooked in research and policy. "Rural schools" face unique challenges: limited resources, multi-grade classrooms, and cultural and linguistic diversity. However, I believe these same challenges also promote resilience, adaptability, and creativity in ways that are underestimated.

In this dissertation, I aim to shed light on the journey of "pre-service English teachers" (PSETs) as they navigate these realities. I want to understand how their self-efficacy develops in response to challenges and how these experiences shape their teacher identities. More importantly, I seek to give voice to those who enter these classrooms, filled with hope and uncertainty, so their experiences can inform how we train future teachers. My goal is not just to document struggles but to highlight moments of growth, strategies that support teachers, and the systems that help them thrive. To genuinely reshape teacher education so it prepares teachers for real-world challenges, I believe we need to listen to those who experience it firsthand.

As I reflect on my teaching journey, the doubts, moments of clarity, and the people who guided me, I am reminded of the power of belief. Belief in oneself. Belief in students. Belief in the transformative power of education. This dissertation is, in many ways, a tribute to that belief. I dedicate it to the PSETs who persevere despite the odds, to the students who inspire them, and to the enduring hope that when teaching is rooted in identity and integrity, it has the power to change lives, not just for students but for teachers themselves.

1.1 Background of the Study

Education plays a fundamental role in individual development and national progress. In other words, education equips individuals with essential knowledge, skills, and values that enable meaningful participation in society and serve as a key driver of economic growth and social cohesion (OECD, 2024). In Thailand, education has long been positioned as a national priority, with teachers regarded as central agents in shaping the country's future. This view was powerfully articulated by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who emphasized that teachers' knowledge, morality, and professional capability are decisive for national development (Bunwirat & Crocco, 2019). Such a vision continues to influence Thai educational discourse and reinforces the expectation that teacher education programs produce not only competent instructors but also ethically grounded and resilient professionals.

In contemporary educational contexts, however, the role of teachers has become increasingly complex. Teachers are now expected to serve as agents of change who respond to rapid technological development, globalization, and shifting social conditions, while addressing learner diversity and increasing accountability pressures (Priestley et al., 2015). These demands extend the transmission of subject knowledge and place considerable cognitive, emotional, and professional strain on teachers, particularly those at the beginning of their careers. As a focus of this study, these challenges are especially noticeable for English language teachers. Unlike teachers of other subjects, English teachers are required to use the target language as both the content and the medium of instruction, positioning their own linguistic performance at the center of professional evaluation. In non-English-speaking contexts such as Thailand, English is widely associated with global mobility, economic opportunity, and academic success (Baker & Jarunthawatchai, 2017; Todd & Darasawang, 2020). As a result, English teachers are judged not only on their pedagogical competence but also on their pronunciation, fluency, and communicative efficacy. Hence, this dual expectation places English teachers under distinctive professional pressure and directly affects their sense of capability and legitimacy.

In addition, scholars point out that a critical contribution to the quality of English language teaching (ELT) is the preparation and professional development of English teachers. For example, Darling-Hammond (2017, p. 291) emphasizes that "teacher preparation and development are key building blocks in developing effective teachers." In Thailand, pre-service English teachers (PSETs) are primarily trained through Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programs regulated by the Teacher Council of Thailand (TCT). These programs aim to develop PSETs who possess adequate linguistic proficiency, pedagogical competence, and professional ethics, in line with national standards and reform agendas (Thongthew, 2014). Nevertheless, research indicates that many PSETs begin their professional careers feeling inadequately prepared (Damnet, 2021; Pojanapunya et al., 2023). Pedagogically, PSETs frequently feel unprepared to manage communicative classrooms, scaffold language learning for mixed-proficiency students, and sustain student engagement when learners have limited exposure to English outside school. Linguistically, some PSETs express insecurity about their English proficiency, including pronunciation, grammatical

accuracy, and spontaneous English classroom interaction. These gaps between training and real-world teaching raise concerns about the effectiveness of teacher education programs in preparing English language teachers for challenging English classrooms across various contexts.

Where theory meets practice, the teaching practicum (see section 2.3) is a fundamental and compulsory component of teacher education programs in Thailand and worldwide. This stage is a critical *bridge* between academic coursework and practical classroom experience. It offers PSETs that provide structured opportunities to apply their knowledge, experiment with instructional strategies, and interact with diverse students under the supervision of experienced mentors (Becker et al., 2019; Deocampo, 2020; Li et al., 2023). Accordingly, this phase is not only a requirement but also represents a *formative* stage in which PSETs transition from being learners of teaching to practitioners responsible for facilitating their students' learning (Bloomfield, 2010; Allen & Wright, 2014). Therefore, the quality of this experience not only affects their effective teaching in the classroom but also plays a key role in developing their professionalism, resilience (Krisdianata & Mbato, 2022), and long-term identity as teachers (Prabjandee, 2019; Ardi et al., 2023; Groenewald & Arnold, 2024).

Nevertheless, learning to become a (good) English teacher from one classroom to another is *never* an easy journey. Britzman (1991, as cited in Bloomfield, 2010, p. 221) referred to this professional experience as a "struggle for voice." This refers to the challenge PSETs face in finding and asserting their own professional voice amid the dominant discourses, expectations, and institutional norms of schooling. As mentioned earlier, this shift requires PSETs to reframe their role in education, from being recipients of knowledge to providers of it. Ulum (2020) states that many PSETs begin their teaching practicum with *idealized* expectations about teaching. Nonetheless, these expectations oftentimes clash with the realities of unforeseen challenges, such as student disengagement, discipline issues, administrative constraints, and language barriers, among others (Deocampo, 2020; Imsa-ard et al., 2021). Previous scholars indicate that these challenges, also referred to as *"reality shock"* (Veenman, 1984, p. 143, as cited in Yuan & Lee, 2016), can tremendously affect PSETs' beliefs and cause stress and self-doubt, and lead them to reconsider their

career choice (Hong, 2010; Cai et al., 2022). The question is: how can we prepare PSETs for such scenarios?

As a focus of this study, that 'reality shock' could be even more noticeable and severe in rural schools (see section 2.3.3). Teaching practicum in these schools presents unique obstacles, such as resource shortages, professional isolation, and socio-economic disparities, which make the teaching process even more demanding for PSETs (Harmon et al., 2018; Azano & Stewart, 2015). For many years, Thailand has experienced ongoing debates about the growing number of 'small-sized schools' (defined as those with fewer than 120 students), which are primarily located in rural areas (Buaraphan, 2013). These schools now account for nearly half of the country's total schools (approximately 14,638 in 2011), and this number is expected to increase every year (Lounkaew, 2013). Therefore, these rural schools reflect the actual teaching environments in which PSETs in this study (and many other pre-service teachers in Thailand) complete their teaching practicum.

For PSETs, professional development involves negotiating multiple, sometimes competing, dimensions of identity. Many are non-native English-speaking teachers who must reconcile their identities as legitimate users of English with dominant ideologies that privilege native-speaker norms (Ilieva, 2010). At the same time, they must navigate the pedagogical demands of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), manage classroom interaction in a second language, and mediate between students' first language (L1), the target language (L2), and the cultural meanings attached to English (Moonthiya & Stevenson, 2024). These processes are closely tied to the development of teacher self-efficacy (TSE) and *teacher identity* (TI), as beliefs about one's linguistic competence, teaching capability, and professional role are continuously tested and reshaped through practice.

This raises a critical question for this study: Why are TSE and TI development significant for PSETs during this early stage of teacher preparation? Simply answered, the early stage is when PSETs' beliefs, emotions, and professional self-concepts are tested and reformed. Berg and Smith (2018) emphasize that there are compelling reasons for initial teacher education to focus closely on these constructs. They argue that once these beliefs are formed, especially self-efficacy beliefs, they tend to resist change. Bandura (1997) further explains that individuals tend to focus on experiences

that reinforce their existing beliefs and may overlook or ignore evidence that contradicts those beliefs. Therefore, at this formative stage, i.e., the teaching practicum, PSETs might be vulnerable to self-doubt and uncertainty as they confront the multifaceted realities of classroom life in rural schools (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019).

To begin with, teacher self-efficacy (hereafter referred to as TSE) (see section 2.4) refers to a teacher's belief in their ability to plan, organize, and execute the necessary actions to achieve desired outcomes in teaching and learning (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). TSE is a crucial psychological process that affects how teachers perceive challenges, persist through difficulties, and build resilience in their profession (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Li et al., 2023). Many studies consistently reveal that teachers with higher TSE show greater persistence, adaptability, and creativity in their teaching practices, even in challenging environments (Klassen & Durksen, 2014; Lazarides & Warner, 2020). Therefore, those teachers are more likely to employ innovative teaching strategies, promote student engagement, and actively pursue professional development opportunities that support their long-term career growth (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). In contrast, teachers with lower TSE experience increased anxiety (Gorospe, 2022), self-doubt (Settllage et al., 2009), and reduced motivation (Barni et al., 2019), which can eventually result in burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007), job dissatisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010), and disengagement from their professional responsibilities (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014).

This developmental aspect of TSE is closely associated with TI, which similarly emphasizes an evolving self-concept and a professional sense of belonging, shaped by personal beliefs, experiences, and social interactions (Beijaard et al., 2004; Sachs, 2005). Furthermore, recent research highlights that TSE and TI are closely interconnected (see section 2.6), with self-efficacy beliefs not only influencing how teachers perceive their professional roles but also shaping how they negotiate and construct their identities within diverse educational contexts (Menon, 2020; Marschall, 2022). Sun et al. (2025, p. 4) further argue that "in the process of forming professional identity, TSE plays a crucial role." For example, PSETs with high TSE may develop a more positive and stable TI, as they perceive themselves as competent in their instructional practices, classroom management, and student engagement. This TSE

strengthens their sense of professional belonging and supports their commitment to teaching (Canrinus et al., 2012; Sun et al., 2025). On the other hand, PSETs with low TSE may experience identity struggles, which lead them to doubt their ability to succeed in the profession and, in some cases, to consider leaving the profession (Marschall, 2022). Understanding these processes within rural ELT contexts is therefore essential for informing English teacher education programs that aim to prepare confident, resilient, and contextually responsive teachers for diverse and demanding teaching environments.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Over the past decades, there has been a growing interest in understanding the roles of teaching practicum in TSE development (e.g., Filatov & Pill, 2015; Megawati & Astutik, 2018; Hoang & Wyatt, 2021; Narayanan et al., 2023) and TI construction (e.g., Trent, 2011, 2013; Kuswandono, 2014; Teng, 2017; Prabjandee, 2019; Ulum, 2020; Groenewald & Arnold, 2024) in teacher education over the past decades. Researchers have employed various research methods, and the results indicate that both constructs are crucial to the effectiveness of teaching, resilience, and professional development.

Firstly, a common theme in scholarly research is that TSE is a dynamic construct rather than a fixed trait, influenced by personal, behavioral, and contextual factors (Zee & Koomen, 2016; Martin & Mulvihill, 2019). Nevertheless, although extensive research has explored TSE development, most studies continue to rely *predominantly* on quantitative methodologies (Wyatt, 2014; Zee & Koomen, 2016), particularly standardized instruments such as the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). While these tools are valuable for identifying general trends, they oversimplify the complex, context-specific aspects of TSE into numerical scores. This method may obscure the development of PSETs' beliefs across various teaching environments. Recent scholars, therefore, advocate additional approaches, such as longitudinal studies (Ma et al., 2022) and qualitative studies (Wyatt, 2014; Alibakhshi et al., 2020), that systematically examine the

evolving nature of TSE. These approaches enable researchers to examine how mentorship, school culture, and individual coping strategies shape TSE (Morris et al., 2017; Menon & Azam, 2021). Moreover, such approaches can reveal not only whether TSE increases or decreases, but also *how* and *why* it changes in response to specific experiences (Alibakhshi et al., 2020). Therefore, a design that combines surveys with interviews, reflections, and observations would offer richer, more holistic insights into the developmental processes of TSE.

Secondly, research on PSET identity construction during teaching practicum has shifted from viewing identity as fixed to understanding it as dynamic, socially constructed, and influenced by emotions, experiences, and context (see sections 2.5 and 2.6). More importantly, recent research indicates that TSE and TI do not develop independently; instead, they interact dynamically throughout a teacher's professional development. Menon (2020, p. 2) observes that "typically, the two constructs are investigated separately, while there is a value in bringing them together." These constructs influence one another, especially during formative experiences such as teaching practicum (Marschall, 2022). On the other hand, while existing research acknowledges the connection between TSE and TI, the specific ways this relationship unfolds in rural teaching practicums remain poorly understood. This is in line with Menon's (2020, p. 3) questioning: "How are identity and self-efficacy linked? What kinds of sources of self-efficacy support identity development, and how?" On the one hand, rural schools may offer greater autonomy and innovation, thereby enhancing both TSE and TI formation. On the other hand, PSETs in these contexts face significant challenges, which could undermine their professional confidence. Given these unclear answers, it is crucial to investigate how rural practicums influence the development of TSE and TI, and how the two relate. Additionally, most research on TSE and TI has been conducted in urban educational contexts. This leaves rural schools mostly unexplored. This research gap is particularly relevant in Thailand, where many English teachers begin their teaching careers in rural schools, either by choice or due to assignment policies (Imsa-ard et al., 2021).

As noted above, teacher education programs worldwide train and prepare PSETs with the essential skills needed to address the complex challenges they will encounter throughout their careers (Allen & Wright, 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2017).

This preparation somewhat guarantees they are equipped to 'survive' in their respective teaching environments. Nevertheless, despite these goals, previous studies have shown that these programs, including those in Thailand, have not sufficiently addressed the urgent needs of diverse educational environments, especially rural schools (Blanks et al., 2013; Hudson & Hudson, 2008). Instead, many existing programs adopt generalized or urban-centered approaches by prioritizing theoretical knowledge and broad pedagogical skills while overlooking the contextualized training needed for rural settings (Jenkins & Cornish, 2015; Azano & Stewart, 2015).

As a result of this oversight, numerous PSETs begin their teaching practicums in rural schools inadequately prepared to handle challenges that require significant resilience, adaptability, and perseverance (Hudson & Hudson, 2019). Heeralal (2014, p. 26) highlights this urgent issue, stating:

"Few students, if any, do their teaching practice in rural schools. Hence, student teachers receive very *little* or *no training* to teach in rural schools. However, it is in these schools that there is the greatest need for teachers. …Teachers with little knowledge and skills of teaching in rural contexts are likely to adversely impact the education of rural children who are already at risk."

Reflecting on this excerpt, Heeralal (2014) pinpointed that the gap between teacher preparation and the reality of rural teaching has substantial consequences (Qin & Villarreal, 2018). Firstly, this gap not only affects teachers' effectiveness in their teaching but also obstructs their professional growth, particularly in their TSE (Berg & Smith, 2018; Ma & Cavanagh, 2018) and identity formation (Varis et al., 2023). Without focused preparation, PSETs may struggle to meet the demands of rural teaching, which, in turn, can reduce their TSE (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Over time, this lack of preparation may lead to frustration, disillusionment, or burnout, which, in turn, decreases job satisfaction and increases attrition among newly qualified teachers (Hong, 2010; Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Secondly, the gap highlights the urgent need for rural-focused training in Thailand (Lounkaew, 2013; Noom-Ura, 2013; Oeamoum & Sriwichai, 2020; Poonpon, 2021). Each year, many PSETs complete their teaching practicums in rural schools because placements in these settings are available or convenient. Rural schools present unique challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, limited access to teaching materials, large or multi-grade classes, and

students from diverse linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds (Buaraphan, 2013; Wannagatesiri et al., 2014; Ajpru et al., 2014). As Heeralal (2014, p.26) further emphasizes, "for effective teaching practices in rural schools, teachers need adequate professional preparation during their initial teacher education program and ongoing education and training whilst they are in service."

In ELT, these issues are further complicated. English teachers operate at the intersection of pedagogy, language use, and culture, and their professional competence is judged by their linguistic performance as much as by their instructional ability. For PSETs, most of whom are non-native English-speaking teachers, this creates additional challenges related to linguistic efficacy, legitimacy, and authority in the classroom. Language teacher identity (LTI), therefore, extends beyond general TI and is shaped by teachers' relationships with English as a global language, their positioning in relation to native-speaker norms, and their ongoing negotiation between students' L1, L2, and associated cultural meanings (Barkhuizen, 2017; De Costa & Norton, 2017). These language-specific demands suggest that findings from studies on general TI may not fully capture the experiences of PSETs.

In response to these identified issues, this study investigates the development of TSE and the construction of TI among PSETs during their teaching practicum in rural schools in Thailand. By adopting a qualitative, case-based approach that emphasizes participants' lived experiences, this study aims to illuminate the dynamic, reciprocal relationship between TSE and TI and to identify the specific challenges and opportunities that rural practicum contexts present for English teacher development.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study aims to investigate the development of TSE and TI among PSETs during their teaching practicums in rural schools in Thailand. Specifically, the objectives of the study are:

1.3.1 To examine how PSETs' self-efficacy develops over the course of their teaching practicums in rural Thai school contexts.

1.3.2 To explore how PSETs' self-efficacy contributes to the construction of their TI during teaching practicums in rural schools.

1.3.3 To identify the key challenges and opportunities that PSETs encounter in developing TSE and constructing TI during their rural teaching practicum experiences.

1.4 Research Questions

Guided by the research objectives, this study addresses the following overarching research question: How does the teaching practicum experience in rural Thai schools contribute to the development of PSETs' self-efficacy and teacher identity?

To answer this overarching question, the study investigates the following specific research questions:

1.4.1 How does PSETs' self-efficacy develop during their teaching practicums in rural schools in Thailand?

1.4.2 In what ways does PSETs' self-efficacy contribute to the construction of TI during their teaching practicums in rural schools in Thailand?

1.4.3 What challenges and opportunities do PSETs encounter in developing TSE and TI during their teaching practicums in rural schools in Thailand?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study makes significant contributions to the understanding of PSETs' professional development at the theoretical, practical, and policy levels, with particular relevance to English language teacher education in rural contexts.

Theoretically, this study advances teacher education and applied linguistics scholarship by offering a more integrated, process-oriented account of the relationship between TSE and TI construction. While existing research has treated self-efficacy and identity as related but conceptually separate constructs, this study demonstrates that their relationship is neither linear nor sequential. Instead, it reveals a reciprocal

and dynamic relationship in which identity construction plays a formative role in shaping how self-efficacy beliefs are initially developed, interpreted, and sustained.

Building on Bandura's (1997) four sources of self-efficacy, i.e., mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological and emotional states, this study extends the model by focusing on TI as an interpretive lens through which these sources are filtered. The findings indicate that PSETs enter the teaching practicum with emerging and fragile conceptions of who they are as English teachers, shaped by prior learning histories, linguistic self-perceptions, and imagined professional futures. These identity positions influence how efficacy-related experiences are evaluated. For instance, similar classroom events may strengthen or undermine self-efficacy depending on whether PSETs position themselves as legitimate English users, struggling language learners, or novice teachers in transition.

In this sense, identity construction does not merely follow the development of self-efficacy; rather, it precedes and mediates it, particularly at the early stages of professional learning. At the same time, changes in self-efficacy subsequently reinforce, reshape, or destabilize TI, producing a cyclical developmental process. By theorizing TI as both an antecedent to and an outcome of self-efficacy development, this study challenges linear interpretations of Bandura's framework. It contributes to a more nuanced understanding of teacher development during the practicum phase. This theoretical contribution is especially significant for English language teacher education, where professional identity is inseparable from linguistic efficacy, language ideology, and teachers' positioning as legitimate users of English in an EFL context. By explicitly linking self-efficacy theory with LTI research, the study provides a conceptual bridge that responds to calls for more integrated models of language teacher development.

At the practical level, the study offers important implications for English teacher education programs. The findings show that PSETs' self-efficacy and identity development in rural practicums are shaped not by smooth progression but by emotionally charged, context-bound struggles followed by small but meaningful successes. These insights suggest that teacher education programs should move beyond generalized, urban-oriented preparation and provide more context-sensitive, practice-based training, particularly for rural placements. Furthermore, the study

highlights the need to intentionally scaffold early mastery experiences, strengthen mentoring relationships, and make explicit the development of efficacy and identity through guided reflection. It also underscores the importance of addressing the emotional and affective dimensions of teaching, including stress, uncertainty, and resilience, alongside linguistic and pedagogical preparation. Such practices can help PSETs develop adaptive professionalism and sustain commitment to teaching in challenging contexts.

At the policy level, this study contributes to national discussions on English teacher preparation and rural educational equity in Thailand. Current EFL teacher education policies, including those guided by the TCT, emphasize extended practicum experiences, professional standards, and teacher quality assurance. However, the findings of this study indicate that policy intentions are not always matched by adequate structural support during rural practicums. By illustrating how practicum conditions directly shape PSETs' self-efficacy, identity construction, and career aspirations, this study provides empirical support for policy initiatives that call for stronger university–school partnerships, structured mentoring systems, and rural-specific preparation within teacher education programs. It also aligns with broader national goals of reducing urban–rural disparities by emphasizing that adequate rural teacher preparation is not only a logistical issue but a psychological and professional one.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study was conducted in rural schools in northern Thailand, with particular emphasis on small schools, where a substantial number of PSETs complete their teaching practicum. For this research, rural schools were identified using official classifications from local education authorities and the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), in combination with school-size criteria. Small-sized schools were defined as those enrolling fewer than 120 students, typically located outside municipal or urban administrative areas and serving communities with limited access to educational resources, professional support, and instructional materials.

Urban and suburban schools, i.e., those characterized by larger student populations, proximity to municipal centers, and greater access to educational infrastructure, were deliberately excluded to focus on the distinctive contextual conditions of rural teaching environments. The participants in this study were pre-service teachers majoring in English who were undertaking their teaching practicums in these rural schools. In-service and pre-service teachers from other subject disciplines were excluded, as the study focused on individuals in the process of becoming English language teachers, whose professional development entails additional linguistic, cultural, and identity-related demands.

Significantly, the scope of this study was limited to the final year of the teaching practicum, which represents the culminating and most intensive phase of initial teacher education in Thailand. This period was selected because it is a critical transitional stage during which PSETs assume substantial teaching responsibility and begin to negotiate their professional roles as English teachers in authentic school contexts. Other components of teacher education programs, such as theoretical coursework, earlier practicum experiences, or teaching placements in urban schools, were not included. This delimitation enabled a focused examination of how rural practicum experiences in the final year shape the development of TSE and TI.

Theoretically, the study was confined to examining TSE and TI as the primary analytical constructs, with particular attention to their development and interrelationship during the practicum period. The study did not extend to PSETs' early-career experiences after graduation. Methodologically, the research employed a qualitative case study design, using semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and participants' self-reflections to generate an in-depth and context-sensitive understanding of PSETs' lived experiences in rural school settings.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1.7.1 Pre-service English Teachers

PSETs are individuals enrolled in teacher education programs who are undergoing formal training to become certified English teachers. PSETs in this study

are undergraduate students enrolled in a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program in English who have not yet obtained full professional teaching licensure but are participating in formal teacher education and practical training.

1.7.2 Teaching Practicum

The teaching practicum is a structured, field-based experience in which PSETs apply pedagogical theories in authentic classroom settings under the guidance of experienced educators (Crookes, 2003; Zeichner, 2010). It is a critical component of teacher preparation, bridging the gap between theoretical coursework and real-world teaching. This study focuses on PSETs' practicum experiences in Thai rural schools, where contextual factors, including limited resources, cultural diversity, and professional isolation, shape their teaching experiences.

1.7.3 Teacher Self-Efficacy

TSE refers to PSETs' perceived efficacy in planning, organizing, and carrying out English teaching tasks effectively during their rural teaching practicum. In this study, TSE is operationally defined as participants' expressed beliefs about their capability to manage English classrooms, deliver lessons in English, engage students, and respond to instructional challenges in rural school contexts. These beliefs were identified through themes derived from semi-structured interviews, self-reflections, and classroom observations.

1.7.4 Teacher Identity

TI refers to PSETs' evolving perceptions of themselves as English teachers within rural school contexts. In this study, TI is operationally defined as participants' expressed sense of professional role, legitimacy, and belonging in the teaching profession, as reflected in their narratives about teaching experiences, emotional responses, and future career intentions during the practicum. TI was identified through thematic analysis of interview data, reflective writing, and field observations.

1.7.5 Rural Schools

Rural Schools in this study refer to government-operated primary or secondary schools located outside municipal areas in northern Thailand, mainly classified by the OBEC as small schools with fewer than 120 students. These schools are characterized by limited educational resources, multi-grade classrooms, and reduced access to

professional development opportunities. This definition was used as a criterion for site selection and participant recruitment.

1.8 Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters. Each chapter is systematically designed to build the study's rationale, present the methodology, analyze the findings, and discuss the implications.

Chapter 1 introduces the study by presenting the background, statement of the problem, research objectives, and research questions. It also outlines the significance and scope of the research, defines the key terms, and concludes with an overview of the dissertation. I situate the study within Thailand's broader educational context. It highlights the importance of investigating TSE and TI in rural teaching environments.

Chapter 2 reviews the related literature and establishes the study's conceptual foundation. The discussion begins with an examination of second-language teacher education and its conceptual models, followed by an overview of teacher education in Thailand, with particular focus on the preparation of PSETs. The chapter then explores the role of the teaching practicum, its challenges, and its unique characteristics in rural contexts. Subsequent sections discuss TSE and TI in depth, including definitions, theoretical underpinnings, and key related research studies. Finally, the chapter synthesizes these elements of literature into a conceptual framework that guides the study.

Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology. It begins with the epistemological stance underpinning the study and justifies the choice of a qualitative case study design. The chapter then details the research settings and introduces the three PSET participants. It describes the research instruments, including semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and self-reflection, and explains the procedures for data collection. The methods of data analysis are also presented, alongside the ethical considerations taken to ensure rigor, credibility, and the protection of participants.

Chapter 4 presents findings on the first research question: the development of PSETs' self-efficacy during their practicum experiences. Organized thematically, I trace how participants entered the practicum with initial optimism and uncertainty, confronted

reality shock, and gradually developed their sense of efficacy through mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and emotional states.

Chapter 5 focuses on the second research question by examining how TSE contributes to the construction of TI. I will illustrate how participants' sense of efficacy shaped their transition from student to teacher, influenced their engagement with role models and others' validation, and guided their emotional regulation, motivation, and persistence in the profession.

Chapter 6 addresses the third research question to identify the challenges and opportunities PSETs encountered during their practicum in rural schools. This chapter is divided into two major sections: challenges, including resource limitations, language barriers, professional isolation, and conflicting institutional expectations; and opportunities, such as authentic teaching experiences, community engagement, role expansion, and strengthened professional commitment.

Chapter 7 discusses the findings in relation to the existing literature and the conceptual framework. This chapter synthesizes the evidence from Chapters 4 to 6, and interprets how TSE develops, its contributions to TI, and how rural contexts shape these processes. It highlights expected patterns, unexpected findings, and theoretical contributions, while also situating the study within broader debates in teacher education.

Chapter 8 concludes the dissertation by summarizing the key findings and reflecting on their implications for teacher education in Thailand and similar contexts. It also discusses the study's limitations and offers recommendations for future research.

The structure of the dissertation was carefully designed to move from a contextual background and theoretical grounding, through methodological detail and empirical analysis, to an interpretive discussion and practical implications.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I will review the literature relevant to the present study and establish the theoretical and empirical foundations for examining the development of TSE and TI among PSETs during their teaching practicums in Thai rural schools. I will begin with an overview of second language teacher education, then narrow it to pre-service English teacher education in Thailand. Subsequently, I will examine the teaching practicum as a central component of teacher education, with particular attention to the distinctive conditions of rural school placements. Next, I will focus on TSE by reviewing its theoretical origins, core definitions, and Bandura's four sources of efficacy. Particular emphasis is placed on the relevance of TSE for PSETs. Following this, I will discuss the concept of TI, with specific attention to LTI, and then synthesize literature on the relationship between TSE and TI. Finally, I will present a conceptual framework that integrates key constructs and relationships derived from the reviewed literature. This framework serves as an analytical lens for the study, guiding the interpretation of PSETs' experiences and the examination of how self-efficacy and identity are constructed within rural practicum contexts.

2.1 Second Language Teacher Education

Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) is a specialized domain within teacher education that focuses on preparing teachers, developing their expertise, and providing ongoing professional support for those working in second- or foreign-language contexts (Wright, 2010; Barahona, 2014). As the global demand for English and other additional languages continues to expand, the role of SLTE has become increasingly critical in equipping language teachers with not only pedagogical knowledge and linguistic competence but also the professional dispositions, reflective capacities, and adaptive skills required to teach in diverse and challenging contexts (Johnson, 2009; Freeman, 2016).

Unlike general teacher education, SLTE places particular emphasis on the linguistic, sociocultural, and identity-related dimensions of teaching and learning. Richards (2017) argues that language teaching is inherently embedded in social, cultural, and political contexts, requiring teachers to negotiate issues of language use, power, legitimacy, and professional identity. Consequently, SLTE addresses a broad range of concerns, including teacher cognition, classroom practice, professional identity, emotional labor, and reflective teaching, all of which are shaped by multilingual and multicultural educational environments (Burns & Richards, 2009; Farrell, 2018).

In recent decades, SLTE has shifted away from transmission-oriented models of training toward more situated, constructivist, and practice-based paradigms that conceptualize teachers as learners embedded within complex educational ecosystems (Johnson & Golombek, 2011). This evolution reflects a growing recognition that learning to teach a language is not simply a matter of acquiring techniques, but a developmental process involving belief formation, identity negotiation, and meaning-making through practice. This section, therefore, reviews the definition, historical development, and key conceptual models of SLTE, providing a theoretical foundation for situating TSE and TI within contemporary language teacher education.

2.1.1 Definition and Development

The term SLTE was first introduced by Richards (1990) to describe the preparation and education of teachers of second and foreign languages. Richards (1990, p. 15) emphasizes that SLTE aims to provide novice teachers with opportunities to acquire practical teaching skills and to develop the "working rules" that guide professional decision-making in real classrooms. Building on this view, Crandall (2000) conceptualizes SLTE as comprising two interrelated components: *education*, which develops teachers' linguistic and pedagogical understanding, and training, which emphasizes applying this knowledge in authentic teaching contexts. Freeman (2016) further characterizes SLTE as a bridge between theory and practice, highlighting its dual focus on knowledge development and experiential learning. As such, SLTE encompasses both pre-service and in-service dimensions and attends not only to what language teachers need to know, but also to how they learn, reflect, and evolve professionally over time (Johnson & Golombek, 2011). Wright (2010) notes a significant shift in SLTE, from viewing teaching as a collection of discrete skills to understanding teacher learning as a complex, socially

mediated, and context-dependent process. This shift is reflected in increased scholarly attention to teacher cognition, reflective practice, identity construction, and the influence of lived teaching experience (Freeman & Johnson, 1998; Burns & Richards, 2009).

Historically, the development of SLTE has paralleled changes in ELT. In the 1960s, SLTE programs were largely skills-based and training-oriented, influenced by behaviorist approaches such as Audiolingualism and Situational Language Teaching. These models emphasized structured curricula, repetition, and mastery of prescribed techniques (Richards, 2008). However, such approaches were increasingly criticized for failing to account for the complexity of classroom interaction and the contextual realities of teaching, prompting a search for more flexible and reflective models of teacher education. During the 1970s and 1980s, the rise of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) marked a shift toward meaning-focused instruction and learner-centered pedagogy. Wright (2010) observes that this shift also influenced teacher education by encouraging reflection, adaptability, and responsiveness to learners' needs. At the same time, insights from cognitive psychology led to growing interest in teacher cognition, defined as the beliefs, knowledge, and thinking processes that shape teachers' instructional decisions (Borg, 2003). Freeman and Richards (1993) argue that this period marked a move from short-term teacher training toward longer-term teacher development, emphasizing professional growth rather than mere skill acquisition.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, SLTE was further enriched by sociocultural theories of learning. Drawing on Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development and Engeström's Activity Theory, scholars highlighted the central role of social interaction, mediation, and context in teacher learning (Johnson & Golombek, 2011). Freeman and Johnson (1998) advocate for a contextualized approach to SLTE that prioritizes experiential learning, reflective practice, and collaboration. Similarly, Borg (2009) contends that teacher learning is not the direct application of theory, but a dynamic process shaped by teachers' beliefs, experiences, and institutional conditions.

Since the 2010s, SLTE has increasingly incorporated poststructuralist and sociopolitical perspectives that highlight the contested, contextual, and ideological nature of language teaching (Farrell, 2018). These perspectives challenge views of teaching as a neutral technical activity and instead emphasize how teachers negotiate their professional identities within institutional, cultural, and power-laden contexts (Alsup, 2006). Varghese

et al. (2005) and Norton (2010) argue that LTI is continuously constructed and reconstructed through practice, reflection, and participation in communities of practice, and is closely tied to teachers' beliefs about language, legitimacy, and professional agency.

More recently, increasing attention has been paid to teacher agency, defined as teachers' capacity to act intentionally and make informed pedagogical decisions within structural constraints (Robinson, 2012). Priestley et al. (2015) conceptualize agency not as an individual trait but as an emergent phenomenon shaped by cultural, material, and institutional conditions. Empirical studies suggest that SLTE programs that promote inquiry-based learning, critical reflection, and professional autonomy are more effective in fostering teacher agency and adaptive professionalism (Leijen et al., 2024). This focus aligns with contemporary views of SLTE as a transformative, dialogic process that supports teachers in navigating complexity, inequality, and change in language education contexts (Kubanyiova, 2020).

2.1.2 Key Conceptual Models in SLTE

The evolution of SLTE has been informed by several influential conceptual models that reflect changing assumptions about teaching, learning, and professional development. Early models, grounded in behaviorist and applied linguistics traditions, emphasized imitation, repetition, and controlled practice (Richards, 2008; Farrell, 2018). Within these frameworks, teacher education focused on developing technical competencies such as lesson planning, classroom management, and accurate language use, through tightly structured curricula and prescriptive methodologies (Freeman, 2001). While these models provided foundational skills, critics argue that they neglected the social, cultural, and psychological dimensions of teaching (Nguyen, 2016).

A significant paradigm shift occurred with the emergence of social constructivist perspectives, which reconceptualized teacher education as an active, situated process. Johnson (2009) emphasizes that teachers' knowledge and practices are co-constructed through interaction, reflection, and participation in specific educational contexts. Borg's (2003) model of teacher cognition further illustrates how teachers interpret and adapt pedagogical knowledge based on prior beliefs and classroom realities, challenging linear notions of theory application. Schön's (1983) concept of reflective practice has also been influential, highlighting the role of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action in professional learning. Farrell (2022) argues that reflective practices such as journaling and

peer observation enhance teachers' adaptability and responsiveness to learners. Building on these ideas, sociocultural models have become dominant in contemporary SLTE. Drawing on Vygotskian theory, these models emphasize learning through collaboration, mediation, and participation in communities of practice (Wright, 2010). Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of situated learning conceptualizes teacher education as a process of socialization into a professional community, where novice teachers gradually develop competence and legitimacy. Research on TI further extends this perspective by demonstrating that identity is shaped through experiences of success, failure, and emotional engagement in practice (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Pennington & Richards, 2016).

Table 2.1 Models of Curricular Design in Second Language Teacher Education

Models	Views of Teaching	Learning to Teach	Role of the Teaching Practicum	Views of PSETs
The craft model (an apprenticeship model)	Teaching as doing	Learning by imitating experienced teachers involves acquiring knowledge through observation, instruction, and practice.	The practicum introduces PSETs to the profession through supervised observation and practice.	PSETs are seen as apprentices or trainees under the guidance of expert teachers.
The applied science model (a theory to practice model)	Teaching as science (thinking and doing)	Learning involves applying theoretical knowledge gained in formal education.	The practicum serves as a laboratory for the controlled application of theory under expert guidance.	PSETs are passive recipients of knowledge, educated through its application.
The reflective model	Teaching as knowing what to do	Learning occurs through reflection on practice and critical analysis of experiences.	The practicum offers authentic, complex cases for analysis and interpretation, informed by research, theory, and practical experience.	PSETs are active decision-makers who engage with experiences and research to refine their teaching methods.

Source Barahona (2014, p. 47)

Wallace's (1991) influential framework synthesizes these developments by identifying three broad models of language teacher education: the craft (apprenticeship) model, the applied science (theory-to-practice) model, and the

reflective model. As summarized in Table 2.1, these models differ in their views of teaching, learning to teach, the role of the practicum, and the positioning of pre-service teachers. While the craft and applied science models emphasize skill acquisition and the application of theory, respectively, the reflective model emphasizes critical engagement, contextual responsiveness, and professional autonomy. Contemporary SLTE programs increasingly integrate elements from all three models, recognizing that effective teacher development requires a balance of foundational knowledge, practical experience, and reflective capacity (Barahona, 2014; Farrell, 2022).

In conclusion, the development of SLTE reflects an increasing focus on teacher learning as a context-dependent, identity-driven, and emotionally driven process. This perspective provides a critical foundation for examining how PSETs develop self-efficacy and professional identity during teaching practicums, particularly in complex contexts such as rural schools. The following section, therefore, turns to pre-service teacher education in Thailand, situating these global SLTE principles within the national and institutional context of this study.

2.2 Pre-service English Teacher Education in Thailand

This section situates the study within the national and institutional context of pre-service English teacher education in Thailand. While global SLTE frameworks provide important theoretical foundations, the Thai context presents distinctive structural, policy-related, and sociocultural conditions that shape how PSETs develop professional competence, self-efficacy, and identity. Persistent concerns such as curriculum fragmentation, uneven practicum quality, and a longstanding gap between theoretical coursework and classroom realities have been widely documented in Thai teacher education (Vibulphol, 2015; Todd & Darasawang, 2020). These challenges are particularly significant for PSETs undertaking teaching practicums in rural schools, where limited resources, professional isolation, and contextual demands intensify the process of professional learning. Understanding the organization and evolution of

teacher education in Thailand is, therefore, essential for examining how TSE and TI are constructed during rural practicum experiences.

2.2.1 The Overview of Teacher Education in Thailand

Pre-service teacher education plays a central role in Thailand's national efforts to improve English language education and enhance learners' communicative competence in a globalized world (Sairattanain & Loo, 2021). The preparation of future English teachers typically combines academic coursework with supervised practicum experiences designed to develop linguistic proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and professional values (Todd & Darasawang, 2020; Damnet, 2021). Although international developments have influenced Thai teacher education in SLTE, it remains strongly shaped by national policy frameworks, institutional practices, and local educational cultures (Vibulphol, 2015).

At the policy level, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation (MHESI) establishes broad standards for teacher education, while universities retain relative autonomy in curriculum design. This decentralized structure allows institutions to respond to local needs but also contributes to variability in program quality, particularly in practicum design and implementation (Vibulphol, 2015). As a result, the alignment between coursework and school-based teaching experiences is inconsistent, leaving PSETs underprepared for the realities of classroom teaching, especially in rural contexts.

Historically, teacher education in Thailand has developed through several major phases, reflecting shifts in national priorities and educational reform (Thongthew, 2014; Vibulphol, 2015). Formal teacher training began in 1892 with the establishment of the first teacher training college. Subsequent reforms expanded access to teacher education nationwide and gradually raised qualification standards. A significant milestone occurred in 1975 with the enactment of the Teacher College Act, which required all teachers to hold a bachelor's degree. Later reforms, including the National Education Act (1999), introduced professional licensing requirements and standardized competency frameworks administered by the TCT or *Khurusapha*, which regulates professional standards and teacher licensure. Current standards require PSETs to demonstrate competence across multiple domains, including educational foundations, curriculum and instruction, classroom management, assessment, research,

innovation and technology, and professional ethics (Kantavong & Nethanomsak, 2012; Bunwirat & Crocco, 2019). A compulsory teaching practicum, typically conducted in the final year of the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program, constitutes a critical component of this professional preparation (TCT, 2016). During this practicum, PSETs are expected to assume substantial teaching responsibilities and demonstrate readiness for professional practice.

Despite these formal structures, Thailand continues to face significant challenges in teacher distribution and educational equity. Although the country employs a large teaching workforce, shortages of qualified teachers persist in rural and remote areas, particularly in English language education (OECD, 2016; Pholphirul et al., 2023). These disparities have important implications for PSETs' practicum experiences, as rural placements involve heavier workloads, multi-grade teaching, limited instructional materials, and reduced access to mentorship. Such conditions place considerable demands on PSETs and directly influence their developing sense of competence, efficacy, and professional identity.

Table 2.2 The Number of Educational Institutions in Thailand (2016)

Degree	Number of Educational Institutions
Bachelor's degree in education	426
Master's degree in education	82
Doctoral degree in education	22

Source Teacher's Council of Thailand (2016, as cited in Bunwirat & Crocco, 2019)

Teacher education in Thailand is delivered primarily through three pathways: undergraduate B.Ed. programs, postgraduate education degrees, and short-term training programs for foreign teachers (Todd & Darasawang, 2020). Among these, B.Ed. programs constitute the dominant route into the profession. According to the TCT (2016), more than 400 institutions offer teacher education programs nationwide, with Rajabhat universities serving as the principal providers of Initial Teacher Education (ITE). These universities play a significant role in preparing teachers for service in regional and rural communities, aligning with their institutional mandate to support local development (British Council, 2022).

Table 2.3 Types of courses in B.Ed. in English at Rajabhat Universities

Types of courses	Credit
1. General education	30
2. Core courses	
2.1 General pedagogy	
• Teaching profession (25-29 credits)	37-43
• Teaching practices (12-14 credits)	
2.2 English language pedagogy	60-69
• Compulsory (40-42 credits)	
• Electives (20-27 credits)	
3. Free elective courses	6
Total credit	**136-148**

Source Pojanapunya et al. (2023, p. 34)

The B.Ed. in English curriculum at Rajabhat universities typically comprises four main components: general education, pedagogical core courses, English language and ELT-specific coursework, and a supervised teaching practicum (Pojanapunya et al., 2023). While this structure reflects national standards, the balance between theoretical instruction and practical preparation varies across institutions. In many cases, PSETs report that coursework emphasizes linguistic knowledge and teaching methods without sufficiently preparing them for the emotional, relational, and contextual challenges of real classrooms, particularly in under-resourced rural schools (Vibulphol, 2015; Todd & Darasawang, 2020). More broadly, Thai teacher education is shaped by a combination of external and internal factors. Externally, government policies, regulatory requirements, and stakeholder expectations influence curriculum design and assessment practices (Ajpru et al., 2014). Internally, institutional priorities, teaching approaches, and levels of professional support affect the quality of teacher preparation (Vibulphol, 2015). Recent policy initiatives, including alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 4, emphasize quality, equity, and inclusion in education. However, uneven implementation across institutions continues to limit their

impact, particularly in rural teacher preparation (Sunthonkanokpong & Murphy, 2019).

In summary, pre-service English teacher education in Thailand operates within a complex and uneven system characterized by strong policy regulation, institutional variation, and persistent rural–urban disparities. These structural conditions shape not only what PSETs learn, but also how they experience teaching, evaluate their own competence, and construct their professional identities during the practicum. This context provides a critical backdrop for examining the development of TSE and TI among PSETs in rural schools, which is the focus of the present study.

2.2.2 Preparing Pre-Service English Teachers

PSETs in this study are undergraduate students enrolled in a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program in English who have not yet obtained full professional teaching licensure but are undertaking formal teacher education and supervised practical training. In Thailand, teacher education programs are generally structured to prepare teachers for specific school levels, most commonly primary or secondary education, rather than through a single, universal training pathway (Todd & Darasawang, 2020; British Council, 2022). Within the Faculties of Education, programs differentiate training according to learners' developmental stages, curriculum requirements, and pedagogical needs. The Teachers' Council of Thailand licenses graduates based on their training background, which typically defines their eligibility to teach at either the primary level (Grades 1–6) or the secondary level (Grades 7–12).

According to the British Council (2022), over 70 percent of PSETs graduate from Rajabhat Universities, which function as the primary providers of initial teacher education nationwide. Consequently, the structure and quality of training at these institutions play a significant role in shaping the preparedness of future English teachers (Pojanapunya et al., 2023). The curriculum typically emphasizes English language proficiency, linguistics, second language acquisition, and general teaching methodology. While these components provide a solid theoretical foundation, instruction is content- and theory-oriented, with limited differentiation between pedagogical approaches appropriate for primary versus secondary learners. As a result, PSETs may graduate with strong subject knowledge but insufficient preparation to

address age-specific instructional challenges, particularly when teaching younger learners.

Empirical studies by Oeamoum and Sriwichai (2020) and Sairattanain and Loo (2021) indicate that many PSETs have limited opportunities to observe experienced teachers across different school levels or to critically analyze instructional practices prior to their practicum. This gap between theoretical coursework and practical application contributes to feelings of unpreparedness, especially when PSETs are assigned to teaching contexts that differ from their formal training focus (Damnet, 2021; Imsa-ard et al., 2021). Traditionally, Thailand employed a five-year teacher education framework that included a year-long teaching practicum, offering sustained exposure to classroom teaching and school-based responsibilities (Chailom, 2019). However, reforms introduced in 2017 shortened the program to four years in response to national teacher shortages. While this reform aimed to accelerate teacher production, it also reduced practicum duration and shifted greater emphasis toward standardized testing (Chailom, 2019).

Scholars argue that the reduction in practical training has constrained PSETs' opportunities to develop pedagogical efficacy, classroom management skills, and adaptability to diverse learner needs (Sairattanain & Loo, 2021). Todd and Darasawang (2020) further observe that Thailand's centralized teacher education system prioritizes policy-driven curriculum reforms over localized school realities. As a result, PSETs may complete their training without adequate preparation for the practical demands of specific teaching contexts, such as large secondary classrooms or mixed-ability primary settings, particularly in rural schools.

In addition, the sociocultural context of ELT in Thailand presents further challenges. English is positioned as a foreign language, and exposure outside the classroom is limited. This context affects both student engagement and teachers' efficacy in using English as the medium of instruction (Noom-ura, 2013). Many PSETs report anxiety and low self-efficacy when teaching in English, particularly during their initial classroom experiences (Darasawang & Reinders, 2021). These affective challenges may be intensified when PSETs are placed in unfamiliar school levels or teaching environments during the practicum.

Another critical limitation in the preparation of PSETs in Thailand is the limited emphasis on reflective practice and professional identity development. While teacher education programs tend to prioritize technical competencies such as lesson planning, classroom management, and assessment, comparatively little attention is given to supporting PSETs in reflecting on their beliefs, professional roles, and evolving identities as teachers (Wongwanich et al., 2014). Reflective practice plays a vital role in enabling PSETs to connect theory with practice, evaluate their instructional decisions, and adapt to diverse classroom contexts (Dumlao & Pinatacan, 2019). However, within the Thai educational culture, where hierarchical relationships and examination-oriented learning remain prevalent, systematic reflection is not consistently embedded in teacher preparation programs (Swatevacharkul, 2019).

Significantly, reflective practice is closely associated with the development of TI and TSE. PSETs who engage in structured reflection are better positioned to understand their professional roles, recognize their strengths and limitations, and develop a sense of agency and efficacy in their teaching capabilities. Insufficient attention to identity work may therefore hinder PSETs' ability to develop resilient and adaptable professional selves, especially when they encounter challenging or unfamiliar teaching contexts, such as rural schools or school levels for which they were not explicitly trained. Recognizing these challenges underscores the pivotal role of the teaching practicum in bridging theory and practice. The following section, therefore, examines the structure and function of the teaching practicum in Thai teacher education and its contribution to the development of competent, reflective, and confident English teachers.

2.3 Teaching Practicum in Teacher Education

The teaching practicum represents the most critical phase of teacher preparation, during which PSETs transition from learners of pedagogy to novice professionals engaged in authentic classroom practice (Crookes, 2003). For PSETs, the practicum is particularly significant because it constitutes the first sustained opportunity to enact ELT theories in real instructional contexts. Beyond skill development, the practicum functions as a

formative space in which TSE and TI are actively constructed, negotiated, and reshaped through lived teaching experiences.

The practicum provides PSETs with opportunities to interact with students, collaborate with mentor teachers, and respond to institutional expectations and sociocultural norms embedded within schools. These interactions are central to professional learning and identity formation, as they require PSETs to reconcile personal beliefs about teaching with contextual realities (Farrell, 2008; Zeichner, 2010). In ELT contexts, where language proficiency, classroom interaction, and learner engagement are especially significant, practicum experiences play a decisive role in shaping PSETs' efficacy in using English as a medium of instruction and in positioning themselves as legitimate English teachers.

In Thailand, the teaching practicum is a compulsory requirement for graduation from teacher education programs. As such, the quality, structure, and context of practicum placements substantially influence PSETs' professional development outcomes. This section, therefore, conceptualizes the teaching practicum not merely as a site for technical skill acquisition but as a transformative space where ELT practices, TSE, and TI intersect. Understanding this intersection is essential for examining how PSETs develop efficacy, agency, and a sense of professional self during their practicum experiences.

2.3.1 Definition, Purpose, and Structure of Teaching Practicum

The teaching practicum is widely recognized as a core component of teacher education programs (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Prabjandee, 2019). Internationally, it is referred to by various terms, including teaching practice, field experience, apprenticeship, or internship (Damnet, 2021). Despite terminological differences, the practicum consistently serves as a bridge between university-based coursework and the realities of classroom teaching. In the context of ELT, this bridge is critical, as PSETs must translate abstract pedagogical principles into communicative practices that are responsive to learners' linguistic abilities and classroom dynamics.

Typically, the practicum is defined as a structured period of supervised teaching in which PSETs engage in real classroom instruction under the guidance of mentor teachers and university supervisors (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Farrell, 2008; Zeichner, 2010). During this period, PSETs are expected to apply pedagogical knowledge and subject-matter expertise while developing essential professional competencies, such as lesson planning,

classroom management, instructional delivery, assessment, and learner engagement (Becker et al., 2019). For PSETs, these competencies are closely tied to their efficacy in managing classroom interaction in English, responding to learner errors, and facilitating meaningful language use—factors that strongly influence TSE in ELT settings.

Beyond skill development, the practicum serves multiple interrelated purposes. First, it provides PSETs with authentic teaching experiences that expose them to the complexity, unpredictability, and sociocultural dimensions of classroom life (Allen & Wright, 2014; Deocampo, 2020). Second, it plays a central role in the development of TSE, as PSETs' beliefs about their instructional capability are shaped by mastery experiences, mentor feedback, and interactions with learners (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). Third, the practicum supports the formation of TI by enabling PSETs to move from seeing themselves as students of teaching to perceiving themselves as teachers who occupy legitimate professional roles within school communities (Groenewald & Arnold, 2024).

Reflective practice is a key mechanism through which these developmental processes occur. Schön's (1983) concept of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action highlights how teachers learn by critically examining their instructional decisions and classroom experiences. In the practicum, structured reflection, supported by mentor feedback and supervisory dialogue, allows PSETs to interrogate their pedagogical beliefs, evaluate their effectiveness, and gradually construct coherent professional identities (Dumlao & Pinatacan, 2019; Farrell, 2015). For ELT PSETs, reflection is critical in negotiating tensions between prescribed teaching methods and context-specific learner needs.

The structure of the teaching practicum varies across institutions and educational systems, but most programs adopt a phased model that supports progressive professional development (Beck & Kosnik, 2002). These phases typically include:

1. Observation Phase – PSETs observe experienced teachers to understand classroom interaction, instructional strategies, and teacher–student relationships. In ELT contexts, observation allows PSETs to examine how English is used as a medium of instruction and how communicative activities are managed (Farrell, 2008).

2. Assisted Teaching Phase – PSETs gradually assume teaching responsibilities while collaborating with mentor teachers. The quality of mentorship

during this phase is critical, as supportive guidance has been shown to enhance TSE and foster positive identity development (Hudson, 2012).

3. Independent Teaching Phase – PSETs take primary responsibility for lesson planning, instruction, and assessment. This phase is particularly influential for TSE, as successful teaching experiences can strengthen efficacy, whereas unresolved difficulties may generate anxiety and self-doubt (Britzman, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 2017).

4. Reflection and Evaluation Phase – PSETs engage in systematic self-evaluation and receive feedback from mentors and supervisors. Reflection during this phase consolidates learning, supports adaptive teaching practices, and contributes to the ongoing construction of TI (Schön, 1983; Farrell, 2008).

Generally, the practicum's phased structure emphasizes a developmental trajectory from observation to autonomous practice, supported by reflection and mentorship. While this structure provides a valuable framework, its effectiveness depends heavily on contextual factors such as institutional support, mentor quality, and alignment between university expectations and school realities (McNeilly et al., 2022).

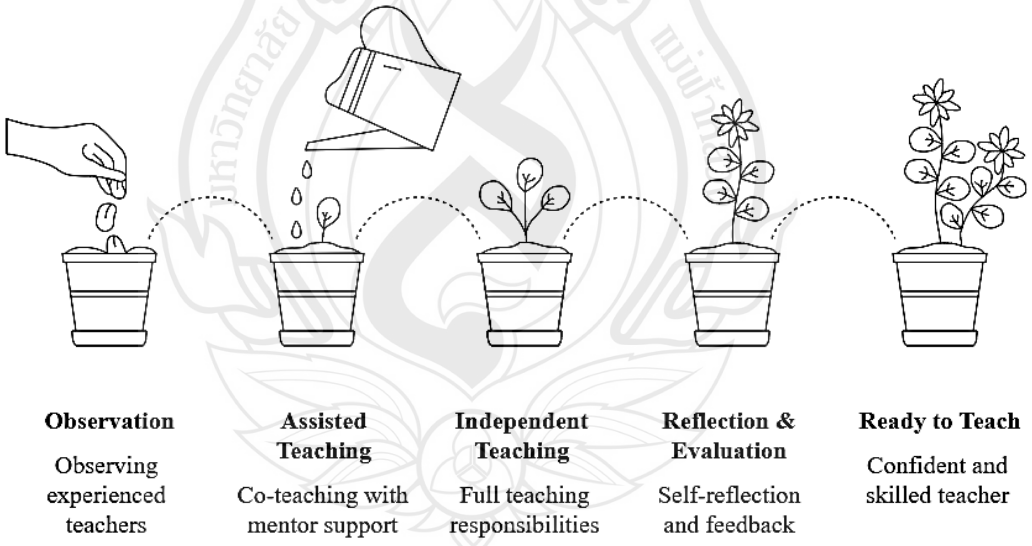


Figure 2.1 Different Phases of Teaching Practicum

2.3.2 Challenges in Teaching Practicum

Despite its central role in teacher preparation, the teaching practicum is widely recognized as one of the most challenging experiences for PSETs. Prabjandee (2019)

characterizes the practicum as both formative and demanding, particularly as PSETs confront the gap between theoretical preparation and classroom realities. This transition generates anxiety, self-doubt, and emotional strain, which can undermine TSE and complicate the development of TI (Yunus et al., 2010).

At the contextual level, PSETs frequently encounter discrepancies between idealized teaching scenarios presented in teacher education programs and the constraints of actual classrooms. Gan (2013) notes that PSETs struggle to implement pedagogical theories in contexts marked by limited resources, large class sizes, or rigid curricula. In ELT settings, these challenges are intensified by linguistic diversity, varying proficiency levels, and limited exposure to English outside the classroom. Such conditions are particularly pronounced in rural or under-resourced schools, where material constraints and infrastructure limitations can limit instructional opportunities (Blatchford et al., 2003; Harmon et al., 2018). These contextual barriers lead to frustration and diminished self-efficacy among PSETs who attempt to implement communicative or learner-centered ELT approaches.

Socio-cultural challenges further complicate practicum experiences. Teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms requires PSETs to adapt instructional strategies to learners' backgrounds and expectations. When PSETs lack cultural competence, communication and classroom management difficulties may arise, weakening teacher–student relationships and undermining instructional effectiveness (Echazarra & Radinger, 2019). These challenges highlight the need for practicum preparation that explicitly addresses cultural responsiveness in ELT.

At the professional level, PSETs struggle with classroom management, lesson pacing, and balancing instructional and administrative responsibilities. Managing disruptive behavior or low learner motivation can generate feelings of inadequacy, particularly for novice teachers who are still negotiating authority in the classroom (Yunus et al., 2010; Kabilan, 2013). Mentor–mentee relationships also play a decisive role. While effective mentorship can enhance TSE and support identity development, mismatched expectations or overly directive mentoring styles may limit PSETs' autonomy and professional growth (Mann & Tang, 2012; Arshavskaya, 2016). Conversely, insufficient guidance can leave PSETs feeling unsupported and uncertain, further eroding efficacy.

At the personal level, the practicum represents a critical period of identity negotiation. The transition from student to teacher produces what Sach (2005) describes as a “reality shock,” as PSETs confront the complexity of teaching and reassess their self-perceptions. Kim and Cho (2014) argue that this mismatch between expectations and experience can negatively affect TSE, particularly when PSETs perceive themselves as failing to meet professional standards. Emotional demands, including stress, isolation, and fear of evaluation, are typical, especially in challenging school environments with limited support (Le Cornu, 2009). Negative practicum experiences may therefore impede the development of a coherent and resilient TI, increasing the risk of burnout or attrition (Teng, 2017; Krisdianata & Mbato, 2022).

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive and context-sensitive approach to practicum design. Bridging theory and practice through simulated teaching, peer teaching, and case-based learning can better prepare PSETs for classroom realities (Damnet, 2021). Strengthening mentorship systems and fostering collaboration between universities and schools are essential to supporting TSE and the development of professional identity (Hobson et al., 2009; McNeilly et al., 2022). Moreover, explicit attention to emotional resilience and reflective practice can help PSETs navigate the psychological demands of teaching and develop sustainable professional identities (Beltman et al., 2015).

2.3.3 Teaching Practicum in Rural Schools

In this study, a rural school is defined as a government-operated primary or secondary school located outside urban and metropolitan areas, typically in geographically isolated or socio-economically underdeveloped regions of Thailand. Such schools are commonly characterized by limited instructional resources, inadequate infrastructure, multi-grade classrooms, and shortages of qualified teachers (Buaraphan, 2013; Jenkins & Cornish, 2015). In addition, rural schools serve students from low socio-economic backgrounds and ethnolinguistic minority communities (Bell, 2007; Autti & Hyry-Beihammer, 2014; Fargas-Malet & Bagley, 2022). These contextual conditions have profound implications for ELT, as students have limited exposure to English outside the classroom and restricted access to learning materials such as English-language books, digital media, private tutoring, and reliable internet connectivity (Kantabutra, 2006; Lounkaew, 2013; Bouck, 2018). Consequently,

English learning in rural contexts is heavily dependent on school-based instruction, placing heightened instructional, emotional, and professional demands on English teachers.

For PSETs, undertaking a teaching practicum in rural schools constitutes a distinctive professional learning context that significantly shapes their teaching practices, beliefs, and emerging professional identities (Kline et al., 2013; Hudson & Hudson, 2019). When placed in rural settings, PSETs are required to confront structural inequalities in education, limited pedagogical support, and diverse learner needs. These challenges require adaptability, creativity, and resilience, all of which are closely linked to the development of TSE and professional identity (Durongkaveroj, 2022). Thus, rural practicums should be understood not merely as constrained teaching environments, but as influential sites where PSETs negotiate their sense of competence and redefine their roles as English teachers.

While rural teaching practicums present substantial challenges, they also offer valuable professional learning opportunities that distinguish them from urban placements. Research indicates that limited teaching resources, varying levels of administrative support, and strong community influence significantly affect practicum experiences in rural schools (Blanks et al., 2013; Azano & Stewart, 2015; Hudson & Hudson, 2019). From an ELT perspective, these conditions require PSETs to modify instructional strategies, rely on locally available materials, and employ flexible pedagogical approaches. Although these demands may initially undermine PSETs' efficacy, sustained engagement with such challenges has been shown to strengthen their instructional competence and resilience, thereby enhancing TSE (Mukeredzi, 2017).

Compared with urban schools, rural schools differ notably in terms of access to instructional resources and linguistic learning environments (Autti & Hyry-Beihammer, 2014; Bouck, 2018). Many rural schools experience chronic shortages of textbooks, teaching aids, laboratory equipment, and digital technologies (Bouck, 2004; Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019). For PSETs, especially those trained in resource-rich university settings, this scarcity can be challenging and may initially disrupt their perceived teaching competence. However, these constraints also encourage

pedagogical innovation and resourcefulness, which contribute to the gradual development of instructional self-efficacy and a more flexible TI.

Language-related challenges are particularly significant in rural ELT practicums. Students in rural areas have limited exposure to English beyond formal schooling, resulting in lower proficiency levels and reduced communicative efficacy (Hayes, 2010; Lounkaew, 2013). As a result, PSETs must adapt their teaching approaches by employing visual supports, code-switching, scaffolding techniques, and interactive activities to facilitate comprehension and engagement. Mukeredzi (2017) notes that these linguistic challenges create a steep learning curve for novice teachers, who must continually negotiate their instructional roles and beliefs about effective English teaching. These experiences play a critical role in shaping PSETs' developing teacher identities, as they move from idealized conceptions of teaching toward more context-responsive professional selves.

Administrative support and mentorship further mediate the quality of rural practicum experiences. Practical guidance from school administrators and experienced mentor teachers can ease PSETs' transition into rural classrooms by offering pedagogical advice, classroom management support, and emotional reassurance (Blanks et al., 2013; Versland et al., 2020). However, the level of mentorship varies widely across rural schools, and the absence of structured support can intensify anxiety, uncertainty, and diminished self-efficacy among PSETs (Mukeredzi, 2017). From an identity perspective, inconsistent mentorship may also complicate PSETs' efforts to construct a coherent professional identity, particularly when expectations from universities and schools are misaligned.

Community perceptions and involvement also play a crucial role in shaping rural practicum experiences. Many PSETs initially enter rural placements with deficit-oriented assumptions, viewing rural schools as professionally limiting or academically inferior (Mukeredzi, 2017). Nevertheless, immersive engagement with rural communities challenges these assumptions. Masinire (2015) demonstrates that sustained interaction with students, parents, and local stakeholders can foster a deeper appreciation of rural teaching and strengthen PSETs' sense of professional purpose. Such experiences contribute positively to identity formation by enabling PSETs to see themselves as socially responsible educators rather than merely subject instructors.

Despite the challenges, rural teaching practicums offer substantial benefits for PSETs' professional development. One key benefit lies in the disruption of negative stereotypes surrounding rural education (Azano & Stewart, 2015). Empirical studies indicate that many PSETs report increased efficacy, improved classroom management skills, and enhanced problem-solving abilities following rural practicum experiences (Mukeredzi, 2017; Kline et al., 2013; Qin & Villarreal, 2018). These outcomes are closely linked to strengthened TSE, as PSETs learn to navigate complex teaching conditions and achieve instructional success despite constraints. Furthermore, rural practicums can influence career trajectories by increasing PSETs' willingness to work in underserved areas, thereby helping to address persistent teacher shortages (Versland et al., 2020; Fargas-Malet & Bagley, 2022).

To maximize the benefits of rural practicums, teacher education programs must adopt context-sensitive and supportive strategies. Strengthening university–school partnerships is essential to improving the quality of mentorship and ensuring consistent professional support (Azano & Stewart, 2015; Versland et al., 2020). The integration of digital technologies, such as virtual mentoring and online supervision, can further support PSETs in geographically isolated placements by facilitating timely feedback and reflective dialogue (Buatip et al., 2019). In addition, incorporating rural-focused coursework that addresses multi-grade teaching, community engagement, and resource management can better prepare PSETs for the realities of rural ELT contexts (Mukeredzi, 2017).

However, many teacher education programs continue to prioritize urban-centered pedagogical models, which may not align with the realities of rural classrooms (Jenkins & Cornish, 2015; Qin & Villarreal, 2018). Addressing this mismatch requires a systematic reconsideration of teacher education curricula to ensure that rural teaching contexts are adequately represented. By doing so, teacher education programs can better support the development of PSETs' instructional competence, self-efficacy, and professional identity across diverse educational settings (Hudson & Hudson, 2008).

In summary, the teaching practicum functions as a critical bridge between theory and practice, offering PSETs immersive experiences that shape their instructional skills, efficacy, and emerging teacher identities. Rural practicums, in

particular, intensify this process by exposing PSETs to challenging yet transformative teaching contexts. These experiences play a pivotal role in shaping beliefs about teaching capability, adaptability, and professional purpose. Given this central role, it is necessary to examine TSE as a core construct underpinning PSETs' capacity to cope with instructional challenges, sustain motivation, and engage in reflective practice. Accordingly, the following section explores the theoretical foundations and empirical research on TSE, with particular attention to its relevance in teacher education and professional development.

2.4 The Concept of Teacher Self-Efficacy

Teacher self-efficacy (TSE) is a central construct in this study, as it plays a crucial role in shaping teachers' beliefs about their capacity to influence student learning, manage classroom challenges, and enact effective instructional practices (Atay, 2007; Klassen & Tze, 2014; Alibakhshi et al., 2020). Grounded in Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, TSE refers to teachers' beliefs in their ability to plan, organize, and implement actions required to accomplish educational goals. Within pre-service teacher education, TSE is particularly significant because it influences how PSETs approach teaching tasks, respond to difficulties, and sustain motivation during demanding practicum experiences (Filatov & Pill, 2015; Martin & Mulvihill, 2019).

Developing a strong sense of TSE has been shown to enhance teaching effectiveness, perseverance, emotional resilience, and long-term professional commitment (Pendergast et al., 2011). For PSETs, whose beliefs are still forming and are highly sensitive to contextual feedback, practicum experiences represent a critical period in which TSE beliefs are either strengthened or undermined. Accordingly, this section reviews key literature on the definition, theoretical foundations, and development of TSE, with particular emphasis on its relevance to PSET education and early professional learning.

2.4.1 Definition and Theoretical Foundation

TSE has been a focal point of educational research since Bandura (1986) introduced the broader concept of self-efficacy. Early investigations into teachers'

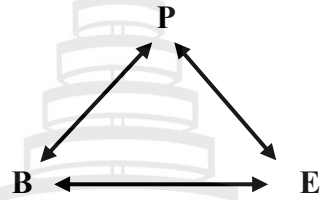
beliefs were influenced by Rotter's (1954) locus of control theory, which emphasized whether individuals attribute outcomes to internal or external factors. These early studies conceptualized teacher efficacy primarily as teachers' perceived control over instructional outcomes. However, contemporary research has increasingly adopted Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory as the dominant framework for understanding teachers' beliefs and behaviors. This study aligns with Bandura's conceptualization by providing a robust, context-sensitive theoretical foundation for examining PSETs' beliefs during practicum experiences.

Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). This definition emphasizes self-efficacy as a future-oriented belief system that influences goal setting, effort, persistence, and responses to challenges (Bandura, 2013). In teaching, self-efficacy is conceptualized as a teacher's belief in their ability to plan, organize, and execute instructional practices that lead to desired learning outcomes (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Empirical research consistently shows that teachers with high TSE are more likely to employ innovative teaching strategies, manage classrooms effectively, and persist in the face of student-related or contextual difficulties (Zee & Koomen, 2016).

Importantly, TSE is domain-specific rather than a general personality trait. Bandura (1997) emphasized that self-efficacy beliefs vary across tasks and contexts, such as classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement. This distinction is particularly relevant for PSETs, whose efficacy beliefs may fluctuate depending on the teaching context, student population, or school environment encountered during practicum. Furthermore, self-efficacy differs from related constructs such as outcome expectations and self-concept. While outcome expectations refer to beliefs about the consequences of actions, and self-concept reflects a broader, retrospective evaluation of oneself, self-efficacy focuses on perceived capability to perform specific future tasks (Marsh et al., 2018). This forward-looking nature highlights the dynamic and malleable character of TSE, especially during early professional development (Cai et al., 2022).

The theoretical framework underpinning TSE is embedded within Bandura's social cognitive theory, which posits that human functioning results from reciprocal

interactions among personal factors, behavior, and environmental influences (Bandura, 1986). Within this framework, locus of control is conceptualized as a motivational factor influencing self-efficacy beliefs rather than as an equivalent construct. Individuals with a stronger internal locus of control are more likely to attribute success to effort and competence, thereby reinforcing self-efficacy and personal agency (Bandura, 1997; Barni et al., 2019). Although related, locus of control and self-efficacy are conceptually distinct, with self-efficacy focusing specifically on perceived capability to perform actions within particular contexts.



Source adapted from Bandura (1986)

Figure 2.2 Triadic Reciprocal Causation Model

A key principle of social cognitive theory is triadic reciprocal determinism, which explains how personal factors (P), behavior (B), and environmental conditions (E) interact dynamically and continuously (Bandura, 1986). This model highlights that individuals are active agents who both influence and are influenced by their environments. In teacher education, this perspective offers valuable insights into how PSETs develop professional competence and efficacy. For instance, PSETs' beliefs about their teaching ability (personal factors) influence their instructional choices (behavior), which in turn shape classroom interactions and feedback from students and mentors (environment). These interactions then feed back into their self-efficacy beliefs, creating an ongoing cycle of professional learning and adaptation.

Bandura (1986) conceptualized personal factors as encompassing cognitive abilities, emotions, prior experiences, and self-reflective processes. Behavior refers to observable teaching practices, such as instructional strategies and classroom management techniques, while the environment includes institutional support, school culture, curriculum demands, and student characteristics. This reciprocal and dynamic interaction underscores that TSE is both individually constructed and contextually mediated. For example, positive feedback from a supportive mentor during practicum

may enhance a PSET's efficacy, leading to more effective instructional behavior and further reinforcement of self-efficacy. Conversely, persistent challenges, such as student disengagement or linguistic barriers, may initially weaken TSE, particularly in demanding contexts, such as rural schools.

Building on Bandura's framework, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) proposed an integrated model of TSE development that emphasizes two key cognitive processes: analysis of the teaching task and self-assessment of teaching competence. Teachers evaluate the demands of a given teaching context and then assess their capacity to meet them. Successful mastery experiences reinforce self-efficacy and encourage greater persistence and willingness to confront new challenges, as Pajares (1996) observed, "the higher the sense of efficacy, the greater the effort, persistence, and resilience" (p. 544).

Subsequent research has further conceptualized TSE as a multidimensional construct. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) identified three core domains of TSE: efficacy for instructional strategies, efficacy for classroom management, and efficacy for student engagement. These domains reflect the complex, multifaceted nature of teaching and provide a valuable framework for examining PSETs' strengths and challenges. For example, a PSET may feel confident in managing classroom behavior but less efficacious in differentiating instruction or engaging learners with limited English proficiency. This domain-specific perspective is particularly valuable in teacher education, as it enables targeted support and intervention.

A substantial body of research has demonstrated that high levels of TSE are associated with positive educational outcomes, including greater use of student-centered pedagogy, more substantial professional commitment, and lower levels of stress and burnout (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). In pre-service contexts, higher TSE is linked to increased enthusiasm for teaching, more adaptive responses to classroom challenges, and smoother transitions into professional roles (Hoy & Spero, 2005). Importantly, strong efficacy beliefs can serve as a protective factor against emotional exhaustion and self-doubt, particularly in under-resourced and challenging teaching environments such as rural schools (Azimi, 2012). These findings underscore the importance of teacher education programs in deliberately fostering TSE from the earliest stages of professional preparation.

2.4.2 The Four Sources of Teacher Self-Efficacy

Understanding how TSE develops requires close attention to its primary sources. Bandura (1997) identified four interrelated sources of self-efficacy beliefs: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social and verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. These sources interact dynamically and are mediated by teachers' cognitive interpretations of teaching experiences. In pre-service English teacher education, these sources are particularly influential because PSETs form and reshape their beliefs about English teaching during practicum placements, where they encounter real learners, institutional constraints, and language-related challenges for the first time.

In ELT contexts, the development of TSE is closely tied to PSETs' perceptions of their ability to use English effectively, teach language skills meaningfully, manage communicative classrooms, and support learners with varying levels of proficiency. The following subsections examine each source of TSE with explicit reference to ELT practicum experiences, including rural and under-resourced school settings.

2.4.2.1 Mastery Experiences

Mastery experiences, also referred to as enactive mastery experiences or performance accomplishments, are widely recognized as the most potent source of TSE (Bandura, 1997; Lazarides & Warner, 2020). These experiences occur when teachers successfully perform teaching tasks and perceive a clear link between their actions and positive instructional outcomes. In ELT, mastery experiences involve successful lesson delivery, effective facilitation of communicative activities, improved student participation, or observable gains in learners' language use.

For PSETs, mastery experiences may include designing a lesson that encourages meaningful interaction in English, managing pair or group work effectively, or helping learners overcome difficulties in speaking, pronunciation, or comprehension. Each successful ELT-related experience reinforces PSETs' belief in their ability to teach English, while repeated setbacks, particularly when unsupported, can undermine emerging self-efficacy. Consequently, mastery experiences play a central role in shaping PSETs' efficacy in their pedagogical and linguistic competence.

Bandura (1997) emphasized that repeated success strengthens efficacy beliefs, whereas persistent failure may foster self-doubt and avoidance behaviors

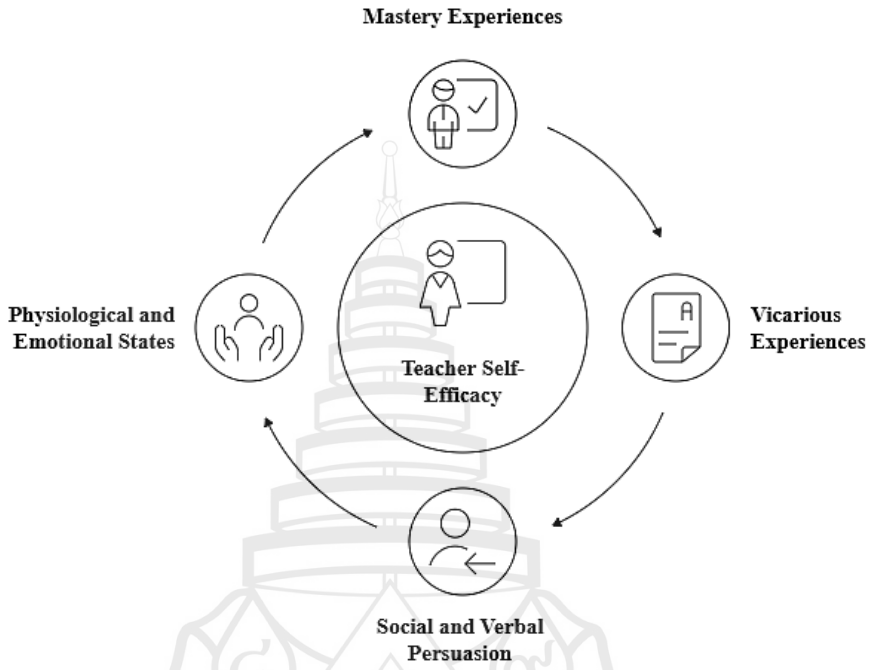
(Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). In practicum contexts, mastery experiences gained through successful English lessons provide concrete evidence that theoretical knowledge can be translated into effective classroom practice (Yada et al., 2021). Research in ELT consistently shows that PSETs who experience positive teaching outcomes, such as increased student engagement or improved language performance, report higher levels of TSE (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Conversely, early adverse experiences, particularly in linguistically diverse or low-proficiency classrooms, may lead PSETs to question their suitability for teaching English (Barni et al., 2019).

The importance of supportive practicum structures is therefore critical. Scaffolded teaching opportunities, collaborative lesson planning, and constructive mentorship enable PSETs to reinterpret difficulties as learning opportunities rather than failures. Such support is critical in ELT, where classroom interaction is unpredictable and heavily dependent on students' linguistic readiness. When challenges are framed as part of professional learning, PSETs are more likely to develop adaptive strategies and resilient efficacy beliefs.

Mastery experiences are especially significant in rural ELT practicum contexts. PSETs in rural schools face limited teaching resources, significant proficiency gaps, minimal exposure to English outside the classroom, and students' low efficacy in using English (Lounkaew, 2013; Trent, 2013). Although these conditions may initially hinder teaching effectiveness, successfully navigating such constraints, such as conducting communicative lessons with minimal materials or increasing student willingness to speak English, can produce powerful mastery experiences. Studies suggest that overcoming these challenges enhances PSETs' efficacy in teaching English across diverse and under-resourced contexts (Wang et al., 2020; Zee & Koomen, 2016).

Reflective practice further strengthens the impact of mastery experiences. Through structured reflection, such as teaching journals, post-lesson conferences, or guided mentoring, PSETs can critically analyze their ELT practices, identify growth, and reframe challenges constructively (Schön, 1983; Orland-Barak, 2010). Research indicates that reflection enables PSETs to transform both success and difficulty into sustained professional learning, thereby reinforcing TSE in ELT (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005; Dumlao & Pinatacan, 2019). Thus, mastery experiences are most

effective when embedded within reflective cycles that support continuous pedagogical and professional development.



Source adapted from Bandura (1997)

Figure 2.3 Sources of Teacher Self-Efficacy

2.4.2.2 Vicarious Experiences

Vicarious experiences involve developing self-efficacy by observing others successfully perform teaching tasks. For PSETs, this source of TSE is particularly significant, as opportunities for sustained independent teaching are limited during teacher preparation. In ELT contexts, vicarious experiences commonly occur when PSETs observe mentor teachers, peers, or novice teachers conducting English lessons, managing classroom interaction in English, or facilitating communicative activities. Observing such practices allows PSETs to judge their potential teaching capabilities by comparing themselves with instructional models (Bandura, 1997).

During teaching practicums, PSETs are typically provided with structured observation opportunities in which they witness experienced English teachers implement lesson plans, manage learner participation, and negotiate language-related challenges such as mixed proficiency levels or students' reluctance to use English.

These observations provide concrete examples of effective pedagogical strategies, including scaffolding, corrective feedback, and classroom discourse management (Richards, 2012). When PSETs observe mentor teachers successfully addressing ELT-specific challenges, such as encouraging student talk, managing pronunciation difficulties, or maintaining English as the medium of instruction, their efficacy in handling similar situations is likely to increase (Yüksel, 2014). Similarly, observing peers or novice teachers who have recently transitioned into the profession can be particularly influential, as these models are perceived as more relatable and attainable (Wolf et al., 2010).

However, the influence of vicarious experiences on TSE is not uniformly positive. Observing ineffective ELT practices, such as excessive teacher talk, limited student interaction, or inconsistent use of English, may negatively affect PSETs' beliefs if such practices are interpreted as typical or unavoidable (Fackler & Malmberg, 2016). Without guided reflection, PSETs may struggle to distinguish between effective and ineffective instructional approaches. Consequently, the role of mentor teachers is critical. Skilled mentors not only demonstrate effective ELT practices but also articulate the pedagogical rationale behind their instructional decisions, enabling PSETs to critically analyze observed lessons and adapt strategies to their own teaching contexts (Jeh-Awae, 2021).

Research further suggests that vicarious experiences are most effective when integrated with opportunities for practice and feedback. Observation alone is insufficient to foster strong TSE unless it is followed by teaching rehearsals, reflective discussions, or collaborative lesson planning (Gale et al., 2021). In ELT programs, activities such as team teaching, post-observation debriefings, and peer reflection sessions help PSETs bridge the gap between observation and action, thereby strengthening the impact of vicarious learning.

In addition, technology-mediated observations have become increasingly important in ELT teacher education. Video-based lessons and online teaching demonstrations allow PSETs to repeatedly examine specific instructional moments, such as error correction, teacher questioning, or interactional patterns in English (Liu, 2012). These resources are particularly valuable in contexts where access to high-quality mentor teachers or diverse teaching settings is limited. Chen (2020)

demonstrates that video-supported observation enhances PSETs' pedagogical awareness and professional agency when combined with guided reflection.

Finally, perceived similarity between the observer and the model strongly shapes the effectiveness of vicarious experiences. PSETs are more likely to develop stronger TSE when observing teachers who share similar linguistic backgrounds, proficiency levels, or cultural experiences, particularly in EFL contexts where English is not the teachers' first language (Ma et al., 2022). In contrast, observing highly proficient or experienced teachers may sometimes lead to unfavorable self-comparisons if PSETs perceive an unbridgeable gap between themselves and the model (Woolfolk Hoy & Burke-Spero, 2005). Therefore, ELT teacher education programs should provide a balanced range of models that are both aspirational and relatable to maximize the positive effects of vicarious experiences on TSE.

2.4.2.3 Social and Verbal Persuasion

Social and verbal persuasion refers to the evaluative messages, feedback, and encouragement that PSETs receive from mentors, supervisors, and peers regarding their teaching competence. In ELT contexts, such feedback focuses on language use, instructional clarity, classroom interaction, and pedagogical decision-making. Although social persuasion is generally considered less influential than mastery experiences, it remains an important source of TSE, particularly when feedback is specific, credible, and developmentally appropriate (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

For PSETs, post-lesson feedback during practicum placements is a primary form of social persuasion. Constructive feedback that acknowledges effective ELT practices, e.g., such as successful elicitation of student responses, explicit modeling of language forms, or effective use of communicative activities, can reinforce PSETs' beliefs in their instructional capabilities (Farrell, 2016). Importantly, feedback that combines affirmation with practical guidance supports a growth-oriented interpretation of teaching performance. Research on feedback and self-efficacy emphasizes the value of specificity and task-focused commentary. For example, McCabe (2006) identifies exemplary verbal prompts that enhance self-efficacy, such as:

1. Performance-specific praise, e.g., "Your use of group work in today's lesson helped engage quieter students; continue to build on this strategy with explicit English objectives."

2. Strategy-oriented guidance, e.g., “When students struggle with pronunciation, try breaking the word into syllables and modeling stress patterns before asking them to repeat.”

3. Process-focused encouragement, e.g., “You clearly prepared well for today’s lesson; keep reflecting on how your questioning techniques support student thinking.”

These kinds of prompts reinforce teachers’ perceptions of competence by acknowledging observable actions and offering straightforward, actionable suggestions for improvement. Similarly, Siegle (2000) highlights feedback strategies that promote self-efficacy by fostering accurate self-assessment and mastery orientation. These strategies include:

1. Setting attainable sub-goals, which helps teachers experience incremental success and build efficacy over time;

2. Encouraging self-reflection paired with actionable next steps, such as “Notice how your pacing affected participation; next time, try allocating specific time blocks for discussion to increase student talk time.”

3. Modeling successful practices through exemplars or peer observation, which provides vicarious learning that can expand teachers’ sense of instructional possibilities.

Together, these approaches help PSETs develop a clearer understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement, fostering a sense of control over their professional development. When feedback emphasizes effort, strategy use, and improvement rather than fixed ability, PSETs are more likely to persist in refining their teaching practices (Barni et al., 2019).

Conversely, poorly delivered feedback may undermine TSE. Overly critical, vague, or inconsistent comments can heighten self-doubt and discourage experimentation with new ELT methodologies, particularly for PSETs who are still developing efficacy in their language proficiency and classroom authority (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014). The perceived credibility of the feedback provider also plays a crucial role. PSETs are more receptive to feedback from mentors and supervisors whom they view as knowledgeable about ELT pedagogy and sensitive to contextual constraints (Morris et al., 2017). As such, mentor training is essential to ensure that feedback is

supportive, pedagogically grounded, and aligned with the goals of ELT teacher education programs (Chinokul, 2015; Göker, 2020).

Beyond formal feedback, informal encouragement and collegial interaction also contribute to social persuasion. Collaborative activities such as lesson planning, peer teaching, and reflective dialogue create a sense of professional belonging and shared learning (Barbour & Lammers, 2015). These interactions help PSETs construct a "professional self-understanding" that includes beliefs about their competence as English teachers (Kelchtermans, 2005). Furthermore, institutional cultures that promote trust, collaboration, and open communication enhance the effectiveness of social persuasion by normalizing feedback as part of professional growth (Klassen et al., 2011). In ELT teacher education, fostering such environments is essential for strengthening PSETs' TSE and encouraging sustained professional engagement.

2.4.2.4 Physiological and Emotional States

Physiological and emotional states constitute the fourth source of TSE and refer to how individuals interpret their affective and physical reactions to teaching-related demands. Bandura (1997) emphasizes that it is not emotional arousal itself but its interpretation that influences self-efficacy beliefs. In ELT contexts, PSETs frequently experience emotional challenges related to language use, classroom management, and performance evaluation, all of which shape their perceptions of teaching competence.

During teaching practicum, PSETs encounter stressors such as managing classroom interaction in English, addressing students' linguistic errors, and meeting institutional expectations. These demands may generate anxiety, particularly when PSETs perceive their language proficiency or pedagogical skills as insufficient. Research indicates that high levels of unmanaged stress can undermine TSE, whereas moderate levels of arousal may enhance focus and motivation (Bandura & Wessels, 1994). Teachers who can regulate their emotional responses and view stress as a regular part of professional growth tend to develop greater resilience and higher TSE (Zee & Koomen, 2016).

Empirical studies further suggest that physiological responses, including fatigue and stress-related indicators, are closely linked to teachers' self-perceptions of effectiveness (Hendricks, 2016; Sander, 2021). For PSETs in ELT programs, learning

to cope with emotional challenges is therefore essential. Teacher education programs that incorporate reflective practices, stress-management strategies, and emotional support mechanisms help PSETs maintain emotional balance and efficacy during practicum experiences (Richards, 2012). Supportive school environments also play a critical role. When PSETs feel valued by mentors and colleagues, they are more likely to view challenges as manageable and to see setbacks as opportunities for learning rather than signs of incompetence (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010).

Emotional labor further complicates the relationship between emotional states and TSE in ELT contexts. Teachers are expected to regulate their emotional expressions to maintain a professional classroom atmosphere, which can be particularly demanding for PSETs who are still negotiating their TI (Chang, 2009). Managing frustration, maintaining enthusiasm, and projecting efficacy in a second language can be emotionally taxing, potentially leading to exhaustion and reduced TSE if not adequately supported (Bloomfield, 2010). Training in emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to recognize, regulate, and respond to emotions, has been shown to positively influence TSE and classroom effectiveness (Corcoran & Tormey, 2012). Such training equips PSETs to interpret emotional cues more accurately and respond adaptively to classroom challenges.

Finally, supporting PSETs' physiological and emotional well-being is essential for sustaining TSE across both practicum and long-term professional development. Unaddressed emotional strain during teacher preparation may contribute to burnout or attrition, whereas proactive emotional support fosters resilience, motivation, and a stable sense of professional competence (Beltman et al., 2011). In ELT teacher education, addressing emotional dimensions alongside pedagogical skills is therefore critical for preparing confident and effective future English teachers.

2.4.3 Teacher Self-Efficacy in Pre-Service Teacher Education

Developing strong self-efficacy beliefs is widely recognized as a central goal of pre-service teacher education because these beliefs shape how PSETs interpret teaching demands, respond to challenges, and persist in the profession (Pendergast et al., 2011). Berg and Smith (2018) emphasize that self-belief is not a peripheral outcome of teacher education but a core psychological mechanism through which pedagogical knowledge is translated into classroom practice. In ELT contexts, where

teachers must manage language use, student interaction, and communicative demands simultaneously, TSE becomes particularly consequential. Research consistently links strong TSE with more effective classroom management, greater willingness to use communicative and innovative teaching strategies, and higher levels of professional persistence (Alibakhshi et al., 2020; Bjorklund et al., 2020).

A foundational contribution to understanding TSE in pre-service education is provided by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007), who posed a set of critical questions about how preservice teachers' past learning experiences, observations of teachers, and exposure to representations of teaching shape emerging efficacy beliefs. These questions are especially relevant for ELT, as many PSETs have spent years observing English teachers whose practices may have emphasized form-focused instruction, limited student interaction, or teacher-centered approaches. Such experiences form powerful, efficacy-relevant memories that influence how PSETs conceptualize "good" English teaching and their sense of their own potential to enact it.

Building on this perspective, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) argue that understanding the sources of PSETs' self-efficacy is essential for improving teacher education programs. Once efficacy beliefs are established, they tend to be resistant to change because individuals selectively attend to experiences that confirm those beliefs while discounting contradictory evidence (Bandura, 1997). The implication is clear: if teacher education programs fail to intentionally cultivate positive and realistic TSE early on, ineffective or fragile efficacy beliefs may persist into in-service teaching. Consequently, it is more pedagogically sound to foster strong and adaptive TSE during initial teacher education than to attempt remediation once teachers enter the profession (Berg & Smith, 2018; Gorospe, 2022).

From this perspective, teacher education programs are not merely sites for transmitting pedagogical knowledge but critical intervention points for shaping how PSETs interpret success, failure, and professional growth. Bjorklund et al. (2020) argue that many of the challenges faced by novice teachers, such as attrition, instructional rigidity, and emotional exhaustion, can be traced back to underdeveloped or unstable TSE. Strengthening TSE during pre-service education, therefore, has implications not only for immediate teaching performance but also for long-term professional sustainability.

Teacher education programs enhance TSE by deliberately structuring opportunities for mastery experiences, reflective practice, observation, and feedback (Atay, 2007). In ELT programs, this includes opportunities for PSETs to plan and deliver English lessons, manage English-language classroom discourse, and address learners' linguistic difficulties. Narayanan et al. (2023) highlight that when PSETs actively engage in lesson planning, teaching, and assessment, they can observe the impact of their instructional decisions on student learning, i.e., an experience that directly strengthens TSE. The teaching practicum thus functions as a pivotal space where theoretical knowledge is tested, reinterpreted, and personalized.

However, the transition from the relatively protected environment of university coursework to the realities of classroom teaching produces what has been termed a "reality shock" (Kim & Cho, 2014). Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) explain that this shock may result in a temporary decline in TSE when PSETs encounter difficulties managing classrooms, engaging learners, or meeting institutional expectations—challenges that are particularly acute in ELT settings characterized by mixed proficiency levels, limited resources, or large class sizes (Woolfolk Hoy & Spero, 2005). Longitudinal research suggests that although TSE generally increases during teacher preparation, it may decline during the early years of teaching before stabilizing as experience accumulates (Bjorklund et al., 2020).

The implication here is not that declining TSE signals failure, but that teacher education programs must prepare PSETs to interpret early struggles as part of professional learning rather than as evidence of incompetence. Mastery experiences remain the most potent source of TSE (Bandura, 1997), yet these experiences must be scaffolded. When PSETs successfully manage ELT-specific challenges, such as facilitating pair work, responding to learner errors, or maintaining English as the medium of instruction, they develop a sense of instructional agency. Conversely, unsupported negative experiences may undermine efficacy and limit pedagogical risk-taking. Structured mentorship, peer collaboration, and guided reflection are therefore essential to ensure that early difficulties contribute to growth rather than erosion of TSE (Farrell, 2016).

Vicarious learning further supports TSE development by allowing PSETs to observe feasible models of effective English teaching. Observing mentors and peers

manage communication, negotiate classroom interactions, or adapt instruction to learners' needs demonstrates that effective ELT practice is attainable (Filatov & Pill, 2015). Similarly, social and verbal persuasion, e.g., through constructive feedback and dialogic mentoring, helps PSETs recalibrate their self-perceptions and set realistic professional goals (Becker et al., 2019; McNeilly et al., 2022). These processes highlight an important implication: TSE does not develop automatically through exposure to practice but must be intentionally supported through pedagogical design and relational support.

Emotional well-being is also integral to sustaining TSE. Stress, anxiety, and fatigue, common during the practicum, can weaken efficacy beliefs if left unaddressed (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Teacher education programs that normalize emotional challenges, promote stress-management strategies, and provide supportive networks help PSETs maintain efficacy and resilience. This is particularly important in ELT contexts, where language anxiety and performance pressure may compound general teaching stress.

Significantly, recent research has challenged early assumptions that TSE is static. Hoang and Wyatt (2021) demonstrate that TSE is dynamic and context-sensitive, evolving through reflection and experience. Studies of pre-service EFL teachers show that TSE may fluctuate during the practicum, decreasing during observation phases and increasing as PSETs assume greater instructional responsibility (Yüksel, 2014). Atay (2007) similarly found uneven development across efficacy domains, with gains in classroom management accompanied by declines in efficacy regarding innovative pedagogy. These findings underscore the need to conceptualize TSE as developmental rather than linear.

This body of research has important implications for ELT teacher education. Filatov and Pill (2015) note the historical lack of research explicitly focused on English teaching self-efficacy, despite the unique demands of ELT. Their findings suggest that PSETs' TSE is powerfully shaped by the quality of their university preparation and the coherence between coursework and practicum experiences. Consequently, understanding TSE provides a powerful lens for evaluating the effectiveness of ELT teacher education programs.

At a practical level, PSETs continuously engage in internal evaluations of their teaching, asking questions such as: Can I teach effectively in English? Can I support my students' learning? Can I improve over time? These questions reflect the essence of TSE (Megawati & Astutik, 2018). As Sharp et al. (2016) argue, it is not actual competence alone but perceived capability that determines whether teachers apply their knowledge in practice. Thus, studying TSE allows researchers and teacher educators to move beyond what PSETs know to how confidently and flexibly they can act on that knowledge in real classrooms.

In summary, examining TSE in pre-service teacher education has clear implications. It highlights the need for teacher education programs, particularly in ELT, to design practicum experiences that intentionally support mastery, provide credible models, offer constructive feedback, and attend to emotional well-being. More broadly, it positions TSE as a key mediating construct linking teacher preparation to classroom practice, professional identity development, and long-term retention in the teaching profession. These implications provide a conceptual bridge to the discussion of practicum design, TI, and professional development in later chapters.

2.4.4 Related Research on PSET Self-Efficacy

Research on TSE has become a central focus in teacher education scholarship, particularly regarding PSETs and their experiences during teaching practicum. Over the past two decades, scholars have increasingly emphasized that TSE is not a fixed personal trait but a dynamic belief system shaped through ongoing interactions among individual characteristics, instructional experiences, and contextual conditions. Within this body of work, the teaching practicum has been identified as a critical site where PSETs' efficacy beliefs are tested, challenged, and reconstructed. This section synthesizes prior research on PSET self-efficacy by organizing findings thematically, with particular attention to practicum-related challenges, mastery experiences, mentorship and feedback, individual and contextual influences, and limitations in research conducted in rural and under-resourced settings.

A consistent finding across studies is that the teaching practicum represents both a crucial developmental opportunity and a period of heightened vulnerability for PSETs' self-efficacy. Many PSETs experience an initial decline in TSE when transitioning from university coursework to real classroom environments, a

phenomenon described as “reality shock” (Yang, 2023). This decline is commonly attributed to difficulties in classroom management, lesson pacing, student engagement, and the unpredictable nature of classroom interaction (Megawati & Astutik, 2018; Karakaş & Erten, 2021). In ELT contexts, these challenges are further intensified by concerns related to linguistic competence. Tutyandari (2023) found that PSETs’ perceived English proficiency strongly influenced their instructional efficacy, particularly during spontaneous classroom interaction, pronunciation modeling, and error correction. Anxiety surrounding grammatical accuracy, fluency, and pronunciation undermined PSETs’ self-efficacy, even when their pedagogical knowledge was sound. Similar findings were reported in the Thai context, where PSETs reported comparatively low self-efficacy in English use and classroom management, despite positive perceptions of their overall professional growth (Yuso, 2023). These challenges are particularly pronounced in rural and under-resourced schools, where limited instructional materials, large or multi-grade classes, and inconsistent institutional support place additional demands on PSETs (Altarawneh et al., 2023; Mudra, 2024). Collectively, these studies suggest that practicum experiences may reveal gaps between theoretical preparation and classroom realities, thereby placing significant strain on the development of self-efficacy.

Despite these challenges, the practicum is widely recognized as a primary source of mastery experiences that contribute to the development of TSE. Grounded in Bandura’s (1997) social cognitive theory, numerous studies highlight that successful teaching experiences—however small—play a decisive role in strengthening PSETs’ efficacy beliefs. Filatov and Pill (2015), for example, demonstrated a strong relationship between the quality of university-based preparation and the development of English teaching self-efficacy, particularly when pedagogical coursework was meaningfully integrated with field-based practice. Their findings underscored the importance of mastery modeling, in which PSETs observe and enact effective teaching practices in supportive environments. Similarly, Megawati and Astutik (2018) reported generally high levels of TSE among PSETs following the practicum, especially in lesson planning and instructional delivery. However, they also noted considerable individual variation, indicating that mastery experiences are unevenly distributed and strongly influenced by classroom contexts, mentor support, and teaching

responsibilities. Longitudinal evidence further supports this view. Karakaş and Erten's (2021) sequential explanatory mixed-methods study revealed gradual improvements in PSETs' self-efficacy across multiple semesters, particularly in student engagement and classroom management, reinforcing the notion that TSE develops cumulatively through sustained and repeated teaching experiences. These findings highlight the importance of well-structured practicum designs that provide PSETs with opportunities for incremental success, reflection, and the development of efficacy over time.

Beyond mastery experiences, mentorship and social support have been consistently identified as critical contributors to PSETs' self-efficacy development. Research indicates that constructive feedback from mentor teachers, university supervisors, and even students plays a key role in shaping PSETs' efficacy and instructional decision-making (Pandee et al., 2020; Altarawneh et al., 2023). Positive student responses and encouragement tend to reinforce efficacy beliefs, while unsupportive classroom climates and limited guidance can undermine them (Pandee et al., 2020). Karakaş and Erten (2021) emphasized that effective mentor feedback helps PSETs reinterpret teaching difficulties as opportunities for learning rather than as indicators of failure, thereby supporting sustained TSE growth. Conversely, inconsistent mentoring structures, weak communication between universities and schools, and insufficient mentor preparation have been identified as barriers to effective development of self-efficacy (Altarawneh et al., 2023). These findings align with Bandura's concept of social persuasion, suggesting that the quality, credibility, and specificity of feedback significantly influence how PSETs evaluate their teaching competence. In ELT contexts, mentorship is crucial for addressing language-related anxiety and instructional uncertainty. Tutyandari (2023) found that consistent support from mentors and supervisors helped reduce PSETs' anxiety about using English in class and strengthened their ability to manage classroom interactions, highlighting mentorship as a crucial buffer against practicum-related stress.

Research further suggests that the interaction between individual characteristics and contextual conditions shapes TSE development. Yang (2023) reported that personality traits such as extroversion influenced how PSETs approached classroom challenges, with more extroverted individuals demonstrating higher self-efficacy through proactive engagement with students and mentors. Introverted PSETs, while

equally capable, require additional scaffolding to build efficacy. Contextual factors, including school culture, student behavior, and resource availability, also strongly influence TSE development. Altarawneh et al. (2023) found that limited resources and inconsistent school-based support constrained PSETs' efficacy beliefs, even when pedagogical competence was high. In ELT settings, contextual pressures are further compounded by linguistic environments in which English exposure outside the classroom is limited and student proficiency is low (Tutyandari, 2023; Yuso, 2023). These findings reinforce the understanding of TSE as a context-sensitive construct shaped by the dynamic interplay between personal dispositions and teaching environments.

Although a substantial body of research has examined PSET self-efficacy during teaching practicum, relatively few studies have focused explicitly on rural or under-resourced contexts. Existing evidence suggests that PSETs in rural schools face greater challenges in translating theoretical knowledge into practice due to factors such as professional isolation, cultural differences, and limited instructional resources (Qin & Villarreal, 2018; Mudra, 2024). Qin and Villarreal (2018) reported higher levels of professional commitment and teaching efficacy among PSETs in urban schools than in rural placements, underscoring contextual disparities in practicum experiences. In the Thai context, research on PSET self-efficacy remains limited and concentrated mainly in non-rural settings. While studies by Pandee et al. (2020) and Yuso (2023) acknowledge the influence of practicum environments on TSE, they do not examine rural schools as distinct contexts for self-efficacy development. Moreover, much of the existing literature relies on cross-sectional quantitative designs, which offer limited insight into how TSE evolves and how PSETs negotiate efficacy, doubt, and resilience in challenging settings. Given the close relationship between self-efficacy and TI, there is a clear need for qualitative and longitudinal research that captures the lived experiences of PSETs in rural and under-resourced ELT contexts. Addressing this gap is particularly important in Thailand, where many PSETs begin their teaching careers in rural schools with limited professional support.

The discussion of the four sources of self-efficacy highlights that PSETs' beliefs about their teaching capabilities are not formed in isolation, but are socially situated, emotionally mediated, and dynamically constructed through experience.

These sources collectively shape how PSETs interpret their practicum experiences, evaluate feedback, manage emotions, and make sense of their emerging roles as teachers. Significantly, these interpretive processes extend beyond efficacy in performing instructional tasks; they influence how PSETs see themselves *as* teachers, how they position themselves within school communities, and how they negotiate expectations, responsibilities, and professional norms. In this sense, TSE and TI are closely intertwined, as efficacy beliefs both inform and are informed by teachers' evolving understandings of who they are and whom they are becoming in the profession. Building on this connection, the following section examines TI, focusing on its conceptual foundations and its relevance to understanding PSETs' professional development during initial teacher education and teaching practicum experiences.

2.5 Teacher Identity

TI provides critical insight into how teachers understand, enact, and negotiate their professional roles, beliefs, and pedagogical practices (Miller, 2009). Contemporary scholarship widely conceptualizes TI as a dynamic, context-dependent, and continuously evolving construct that both shapes and is shaped by teachers' personal histories, professional experiences, and sociocultural environments (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Sachs, 2005). For PSETs, the formation of TI begins before formal classroom entry and is influenced by prior schooling experiences, personal aspirations, educational philosophies, and interactions within teacher education programs (Cook, 2009; Huang et al., 2021). As PSETs progress through coursework and practicum experiences, their instructional beliefs are frequently challenged and reshaped, contributing to the ongoing construction of TI.

The teaching practicum, in particular, is a pivotal context for TI development, as it exposes PSETs to authentic teaching situations in which personal beliefs must be reconciled with institutional expectations and professional norms. Through these experiences, PSETs begin to align—or struggle to align—their self-perceptions with the realities of classroom practice. Consequently, TI formation is central to understanding how PSETs perceive themselves as teachers and how they relate to

students, colleagues, and broader professional responsibilities (Ulum, 2020). Against this backdrop, this section reviews key definitions and theoretical perspectives on TI, examines the distinctive features of LTI, explores processes of TI development during the teaching practicum, and synthesizes empirical research on TI formation among PSETs.

2.5.1 Defining Teacher Identity

Teacher identity (TI) has emerged as a significant area of inquiry in educational research over the past three decades, offering a powerful lens for understanding how teachers construct, enact, and sustain their professional selves. Despite extensive scholarly attention, TI remains a complex and contested concept, with no single, universally accepted definition (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Broadly, identity can be understood as a meaning-making process through which individuals seek coherence, continuity, and recognition within particular social, cultural, and institutional contexts (De Ruyter & Conroy, 2002).

In the literature, the terms teacher identity and teacher professional identity are used interchangeably (Mockler, 2011), reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of identity research, which draws on psychology, sociology, philosophy, and education (Day et al., 2006). Beijaard et al. (2004) conceptualize teacher professional identity as "the perception that teachers have of themselves at a present time," captured succinctly in the question: "Who am I as a teacher at this moment?" This perception encompasses teachers' beliefs, values, motivations, self-concepts, experiences, and practices, all of which interact with broader institutional and sociocultural forces (Cai et al., 2022). Accordingly, TI is now widely understood as dynamic, relational, and context-dependent, continuously constructed and reconstructed through experience and reflection (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Beijaard et al., 2004; Olsen, 2008). Teachers, therefore, do not simply *possess* identities; instead, they actively negotiate and enact them across time and space.

Historically, TI was conceptualized as a relatively fixed set of attributes or competencies acquired during teacher training (Beijaard et al., 2004). Early perspectives tended to align identity with prescriptive notions of effective teaching and professional competence (De Ruyter & Conroy, 2002). However, such essentialist views have been increasingly challenged. Contemporary research emphasizes the

fluid, hybrid, and evolving nature of TI, framing it as an ongoing process shaped by internal transformations and external conditions (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Olsen, 2008; Sachs, 2005). Yuan and Lee (2016), for example, conceptualize TI as a narrative that develops through dynamic interactions among personal, social, and institutional factors. From this perspective, TI is not acquired once and for all during initial teacher education but is continually negotiated throughout a teacher's professional life. As such, TI is better understood as a process of *becoming* rather than a stable professional state (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Clarke, 2009; Ovens et al., 2016).

A prominent strand of TI research conceptualizes identity as both narrative and emotional. Clandinin et al. (1999) describe TI as teachers' "stories to live by," highlighting how professional identities are composed and embodied through lived experiences within particular contexts. These narratives are shaped by prior schooling, teacher education experiences, institutional expectations, and broader sociopolitical conditions (Flores & Day, 2006; Mockler, 2011; Rodgers & Scott, 2008). Emotions play a central role in this process, mediating how teachers interpret challenges, successes, and moral purposes in their work (Zembylas, 2005). TI thus emerges through a constant negotiation between self-ascribed and ascribed identities. When personal beliefs or aspirations conflict with institutional demands, this negotiation may result in tensions or identity dissonance, referred to as identity stress, a phenomenon that is particularly significant for PSETs operating in unfamiliar and evaluative practicum contexts (Miller, 2009; Pennington & Richards, 2016).

To capture the multi-layered nature of TI, several influential theoretical frameworks have been proposed. Gee's (2000) model conceptualizes identity as "being recognized as a certain kind of person in a given context" (p. 99) and delineates four dimensions: nature-identity, institution-identity, discourse-identity, and affinity-identity. Together, these dimensions highlight how identity is shaped through personal characteristics, institutional positioning, social interaction, and participation in communities of practice.

Similarly, Britzman (2003) conceptualizes TI development as a "struggle for voice," shaped by the interaction of biography, emotions, and institutional structures. Biography refers to teachers' personal histories and educational experiences; emotions capture the internal and unspoken dimensions of becoming a teacher; and institutional

structures represent the systems that regulate and legitimize professional practice. TI thus emerges through ongoing negotiation among these dimensions. Complementing this view, Beijaard et al. (2004) identify three core components of TI: subject matter expertise, didactical competence, and pedagogical knowledge, emphasizing that TI is both individually constructed and socially validated within professional contexts.

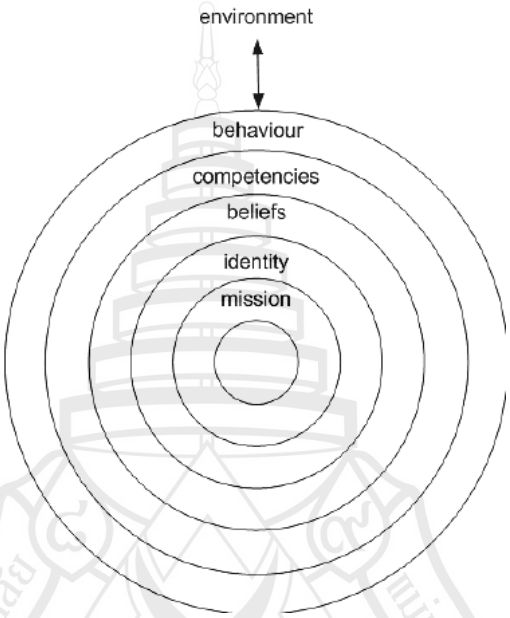


Figure 2.4 Korthagen's Onion Model

Another influential framework is Korthagen's (2004) Onion Model of Levels of Change, which conceptualizes teacher development across six interrelated layers: environment, behavior, competencies, beliefs, identity, and mission. While outer layers relate to observable practices and contextual factors, inner layers address deeper aspects of professional self-understanding. The identity level centers on teachers' self-conceptions, while the mission level reflects their moral purpose and broader sense of contribution. Korthagen argues that sustainable professional growth requires alignment across these levels, particularly the inner ones. For PSETs, the Onion Model offers a valuable lens for understanding how practicum experiences prompt a shift from surface-level concerns about performance toward deeper reflection on beliefs, identity, and professional purpose (Alsup, 2006).

Importantly, TI does not develop in isolation. It is shaped by sociocultural, institutional, and political contexts that influence how teachers understand and enact

their roles (Sachs, 2005). In diverse educational settings, factors such as language policy, cultural norms, and school location may significantly affect identity negotiation. Olsen (2008) and Bloomfield (2010) highlight personal biography, professional preparation, and institutional context as key influences on TI development. As teachers accumulate experience and participate in communities of practice, their identities continue to evolve rather than stabilize (Wenger, 1998).

Day and Kington's (2008) three-dimensional framework further elucidates this dynamic process by conceptualizing TI as comprising personal, professional, and situated dimensions. Personal identity reflects teachers' values, beliefs, and life experiences; professional identity encompasses formal roles, responsibilities, and ethical commitments; and situated identity emphasizes the influence of specific contexts such as school culture and community expectations. Together, these dimensions illustrate how TI emerges at the intersection of internal agency and external structure.

Source Day and Kington (2008)

Figure 2.5 Three Dimensions of Teacher Identity

Building on this perspective, subsequent research highlights the reciprocal relationship between individual characteristics, such as resilience, TSE, and motivation, and contextual conditions in shaping TI (Beltman et al., 2015). Pennington and Richards (2016) further identify motivations for entering the profession, institutional influences, and long-term aspirations as critical factors in identity formation. More recent studies (e.g., Hong et al., 2024) adopt an intersectional lens,

emphasizing how language background, gender, race, and sociopolitical positioning intersect to shape TI in complex educational contexts.

2.5.2 Language Teacher Identity

Language teacher identity (LTI) has emerged as a specialized strand within TI research, focusing on the distinctive roles, challenges, and contextual conditions associated with language teaching (Barkhuizen, 2019; Fairley, 2020). In recent years, scholarly attention has increased to understanding how language teachers construct, negotiate, and enact their professional identities. As Barkhuizen (2017) argues, language teacher education has moved beyond generic models of teacher development to acknowledge that LTI is shaped not only by general teaching experiences but also by the specific linguistic, cultural, and pedagogical characteristics of language education. Fairley (2020) synthesizes this view, suggesting that LTI is influenced by teachers' relationships with educational systems, the languages they teach, their classroom practices, and their ongoing interactions with learners. Consequently, LTI can be understood as both an extension of general TI and a distinct construct shaped by the unique demands of language teaching (De Costa & Norton, 2017).

David Block's seminal work provides a key theoretical foundation for understanding identity in EFL and second-language contexts, Second Language Identities (2007, 2014). Block challenges cognitively oriented views of identity in second language acquisition and instead conceptualizes identity as socially constructed, multiple, and continuously negotiated through language use and participation in social practices. Drawing on poststructuralist theory, Block emphasizes that identity is inseparable from power relations, discourse, and sociocultural context. Notably, he highlights that foreign language contexts, such as EFL settings, offer limited opportunities for authentic language use and identity affirmation compared with second language environments in which the target language is embedded in daily life. As a result, learners and teachers in EFL contexts may experience greater tensions in negotiating linguistic legitimacy, efficacy, and professional positioning (Block, 2007, 2014). This perspective is particularly relevant for EFL teachers, whose professional identities are shaped within systems that prioritize native-speaker norms, standardized curricula, and examination-driven instruction. Block's work thus provides a critical lens for understanding how LTI is constructed under structural and

ideological constraints, reinforcing the view that LTI is deeply contextual and relational.

While language teachers share standard professional features with teachers of other subjects, they operate under conditions that distinctly shape their professional identities (Fairley, 2020). Borg (2006) provides a seminal contribution to LTI research by identifying eleven distinctive characteristics of language teachers, encompassing the nature of the subject matter, instructional content, pedagogical methodology, teacher–learner relationships, and broader institutional and societal conditions. Language, unlike many academic subjects, is inherently dynamic, socially embedded, and closely tied to real-life communication. As a result, language teaching extends beyond the transmission of grammatical knowledge to include communicative competence, cultural understanding, and learning strategies. This requires language teachers to reconceptualize their professional roles, positioning themselves not merely as knowledge transmitters but as facilitators of interaction, meaning-making, and cultural exchange.

Table 2.4 A Summary of Distinctive Characteristics of Language Teachers

Theme	Distinctiveness
The nature of the subject	Language is more dynamic than other subjects and has more practical relevance to real life.
The content of teaching	Unique in scope and complexity. Teaching a language not only grammar, vocabulary, and the four skills, but also includes a wide range of other issues, such as culture, communication skills, and learning skills.
Methodology	The methodology of language teaching is more diverse, aiming to create contexts for communication and maximize student involvement.
Teacher–learner relationships	In language teaching, there is more communication between the teacher and learners, and more scope for learners to work on themes that are personally relevant to them.

Table 2.4 (continued)

Theme	Distinctiveness
Non-native issues	In language teaching, teachers and learners operate through a language that is not their mother tongue. Teachers are also compared to native speakers of the language.
Teachers' characteristics	For language teachers, characteristics such as creativity, flexibility, and enthusiasm are essential.
Training	A wide variety of recognized language teaching qualifications exists, some as short as four weeks.
Status	Language and language teachers are awarded lower status than subjects and teachers of other languages [subjects].
Errors	Incorrect output by language learners is more acceptable than in other subjects.
Student body	Many more adults study languages than other subjects.
Commercialization	Language teaching is driven more by commercial forces than by other subjects.

Source Borg (2006, p. 24)

Borg's (2006) framework further emphasizes the methodological diversity characteristic of language teaching. Unlike disciplines that rely heavily on routine procedures or content memorization, language education prioritizes interaction, learner engagement, and contextualized communication. Such methodological diversity is not only pedagogically significant but also central to the construction of LTI (De Costa & Norton, 2017). Language teachers must demonstrate flexibility, creativity, and responsiveness as they balance structured instruction with opportunities for spontaneous, learner-driven communication. Within this pedagogical environment, relational dynamics between teachers and learners become particularly significant. Language teachers engage in more sustained and personal interactions with students, addressing not only cognitive but also emotional and cultural dimensions of learning. This relational emphasis distinguishes LTI from broader TI, underscoring the dual importance of instructional expertise and interpersonal sensitivity (Barkhuizen, 2019).

Another defining dimension of LTI concerns non-native speaker status. Many language teachers teach a language that is not their first language, a condition that complicates their professional self-concept and social positioning. These teachers are frequently subjected to implicit or explicit comparisons with native speakers, which may affect perceptions of credibility, legitimacy, and competence. Navigating these comparisons requires language teachers to balance linguistic proficiency and pedagogical expertise. At the same time, non-native language teachers draw on their own experiences as language learners, enabling them to develop heightened empathy and insight into learners' challenges. In this way, they may position themselves as advocates for multilingualism and linguistic diversity. Beyond linguistic identity, broader structural factors, such as the relatively low status of language subjects and the commercialization of language education, further shape LTI. In many educational systems, language teaching is influenced by market forces that prioritize test results, efficiency, and customer satisfaction. These pressures can undermine professional autonomy and self-esteem, compelling language teachers to continuously adapt their identities to shifting institutional and societal expectations. Nevertheless, such challenges may also foster resilience and professional growth as teachers negotiate constraints while striving to maintain pedagogical integrity and communicative authenticity.

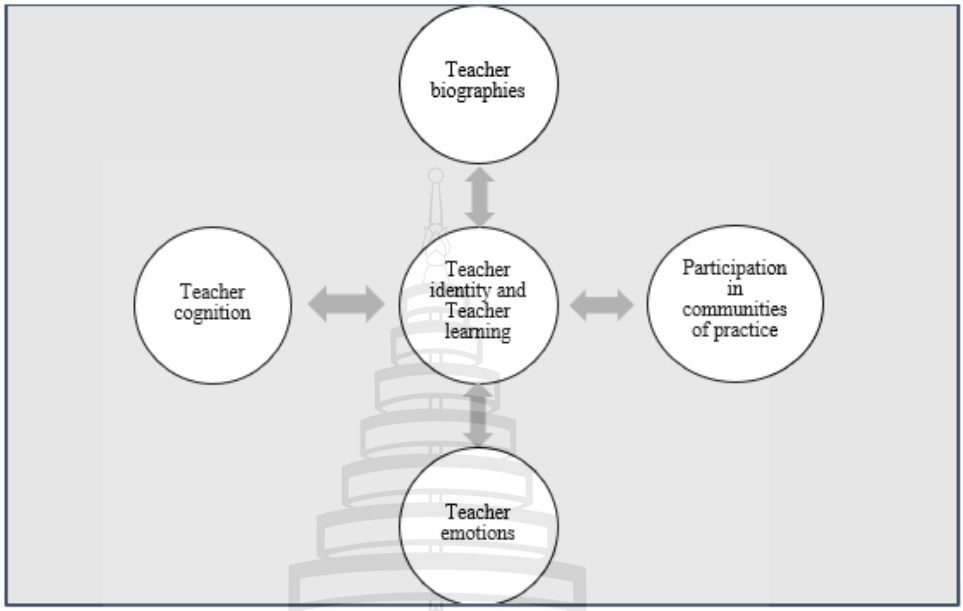
Integrative theoretical frameworks have significantly advanced the understanding of how LTI is constructed and enacted. Varghese et al. (2005) conceptualize LTI as an ongoing, socially situated process rather than a fixed set of internal traits. Drawing on sociocultural and poststructuralist perspectives, they propose the notion of "identity-in-practice," emphasizing that identity emerges through teachers' everyday actions, interactions, and reflections within specific institutional and sociopolitical contexts (Bloomfield, 2010). This perspective marks a shift from viewing identity as something teachers *have* to something they *do*, highlighting the performative and situated nature of language teaching. Within this framework, LTI is shaped through participation in communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991), where engagement with colleagues, learners, and institutional discourses contributes to identity negotiation and transformation.

A central insight of Varghese et al.'s (2005) framework is the recognition of multiple, intersecting identities. Language teachers simultaneously negotiate professional, linguistic, cultural, racial, and national identities, which may align or conflict depending on context. For example, non-native English-speaking teachers may experience tensions between their linguistic identities and their professional authority, particularly in contexts dominated by native-speaker ideologies. Such tensions underscore the inseparability of LTI from issues of power, legitimacy, and language ideology. As Varghese et al. (2005) argue, institutional structures and sociopolitical forces can both constrain and enable teacher agency, shaping how teachers position themselves and are positioned by others.

From a poststructuralist perspective, discourse plays a central role in the construction of LTI. Identity is negotiated through how teachers talk about themselves, how they describe their roles and experiences, and how they are represented within institutional and social discourses. Language, therefore, functions not only as the medium of instruction but also as the site where professional identities are produced, contested, and transformed (Alsup, 2006). Discursive positioning influences how teachers perceive their competence, authority, and professional worth, reinforcing the view of LTI as socially constructed, fragmented, and multiple (Norton, 2006). The framework proposed by Varghese et al. (2005) has informed subsequent research examining identity negotiation across linguistic and cultural boundaries, the relationship between identity and pedagogical decision-making (De Costa & Norton, 2017), and the impact of language policies on teacher agency (Park, 2012).

Yazan's (2018) conceptual framework further enriches LTI scholarship by highlighting the interaction between teacher cognition, sociocultural context, and identity development. His model reflects a shift from purely cognitive views of teacher learning toward socioculturally grounded understandings of professional development. Teacher cognition, including beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes, interacts bidirectionally with identity formation (Borg, 2003, 2009) as teachers engage in reflective practice and participate in communities of practice. Yazan (2018) also highlights the influence of contextual factors operating at both micro levels (e.g., classroom interactions, school culture) and macro levels (e.g., societal norms, cultural expectations). Notably, the framework acknowledges the role of teachers' biographies and emotions in

sustaining professional commitment and resilience, reinforcing the view of LTI as an emotionally grounded, continuously evolving process (Bloomfield, 2010).



Source Yazan (2018)

Figure 2.6 A Conceptual Framework for Language Teacher Identity

A critical evaluation of these perspectives reveals both conceptual strengths and methodological challenges. Borg's (2006) thematic analysis provides a detailed and nuanced account of the distinctive features of language teaching, yet it does not offer a unified theoretical model applicable across diverse contexts. Similarly, integrative frameworks such as those proposed by Yazan (2018) and Pennington and Richards (2016) capture the complexity of LTI but pose challenges for operationalization and empirical measurement. Nevertheless, the convergence of these perspectives underscores a central conclusion: LTI is inherently multifaceted, shaped by the interplay of personal histories, pedagogical practices, linguistic identities, and sociocultural conditions. The collective contributions of Borg (2006), Varghese et al. (2005), and Yazan (2018) demonstrate that LTI is not static or monolithic but is continually constructed, performed, and negotiated through practice, discourse, and participation in social contexts. Recognizing LTI as a distinct yet interconnected construct within TI research is essential to supporting language teachers' reflective

practice, resilience, and professional growth, particularly in complex, multilingual educational settings such as rural schools in Thailand (Cook, 2009).

2.5.3 Pre-Service Teacher Identity in Teaching Practicum

PSET identity formation during the teaching practicum is a complex and consequential process that plays a critical role in shaping future professional practice. Beyond describing how identities emerge, research increasingly emphasizes why identity development matters and what it enables teachers to do in real classrooms. The practicum functions as a key site where PSETs begin to align pedagogical knowledge, beliefs, emotions, and professional responsibilities, thereby transforming from university students into reflective and adaptive practitioners (Cai et al., 2022). Understanding this identity formation process is therefore not merely theoretical; it has direct implications for how teacher education programs prepare PSETs for sustained engagement, resilience, and agency in their future careers.

Teacher education programs provide the initial institutional space in which PSETs explore, negotiate, and rehearse their emerging professional identities (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011). During the practicum, PSETs occupy dual positions as both learners and teachers, a transition that requires a significant shift in self-perception and professional responsibility (Blanks et al., 2013). This shift is not automatic. Instead, it is shaped through guided reflection, mentorship, and situated classroom experience. Groenewald and Arnold (2024) emphasize that while initial identity formation begins during coursework, it is during the practicum that identity becomes enacted, tested, and refined. Consequently, the practicum is not simply a site for applying skills but a formative arena for developing a professional self-concept. This underscores the need for teacher education programs to intentionally design practicum experiences that emphasize identity reflection, rather than treating identity as an implicit by-product of teaching practice.

The interaction between internal belief systems and external teaching realities further highlights the practical significance of TI development. PSETs enter teacher education with deeply rooted beliefs shaped by prior schooling, cultural experiences, and language learning histories. These beliefs strongly influence instructional decision-making, classroom management, and responses to pedagogical challenges (Fives et al., 2014). Research shows that without structured opportunities to examine

and question these beliefs, PSETs may simply reproduce familiar practices rather than develop adaptive and context-sensitive teaching approaches (Korthagen, 2004). From an implications perspective, this suggests that teacher education programs should integrate systematic reflective practices that explicitly address belief revision and identity negotiation, particularly in EFL contexts where linguistic and cultural factors intensify pedagogical tensions.

External influences, especially mentorship and school culture, further shape PSET identity during the practicum and carry long-term consequences for professional commitment and retention. High-quality mentoring provides more than technical guidance; it offers identity affirmation, emotional support, and professional modeling (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). Mentors who acknowledge the identity struggles of PSETs, such as uncertainty, emotional vulnerability, and perceived inadequacy, can help normalize these experiences as part of professional growth. This has direct implications for mentor preparation, suggesting that mentors should be trained not only as supervisors but also as identity mediators who support PSETs' developing sense of legitimacy and agency. In rural EFL contexts, where resources are limited and professional isolation is common, such mentorship becomes even more critical (Gay, 2010).

Importantly, identity formation during the practicum is not linear or conflict-free. As Clarke (2018) and Zembylas (2003) argue, TI development is characterized by tension, contradiction, and emotional labor. These identity struggles are not signs of failure but essential components of professional becoming. Steinberger and Magen-Nagar's (2017) notion of identity as a shifting narrative highlights how PSETs continuously reinterpret their professional selves in response to classroom realities, institutional expectations, and emotional experiences. The implication here is that teacher education programs should not aim to produce uniform or "ideal" teacher identities but should instead support PSETs in navigating uncertainty, ambiguity, and competing demands. This aligns with recent identity-oriented research in journals such as RELC Journal, which emphasizes teacher agency, emotional resilience, and contextual responsiveness as key outcomes of teacher education.

In rural educational environments, the implications of TI development are particularly pronounced. PSETs' beliefs, values, and identities shape how they respond

to challenges such as limited materials, mixed-ability learners, and sociocultural expectations. Teachers with well-developed, value-driven identities are more likely to demonstrate resilience, ethical commitment, and sustained motivation (Day, 2009). Supportive school climates and culturally responsive mentorship can mitigate identity fragmentation and strengthen professional coherence (Seo, 2022). From a policy and programmatic perspective, this suggests that rural practicum placements should not be viewed as merely logistical arrangements but as identity-shaping contexts that require targeted support structures.

Overall, reviewing TI research reveals that understanding TI is not an end in itself but a means to improving teacher preparation, professional sustainability, and instructional quality. While existing studies provide rich insights into how TI develops, they fall short of translating these insights into concrete pedagogical strategies. Nevertheless, a clear implication emerges: effective teacher education must move beyond skills-based training to explicitly address identity, emotion, agency, and context. By embedding reflective practice, mentoring, and community engagement into the practicum, teacher education programs can better support PSETs in developing coherent, resilient, and contextually grounded professional identities. This perspective provides a critical foundation for the present study and informs its discussion and implications, particularly within EFL and rural Thai educational contexts.

2.5.4 Related Studies on Pre-Service English Teacher Identity

Research on PSET identity has increasingly moved away from static, trait-based conceptions toward understanding TI as dynamic, socially constructed, and contextually situated. Scholars emphasize that identity formation is shaped through the interaction of emotional, cognitive, social, and institutional factors, particularly during the teaching practicum, which functions as a critical site for identity negotiation. Early work by Trent (2013), conducted with PSETs in Hong Kong, was instrumental in focusing on the tensions inherent in identity construction. His qualitative study demonstrated that identity conflicts emerge when PSETs' self-perceptions and professional aspirations clash with institutional expectations imposed by teacher education programs and placement schools. Trent (2013) argued that such tensions highlight the need for critical reflection in teacher education, positioning TI

development as a sociocultural and narrative process rather than a purely pedagogical concern.

Subsequent studies have extended this line of inquiry by emphasizing the emotional dimension of TI formation. Teng (2017), using narrative inquiry, revealed how implicit "emotional rules" embedded within school cultures shape PSETs' identity trajectories. His findings illustrated that emotional labor is central to TI development, as PSETs must learn to regulate emotions such as anxiety, frustration, and self-doubt while striving to meet professional expectations. This work marked an important shift in TI research, reinforcing the view that identity development is inseparable from emotional experience and underscoring the need for emotional support mechanisms within teacher education programs.

More recent studies have demonstrated how external disruptions and contextual shifts further complicate PSET identity development. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Choi and Park (2020) found that South Korean PSETs reconfigured their professional identities in response to emergency remote teaching, technological demands, and heightened social responsibility. Their study showed that TI is shaped not only by planned curricular experiences but also by unpredictable sociopolitical and educational changes. Similarly, Ulum (2020) adopted a narrative identity perspective to show that variations in practicum design, supervision styles, and institutional support lead to divergent identity outcomes among PSETs. These findings reinforce calls for more coherent and supportive practicum structures that attend explicitly to identity development rather than assuming it occurs incidentally.

Resilience has also emerged as a key construct in contemporary TI research. Krisdianata and Mbato (2022) demonstrated that resilience-related strategies, such as adaptive help-seeking, emotional regulation, and reflective sense-making, play a central role in sustaining TI during challenging practicum experiences. Importantly, their study positioned resilience not merely as a coping mechanism but as an integral component of identity construction, suggesting that teacher education programs should deliberately cultivate resilience as part of professional identity development.

Research conducted in Thailand provides important context-specific insights into PSET identity formation. Prabjandee (2019) examined Thai PSETs' practicum experiences and found that TI is shaped through the interaction of emotional

responses, classroom practices, and symbolic meanings attached to the teaching role. His findings highlighted the necessity of both technical and psychological support during the practicum. Extending this work, Prabjandee (2020) critically examined Thailand's teacher education curriculum and argued that its segmented structure contributes to fragmented identity development. He identified patterns of both abrupt and gradual identity change, advocating for curricular reform that embeds TI development throughout the entire teacher education program rather than confining it to the practicum.

Complementing this perspective, Nilpriom and Prabjandee (2019) explored the sociocultural dimensions of TI development, demonstrating how school cultures, power relations, and emotional climates influence PSETs' identity negotiation. Their findings align with international research that emphasizes collaborative reflection and mentorship as key supports for identity development. In a related EFL context, Phaethong et al. (2024) examined non-native English-speaking teachers in multilingual schools. They found that supportive institutional environments and professional recognition facilitated positive identity development, challenged deficit-oriented views of non-native teachers, and reinforced the role of sociocultural validation in shaping TI.

Studies focusing on rural teaching contexts further reveal the contextual sensitivity of PSET identity development. Ai et al. (2022) found that rural teaching placements in China enabled PSETs to build social capital through close relationships with students, colleagues, and communities, fostering more holistic and resilient professional identities. Similarly, Mukeredzi's (2016) study of South African PSETs demonstrated that rural practicum experiences disrupted deficit perceptions of rural education and expanded participants' professional aspirations. These studies suggest that rural contexts, while challenging, can serve as powerful sites for identity transformation when adequate support is provided.

However, not all findings portray rural practicums positively. Qin and Villarreal (2018) reported that Chinese PSETs in rural schools struggled to integrate theory and practice, resulting in reduced professional commitment. Mudra's (2024) study of urban PSETs placed in rural settings further highlighted identity tensions arising from cultural unfamiliarity, limited resources, and emotional strain.

Nevertheless, his photovoice-based analysis also revealed significant professional growth, suggesting that identity challenges can become productive when accompanied by reflective opportunities and institutional support.

Despite substantial progress in understanding PSET identity construction, several gaps remain. While existing studies consistently portray TI as dynamic, emotionally mediated, and socially negotiated (e.g., Trent, 2013; Teng, 2017; Flores & Day, 2006), much of the research has focused on urban or generalized teacher education contexts. Fewer studies have examined how rural school environments specifically shape PSET identity, particularly within EFL settings. In Thailand, although research has identified curriculum fragmentation and sociocultural-emotional influences on TI (Prabjandee, 2019, 2020; Nilpriom & Prabjandee, 2019), there remains limited empirical evidence on how rural placements interact with personal beliefs, institutional structures, and affective experiences to shape identity development.

Furthermore, while TI is widely conceptualized as an interaction among personal, professional, and contextual dimensions (Beijaard et al., 2004; Day & Kington, 2008), Thai-based studies have not sufficiently explored how these dimensions intersect with TSE, particularly during the practicum. Given that self-efficacy influences motivation, persistence, and professional agency, examining its relationship with TI is essential for understanding how PSETs sustain and enact their emerging identities in challenging teaching contexts. Addressing this gap provides the rationale for the next section, which examines the interrelationship between TSE and TI and how these constructs mutually reinforce one another in the process of becoming an English teacher.

2.6 Teacher Self-efficacy and Teacher Identity

TSE and TI are widely recognized as central constructs in understanding teachers' professional development, instructional practices, and long-term commitment to the profession. Both concepts have been extensively examined in teacher education research, including studies on English language teachers and PSETs. Despite growing

recognition of their conceptual interdependence, empirical research explicitly examining the relationship between TSE and TI, particularly in ELT contexts, remains limited (Göker, 2020). This section reviews and synthesizes the existing literature to conceptualize the relationship between TSE and TI, with particular focus on English teachers, teaching practica, and under-resourced or rural contexts.

Previous Studies on Teacher Self-efficacy and Identity

TSE refers to teachers' beliefs in their capability to organize and execute actions required to accomplish teaching tasks (Bandura, 1997). In ELT contexts, TSE encompasses beliefs about instructional strategies, classroom management, student engagement, and language-related competencies, such as explaining linguistic concepts, managing communicative activities, and responding to spontaneous learner language use. TI, in contrast, concerns how teachers understand, narrate, and position themselves as professionals within specific social, institutional, and cultural contexts (Sfard & Prusak, 2005; Varghese et al., 2005). For English teachers, TI is further shaped by language-related factors, including non-native speaker status, language ideologies, and the sociopolitical positioning of English within education systems (Barkhuizen, 2017; Block, 2014).

Although TSE and TI are conceptually distinct, scholars increasingly argue that they are mutually constitutive rather than independent constructs. Canrinus et al. (2012) and Van der Want et al. (2019) suggest that teachers' beliefs about their competence influence how they see themselves professionally, while identity perceptions shape how teachers interpret and evaluate their teaching experiences. From this perspective, TSE contributes to the stabilization and strengthening of TI by reinforcing teachers' sense of legitimacy, agency, and professional worth. Conversely, a fragile or conflicted TI may undermine TSE, particularly during early career stages or teaching practicums, when professional roles are still being negotiated.

This reciprocal relationship is particularly significant in ELT and pre-service contexts. PSETs enter teaching practicums with emerging identities that oscillate between "student," "learner," and "teacher." Marschall (2021) found that PSETs who strongly identified themselves as "student teachers" tended to report lower levels of TSE, particularly in classroom management and instructional decision-making. In contrast, those who began to see themselves as legitimate teachers demonstrated

higher TSE and greater professional efficacy. In ELT settings, this identity tension is intensified by concerns about English proficiency, pronunciation, and perceived linguistic authority, which can directly affect efficacy beliefs and professional self-concept (Tutyandari, 2023; Yuso, 2023).

The development of both TSE and TI is embedded within dynamic systems shaped by personal histories, social interactions, institutional structures, and emotional experiences (Cai et al., 2022; Menon, 2020). Bandura's (1997, 2006) four sources of self-efficacy provide a helpful framework for understanding how efficacy beliefs develop during the teaching practicum. These same experiences also function as sites of identity negotiation, suggesting a natural overlap between the development of TSE and TI. Successful classroom experiences not only strengthen efficacy beliefs but also enable PSETs to see themselves as competent teachers. Observing mentor teachers provides models not only for instructional practice but also for "being" a teacher. Feedback and encouragement shape how PSETs interpret their professional legitimacy, while emotional experiences such as anxiety or efficacy influence both efficacy beliefs and identity narratives.

Menon's (2020) study offers one of the most explicit conceptual links between TSE and TI by mapping Bandura's sources of self-efficacy onto Gee's (2000) identity framework. Although conducted in a science education context, this model provides valuable theoretical insights applicable to ELT. In this framework, mastery experiences support discourse identity by enabling PSETs to speak and act like teachers; vicarious experiences foster institutional identity through understanding school norms and professional expectations; social persuasion strengthens affinity identity by cultivating a sense of belonging within professional communities; and emotional regulation contributes to nature identity, shaping how teachers perceive themselves as capable and resilient individuals. This multidimensional view demonstrates that TSE does not merely predict teaching performance but actively contributes to the construction of professional identity.

Empirical evidence from practicum-based studies further supports this interrelationship. Lamote and Engels (2010) found that teaching experiences prompted shifts in both self-efficacy beliefs and professional self-concept, as PSETs developed more realistic understandings of teaching. Canrinus et al. (2012) showed that

beginning teachers with higher TSE were more engaged in reflection, professional learning, and long-term career commitment, suggesting that efficacy beliefs reinforce identity investment. In ELT contexts, similar patterns emerge. Samar et al. (2011) reported that English teachers with strong TSE demonstrated greater enthusiasm, openness to innovation, and professional engagement, all of which contributed to a more robust TI.

The role of mentorship and modeling further illustrates the TSE–TI connection. Nikoçeviq-Kurti (2023) demonstrated that observing mentor teachers during practicum enhanced both student teachers' efficacy beliefs and professional identity formation. Through reflective engagement with mentor practices, student teachers developed efficacy, internalized professional norms, and began envisioning themselves as future teachers. These findings resonate strongly with ELT contexts, where modeling effective language use, classroom interaction, and professional conduct is particularly influential in shaping both efficacy and identity. Reflection has also been identified as a critical mediating process between TSE and TI. Azim (2017) found that reflective journaling during the teaching practicum strengthened both constructs by enabling PSETs to interpret their experiences, recognize growth, and articulate their professional values. For English teachers, reflective practices are essential for negotiating tensions related to language proficiency, instructional authority, and cultural expectations.

Contextual factors, particularly rural and under-resourced settings, further complicate the relationship between TSE and TI. Research indicates that teachers in such contexts face heightened instructional, emotional, and professional challenges. Parks (2017) found that teachers with strong TSE were better able to maintain a positive professional identity despite institutional constraints. In ELT settings, Samar et al. (2011) showed that high-TSE English teachers in rural schools developed resilient identities characterized by adaptability and commitment. These findings suggest that TSE may function as a protective resource that sustains TI in challenging contexts, while TI provides a motivational foundation that supports persistence and agency.

Despite these insights, research integrating TSE and TI within a unified framework remains scarce, particularly in ELT, rural, and non-Western contexts. Many

studies prioritize TSE without examining its identity-related implications, while others focus on TI without systematically addressing efficacy beliefs (Göker, 2020; Garner & Kaplan, 2019). In Thailand, although research has examined TSE and TI separately, little is known about how these constructs interact during rural teaching practicums, where linguistic, cultural, and institutional challenges converge.

In summary, existing literature suggests that TSE and TI are engaged in a dynamic, bidirectional relationship in which each construct both shapes and is shaped by the other. For PSETs, this relationship is particularly significant during teaching practicum, where professional identities are negotiated, and efficacy beliefs are tested in real classroom contexts. However, empirical research that explicitly examines this interaction, especially in rural and EFL settings, remains limited. Addressing this gap is essential to advancing theoretical understanding and informing teacher education practices that support both confident teaching and the development of a sustainable professional identity. This study responds to this need by examining how TSE and TI interact and evolve among PSETs in rural Thai school contexts.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

This study investigates how PSETs develop their TSE and build their TI during their teaching practicum in rural schools in Thailand. To understand these processes, the study uses a conceptual framework (Figure 2.7) that combines Bandura's (1997) Social Cognitive Theory of TSE with sociocultural perspectives on TI construction within the context of rural school placements. The framework shows the dynamic interaction between TSE and TI formation. It emphasizes that these processes are shaped by context and mutually influence one another. The teaching practicum in rural schools provides the overall environment where these constructs interact and evolve.

The teaching practicum is a crucial element of teacher education, providing PSETs with real teaching experiences that connect theoretical knowledge to classroom practice (Farrell, 2008; Zeichner, 2010). In Thailand, rural school placements are essential to the practicum, presenting unique contextual challenges and opportunities that significantly influence the professional development of PSETs. Rural schools face

resource shortages, multi-grade classrooms, socio-economic disparities, and limited access to professional growth (UNESCO, 2014; Buaraphan, 2013). These factors require PSETs to modify their teaching strategies, adopt innovative approaches, and reflect to effectively manage the challenges of rural teaching. However, the rural practicum is not just about its challenges. It also offers valuable opportunities for PSETs to build resilience, foster community involvement, and deepen their understanding of the sociocultural factors that shape teaching and learning (Masinire, 2015; Mukeredzi, 2016). The rural school environment acts as a testing ground where PSETs' beliefs, assumptions, and professional identities are continuously examined and reshaped (Hudson & Hudson, 2019). Consequently, this environment is a crucial part of the conceptual framework, representing the processes of developing TSE and constructing TI.

TSE is explained in this study using Bandura's (1997) Social Cognitive Theory, which describes self-efficacy as individuals' beliefs in their ability to organize and execute the actions needed to handle future situations. In teacher education, TSE refers to PSETs' beliefs in their ability to perform teaching tasks successfully, manage classrooms effectively, engage students, and achieve learning outcomes (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Bandura (1997) identifies four primary sources of TSE: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. During the teaching practicum, PSETs depend on these sources to shape their teaching and learning beliefs. Mastery experiences, or direct successes in the classroom, are considered the most influential because they offer clear evidence of one's abilities (Yada et al., 2021). Vicarious experiences, such as observing mentor teachers and peers, help PSETs imitate effective teaching behaviors and strategies (Richards, 2012). Social persuasion, through feedback and encouragement from mentors, supervisors, and peers, further enhances PSETs' self-efficacy in their teaching skills (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Lastly, managing emotional and physiological responses to stress, anxiety, and fatigue influences how PSETs perceive their teaching competence, particularly in challenging rural environments (Zee & Koomen, 2016).

It is worth noting that TSE is dynamic and evolves through ongoing interactions with contextual, social, and emotional factors (Bandura, 1986). The rural

practicum environment, with its unique demands and supports, becomes a crucial space where PSETs' self-efficacy beliefs are tested, challenged, and possibly strengthened. Successful mastery experiences in overcoming resource constraints or engaging students in linguistically diverse classrooms can enhance TSE, while persistent difficulties without adequate support may diminish TSE and motivation (Barni et al., 2019).

TI is viewed as a dynamic and evolving construct shaped by personal experiences, social interactions, and contextual engagements (Beijaard et al., 2004; Sachs, 2005). It is not merely a self-perception but an ongoing process of becoming, influenced by how teachers perceive themselves and how others perceive them within their professional environments (Varghese et al., 2005). The teaching practicum, especially in rural schools, serves as a crucial space for TI formation, as PSETs manage the challenges of teaching and begin to internalize their roles as educators. TI formation is closely connected to reflective practice. Through reflection, PSETs critically evaluate their teaching experiences, assess their successes and challenges, and connect their actions with their beliefs and values (Farrell, 2022). The practicum facilitates this process by exposing PSETs to essential classroom dynamics, encouraging them to question preconceptions about teaching and adapt to contextual realities.

In rural settings, where PSETs face various challenges, reflective practice becomes essential for developing a resilient and adaptable TI. Moreover, social interactions also significantly influence TI. Relationships with mentor teachers, peers, students, and the broader school community shape how PSETs view themselves as teachers (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011). Positive recognition and validation from these groups can boost feelings of belonging and professional TSE, while negative experiences may lead to TI conflicts and self-doubt (Kelchtermans, 2005; Barbour & Lammers, 2015). Teacher agency is another crucial aspect of TI development (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011). Agency refers to PSETs' ability to make deliberate choices, exercise professional judgment, and cope with institutional limits (Priestley et al., 2015). During the rural practicum, exercising agency might include adapting teaching practices for resource-limited settings, advocating for students' needs, or

initiating collaborative projects within the school. These agentic actions help develop a TI that responds to its context and is grounded in professionalism.

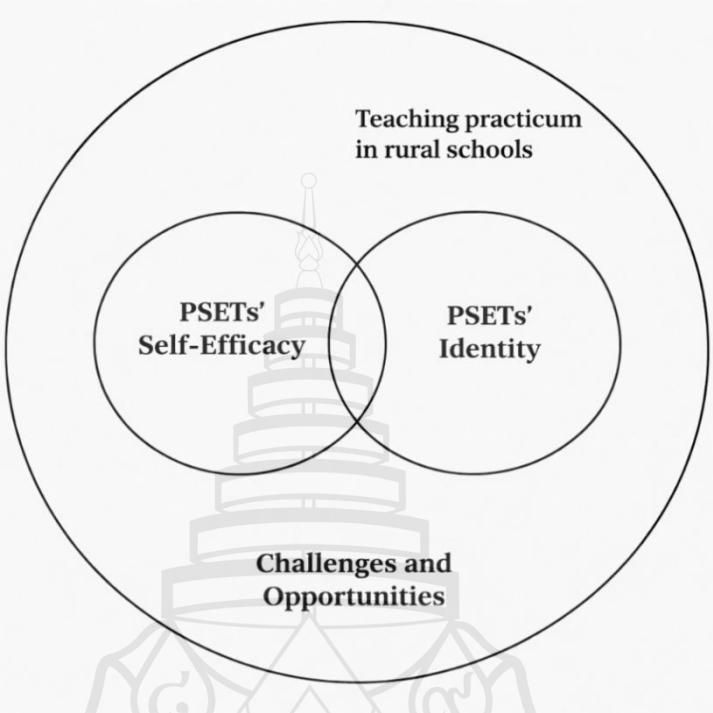


Figure 2.7 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework of this study proposes that TSE and TI are interconnected constructs that influence one another in the teaching practicum setting. As illustrated in the conceptual diagram, the development of TSE and TI among PSETs intersects, with each one affecting the growth of the other. Experiences that build TSE, such as successful lesson delivery or effective classroom management, also reinforce professional identity by fostering a sense of competence and belonging (Barbour & Lammers, 2015). Conversely, a developing TI that values adaptability, resilience, and reflective practice can enhance TSE by equipping PSETs with the mindset and strategies needed to manage teaching challenges. The rural practicum setting reflects these processes, providing a unique environment where the interaction between TSE and TI becomes especially evident. Factors such as resource availability, community engagement, school culture, and the quality of mentorship shape the experiences that influence both TSE and TI. For example, a PSET who successfully adapts a lesson plan using locally available materials (mastery experience) not only enhances their TSE but also begins to perceive themselves as a resourceful and

adaptable educator (identity formation). Furthermore, critical incidents, such as significant professional growth or challenges, can trigger the simultaneous development of TSE and TI. These events encourage PSETs to reflect on their beliefs, address gaps between expectations and realities, and redefine their professional self-concept in response to contextual demands (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

This conceptual framework guides the study's exploration of how PSETs' self-efficacy develops during their teaching practicum, how TSE contributes to TI formation, and how contextual factors create challenges and opportunities for professional growth. It emphasizes that TSE and TI are not straightforward outcomes but are co-constructed through iterative processes of action, reflection, and interaction within the rural practicum environment. By placing TSE and TI within the broader context of rural school teaching practicums, this framework recognizes the complex, situated, and dynamic nature of teacher development. It offers a comprehensive perspective on how PSETs address their professional roles, beliefs, and practices within the context of both challenges and supports. This understanding is important for shaping teacher education programs that are responsive to the realities of rural teaching and that adequately prepare PSETs for the multifaceted demands of the profession.

In summary, I have reviewed key theoretical and empirical literature related to TSE and TI, with particular emphasis on PSETs in practicum contexts. Drawing on Bandura's social cognitive theory and the TSE framework proposed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, the review highlighted how self-efficacy is constructed through mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and emotional and physiological states. These constructs provide a foundational lens for understanding how PSETs develop efficacy and agency in their instructional roles, especially in challenging educational environments.

The chapter also examined TI as a dynamic, socially constructed process shaped by personal histories, professional experiences, and contextual influences. Within ELT, TI development is closely intertwined with language proficiency, pedagogical beliefs, classroom practices, and interactions with students, mentors, and institutional structures. The reviewed studies demonstrated that teaching practicums play a critical role in identity negotiation, as PSETs move from theoretical preparation

to real classroom practice and begin to position themselves as legitimate members of the teaching profession.

Furthermore, the literature review underscored the unique challenges of rural teaching contexts, including limited instructional resources, heavy workloads, multi-grade classrooms, and reduced professional support. These conditions place additional demands on PSETs and significantly influence both their self-efficacy beliefs and identity formation. Despite growing interest in rural education, the review revealed a noticeable gap in qualitative, longitudinal research that closely examines how PSETs experience and navigate these contexts over time.

By synthesizing literature on TSE, TI, ELT practicum experiences, and rural education, I establish a strong conceptual foundation for the present study. The identified gaps in existing research justify an in-depth qualitative case study on PSETs in Thai rural schools. Guided by this theoretical and empirical grounding, the next chapter outlines the research methodology adopted to explore how TSE and identity develop through lived practicum experiences in rural ELT settings.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will outline the research methodology employed in this study and explain how the selected approaches address the research questions and achieve the study's objectives. I will begin by describing the overall research design and the rationale for the methodological choices underpinning the investigation. I will then present the research setting, providing contextual information about the environment in which the study was conducted. This will be followed by an explanation of how research participants and cases were selected, including the criteria and procedures used to ensure their relevance to the study. I will further detail the research instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis strategies adopted to generate and interpret the data. Finally, the ethical considerations guiding the study's design and implementation will be discussed to ensure the research's integrity and trustworthiness.

3.1 Epistemological Stance

This study is grounded in a constructionist epistemological stance, drawing on Crotty's (1998) framework for understanding meaning-making in social inquiry and Merriam's (1998) work on qualitative case study research. From a constructionist perspective, meaning is not discovered as an objective truth embedded in the world; instead, it is constructed through individuals' interactions with their social, cultural, and institutional contexts (Crotty, 1998). Knowledge, therefore, emerges from participants' interpretations of their lived experiences rather than from detached observation. I adopted this epistemological position because it is particularly appropriate for examining how PSETs make sense of their TSE and TI during their teaching practicum in rural EFL contexts.

In contrast to positivist epistemologies, which assume a single, measurable reality that can be objectively captured through standardized instruments, constructionism acknowledges multiple realities shaped by individuals' experiences,

histories, and sociocultural contexts. As Merriam (1998) explains, “reality is not an objective entity; rather, there are multiple interpretations of reality” (p. 22). By adopting a constructionist stance, I explored how PSETs constructed their understandings of themselves as English teachers, their perceived teaching competence, and their professional roles within the specific sociocultural conditions of rural Thai schools. Within ELT, such meanings are shaped not only by individual beliefs but also by classroom interaction, language use, learner diversity, institutional expectations, and broader educational discourses surrounding English education.

A central assumption of constructionist inquiry is that knowledge is co-constructed through interaction between the researcher and participants. Merriam (1998) emphasizes that qualitative research involves interpretive engagement, noting that “the final product of this type of study is yet another interpretation by the researcher of others’ views filtered through his or her own” (p. 22). In this study, I served as the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. All stages of the research process, including participant recruitment, interviews, classroom observations, document analysis, coding, and interpretation, were mediated through my professional background, prior knowledge, and experiential understanding of English language teacher education. Consequently, the meanings generated regarding TSE and TI were not treated as objective facts but as interpretive constructions developed through sustained engagement with participants’ accounts of their ELT practicum experiences.

Given this interpretive role, reflexivity was an essential methodological principle guiding my inquiry. Reflexivity involved critically examining how my beliefs, assumptions, and prior experiences in English language education shaped my interactions with participants, analytical decisions, and interpretations of the data. Throughout the research process, I engaged in ongoing reflexive practices, including maintaining reflexive journals, writing analytic memos during coding, and revisiting emerging interpretations to identify potential bias or taken-for-granted assumptions. My familiarity with the Thai EFL practicum context provided valuable insider insight into the demands of the curriculum, classroom realities, and the institutional constraints faced by PSETs. At the same time, this positionality required deliberate strategies to enhance analytic rigor, including iterative coding, constant comparison

across data sources, and thick description to ensure that interpretations were firmly grounded in participants' voices.

An additional core feature of constructionist research is its emphasis on context. Merriam (1998) argues that understanding human experience requires close attention to the social, cultural, and institutional settings in which it occurs. Accordingly, I situated PSETs' experiences within the specific realities of rural Thai schools, where limited resources, diverse learner needs, community expectations, and institutional constraints shape English teaching. These contextual conditions significantly influenced how PSETs interpreted their teaching successes and challenges, developed efficacy beliefs, and negotiated their emerging identities as English teachers. By employing a qualitative case study approach, the study enabled a detailed and context-sensitive examination of how TSE and TI were constructed within these ELT-specific environments.

Finally, consistent with a constructionist epistemology, this study did not aim for statistical generalization, which is typically associated with positivist research. Instead, I sought transferability, whereby rich, contextualized descriptions allow readers to determine the relevance of the findings to similar ELT practicum settings (Merriam, 1998). Through detailed accounts of participants' experiences, this study offers insights into the processes of self-efficacy development and identity construction among PSETs that may inform English teacher education programs, particularly those preparing teachers for rural and under-resourced contexts.

3.2 Research Design

In this study, I employed a qualitative case study design, guided by Merriam's (1998) framework, to investigate how PSETs developed TSE and constructed TI during their teaching practicum in rural Thai schools. Merriam (1998) defines a qualitative case study as "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon" (p. 13). In the present study, the bounded phenomenon was the practicum experience of PSETs teaching EFL in rural school contexts. I selected this research design because it enabled an in-depth exploration of participants' lived

experiences and meaning-making processes, which are central to understanding professional development in ELT contexts.

A qualitative case study approach was particularly appropriate because both TSE and TI are complex and multifaceted constructs encompassing cognitive, emotional, social, and motivational dimensions. In ELT research, these constructs are shaped not only by individual beliefs but also by classroom interaction, language use, institutional expectations, and broader sociocultural conditions. Traditional quantitative approaches, such as survey-based measures using Likert-type scales, tend to privilege the cognitive dimensions of TSE and may fail to capture the contextualized, emotional, and relational aspects of teaching English, particularly in challenging or under-resourced environments (Bandura, 1997). Marschall (2022) further argues that understanding TSE requires approaches that closely attend to teachers' lived experiences and personal interpretations, rather than relying solely on numerical indicators. By adopting a qualitative case study design, I examined how PSETs interpreted classroom events, negotiated pedagogical and contextual challenges, and constructed meanings about their competence and professional identity as English teachers.

The teaching practicum in rural EFL settings is a complex, context-dependent process influenced by multiple interacting factors, including learners' English proficiency, the availability of instructional resources, school culture, community expectations, and PSETs' prior beliefs about English teaching and learning. A case study approach allowed me to examine these factors holistically and to explore how they shaped the development of TSE and TI over time. By situating the inquiry in specific rural schools, this study generated insights grounded in the realities of ELT in Thailand, rather than abstracted from their sociocultural and institutional contexts.

According to Merriam (1998), qualitative case studies are characterized as particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic, and all three characteristics were central to this study's design.

First, the study was particularistic, focusing on a specific group of PSETs undertaking their teaching practicum in rural Thai schools. Rather than seeking broad generalization, I examined this group's experiences in detail as novice English teachers navigating the demands of EFL classrooms. This focus enabled a nuanced

understanding of how rural contexts shape teaching practices, professional beliefs, and identity development in ELT.

Second, the study was descriptive, providing rich, detailed accounts of PSETs' practicum experiences. Data were generated from multiple sources, including interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, allowing for a comprehensive portrayal of how participants experienced teaching English in rural schools. I used multiple data sources to support triangulation, ensuring that the complexity of participants' experiences, particularly the emotional, interactional, and linguistic dimensions of teaching English, was adequately represented.

Third, the study was heuristic, aiming to deepen understanding of how TSE and TI develop during the teaching practicum. By examining PSETs' experiences in rural EFL contexts, I sought to generate insights that extend existing knowledge in ELT and teacher education. These insights have practical relevance for designing practicum experiences, mentoring practices, and support structures in English teacher education programs, particularly those preparing teachers for rural and underserved contexts.

An additional defining feature of this research design was its emergent nature. As Merriam (1998) notes, qualitative research is inherently flexible and responsive to the data. In this study, the research process evolved as data collection and analysis progressed, allowing me to refine analytical focus and develop emerging themes in response to participants' experiences. This flexibility was essential for capturing the dynamic and evolving nature of TSE development and TI construction, particularly as PSETs encountered unexpected challenges, critical incidents, and moments of growth during their rural teaching placements. Overall, the qualitative case study design provided a methodologically rigorous and theoretically aligned approach for examining the situated, relational, and developmental processes through which PSETs constructed their self-efficacy and professional identities as English teachers within rural school contexts.

Defining the Case

In line with Merriam's (1998) approach, I conceptualized the case as a bounded system, defined as a specific, clearly defined phenomenon examined in depth. Merriam (1998) defines a case as "a thing, a single entity, a unit around which there

are boundaries" (p. 27). In this study, the case focused on the experiences of PSETs during their teaching practicum in rural schools in Thailand. The boundaries of the case were clearly delineated to ensure a focused and coherent investigation of the phenomenon. These boundaries were defined by three interrelated elements: the participants, the setting, and the timeframe.

The participants were PSETs enrolled in an English language teacher education program who were completing their teaching practicum in rural Thai schools. I selected this group because they were transitioning from theoretical ELT coursework to practical classroom teaching, particularly in EFL contexts. As PSETs, they were required to plan and deliver English lessons, manage EFL classrooms, and respond to learners' linguistic needs in resource-constrained environments. Their experiences and reflections constituted the core of the case and were central to understanding how TSE and TI were constructed during the practicum.

The study was set in rural schools in Thailand, where English is taught as a foreign language and contextual challenges are pronounced. These schools commonly face limited instructional resources, large class sizes, mixed proficiency levels among students, and limited exposure to English outside the classroom. I considered this rural ELT context particularly relevant for examining how these conditions shaped PSETs' teaching practices, their efficacy in teaching English, and their emerging professional identities as English teachers. By focusing on rural schools, this study captured context-specific dynamics of EFL teaching that may differ substantially from those found in urban or well-resourced educational settings.

The timeframe of the case was bounded by the teaching practicum period, which typically lasts several months. In this study, the practicum took place from late October 2024 to mid-March 2025. I selected this period because it represented a critical phase in which PSETs engaged in sustained, authentic ELT, applied pedagogical knowledge from their ELT coursework, and interacted with learners, mentor teachers, and school communities. This practicum period functioned as a formative experience for the development of both TSE and TI, making it an appropriate and meaningful timeframe for examining these processes.

Merriam (1998) emphasizes that case study research is particularly well suited to investigating complex educational phenomena because it allows for in-depth,

context-sensitive exploration. By adopting Merriam's particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic orientation, I examined how PSETs navigated the demands of teaching English during their practicum, developed instructional efficacy, and negotiated their emerging identities as English language teachers within rural school contexts. Consistent with Merriam's (1998) position, this case study does not aim for statistical generalization. Instead, I sought to generate contextually grounded insights that may be transferable to similar ELT practicum settings, particularly those involving rural schools and EFL instruction. The findings offer implications for English teacher education programs seeking to better prepare PSETs for teaching in comparable contexts.

3.3 Research Settings

This study was conducted during the teaching practicum, a core component of the Bachelor of Education in English program (four-year track) at Sueksa University (pseudonym). The English major curriculum is designed to progressively develop PSETs' linguistic competence, pedagogical knowledge, and professional identity. As shown in Table 3.1, the curriculum moves from foundational English language development in the early years toward pedagogical application and a full-time teaching practicum in the final year. This structure places particular emphasis on the teaching practicum as a capstone experience in which PSETs are expected to integrate theoretical knowledge, English language proficiency, and classroom practice. Consequently, the practicum provides a critical context for examining the development of TSE and TI, particularly when placements occur in rural and under-resourced EFL school settings.

Table 3.1 Overview of the English Major Curriculum at Sueksa University

Year of Study	Curriculum Focus	Representative Courses / Learning Areas
Year 1	Foundations of English Language and Education	Basic English Skills, English Grammar, Listening and Speaking, Introduction to Education, Educational Psychology
Year 2	Language Development and Pedagogical Introduction	Reading and Writing in English, English Phonetics and Pronunciation, Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), Educational Measurement and Evaluation
Year 3	Pedagogical Skills and Pre-Practicum Preparation	English Curriculum and Materials Development, Classroom Management, Instructional Technology, Research in Education, Pre-Practicum Training
Year 4	Teaching Practicum and Professional Integration	Teaching Practicum in Schools (Internship), Reflective Teaching, Seminar in ELT

The teaching practicum, officially referred to as Internship IV, was designed to support PSETs' transition from theoretical learning in university-based coursework to hands-on practice in authentic school contexts. According to the Teacher Professional Experience Training Manual (2023), this internship provides an immersive professional experience in which PSETs apply their pedagogical knowledge, ELT skills, and classroom management strategies under the supervision of mentor teachers. The practicum objectives outlined in the manual are organized into three domains:

1. Characteristics: PSETs are expected to develop a professional commitment to teaching and demonstrate desirable values, including ethical conduct, responsibility, self-discipline, and care for learners. This domain emphasizes professional attitudes and interpersonal relationships within school communities.

2. Knowledge: PSETs are required to develop both academic and professional knowledge, including English subject-matter expertise and pedagogical knowledge essential for effective ELT and collaboration with colleagues.

3. Technical Methods: PSETs are expected to acquire practical teaching skills, problem-solving abilities, and competencies related to instructional management, learner development, and engagement with school communities.

As discussed in Section 2.2.2, the PSET program was restructured from a five-year to a four-year model (Chailom, 2019), following international teacher education frameworks adopted in countries such as Finland and Singapore. This reform was initiated by the Office of the Higher Education Commission (2015) to address 21st-century educational demands, enhance teaching quality, and streamline program duration while maintaining academic rigor. A key outcome of this reform was the redesign of the teaching practicum into a progressive, four-year model, with a practicum component embedded in each year of study.

Under this model, the practicum spans four years and totals 12 credits, with clearly defined objectives and responsibilities at each stage. The structure reflects a competency-based approach to teacher education by emphasizing experiential learning, sustained school engagement, and gradual professional development. Accordingly, each practicum stage is designed to incrementally enhance PSETs' pedagogical knowledge, instructional skills, and professional efficacy as English teachers.

In the early years, the practicum emphasizes classroom observation and instructional assistance, enabling PSETs to become familiar with school environments, English teaching practices, and learner characteristics. As PSETs progress, they engage in collaborative teaching and instructional experimentation, applying ELT methodologies in increasingly complex classroom situations. In the final year, they assume full responsibility for teaching English classes over an entire semester, functioning as novice professionals under mentor supervision.

Table 3.2 The New Structure of Teaching Practicum

Course code/name	Year/Semester	Objectives	Duration
SIL 1801 School-based practicum 1	1/Semester 2	Observing the teacher's teaching and students to know the contexts	Three weeks
SIL 2801 School-based practicum 2	2/Semester 2	Being a teaching assistant and participating in the teaching and learning process	Three weeks
SIL 3801 School-based practicum 3	3/Semester 2	Engaging in pair or group teaching (Teaching experiments, applying methods and strategies)	Three weeks
SIL 4801 School-based practicum 4	4/Semester 2	Teaching an entire semester in a school	One semester

The first-year practicum (SIL 1801) focuses on understanding school contexts. During these three weeks, PSETs observe classroom instruction, learner behavior, classroom management, and school culture. This stage supports the initial development of professional awareness by allowing PSETs to critically observe English teaching practices before taking on instructional responsibilities.

In the second-year practicum (SIL 2801), PSETs serve as teaching assistants. Over three weeks, they actively support mentor teachers by assisting with lesson preparation, classroom activities, and learner support. This stage contributes to the development of early TSE, particularly through interaction with learners and understanding of English language learning processes, while maintaining close guidance from experienced teachers.

The third-year practicum (SIL 3801) introduces collaborative teaching through pair or group instruction. This three-week stage emphasizes applying ELT methodologies and conducting instructional experimentation, providing PSETs with opportunities to refine teaching strategies and bridge theory–practice gaps in a supportive environment.

The fourth-year practicum (SIL 4801) represents the culmination of the program. During this one-semester placement, PSETs assume full responsibility for

planning, teaching, assessing, and managing English language classes. This phase requires sustained engagement with real classroom challenges and institutional expectations, making it a critical period for developing TSE and consolidating TI. Accordingly, this study focused specifically on the fourth-year complete teaching practicum, as it represents the most intensive and formative stage of PSETs' professional development as English teachers.

Selected School Context

This study involved three PSETs, each placed in a different rural school located in three districts. The schools were purposefully selected to represent variation within rural educational contexts and to enable an in-depth examination of how contextual differences shaped the development of TSE and TI during the teaching practicum. The selection criteria included school size, student population, level of education offered, and distance from urban centers, as these factors are known to influence teaching conditions, instructional demands, and professional learning opportunities in rural EFL settings.

All participating schools offered kindergarten and primary education, while two schools also provided lower-secondary education. Although all three schools were classified as medium-sized under local educational standards, they differed in student enrollment, geographic location, and organizational structure. These contextual variations created distinct teaching environments, which in turn shaped the practicum experiences and professional development trajectories of the participating PSETs. An overview of the key characteristics of the selected schools is presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Description of the Selected Schools

School	Distance from City (km)	Student Population	School Size	Type
A	68	158	Medium	Lower-secondary
B	41	207	Medium	Primary
C	28	217	Medium	Lower-secondary

The selected schools varied in rurality, as reflected in their distance from the nearest urban center. The schools were located between 28 km and 68 km from the city, which affected access to educational resources, infrastructure, and professional

support. Schools located farther from urban centers, such as School A, faced greater logistical challenges, including limited access to teaching materials, fewer opportunities for professional development, and reduced institutional support. These constraints required PSETs to rely more heavily on personal initiative, adaptability, and problem-solving skills, all of which are closely related to TSE development.

In contrast, schools located relatively closer to urban areas, such as Schools B and C, benefited from comparatively better access to resources and infrastructure. However, these schools still exhibited common characteristics of rural education, including a limited number of English teachers, heavy teaching workloads, and diverse levels of learner proficiency. As a result, PSETs were required to adjust their instructional strategies and classroom management approaches to meet varied learner needs, contributing to ongoing identity negotiation as novice English teachers.

Differences in the level of education offered further shaped PSETs' teaching experiences. In School B, which provided only primary education, the PSET primarily taught young learners and focused on foundational English skills, such as basic vocabulary, phonics, and simple communicative activities. In contrast, Schools A and C included lower-secondary levels, requiring PSETs to teach older students and address more complex language content, including grammar, reading comprehension, and basic writing. Teaching across different age groups and proficiency levels required PSETs to modify instructional approaches, assessment practices, and teacher–student interaction styles, thereby influencing both their sense of instructional competence and their emerging professional identities.

Overall, the inclusion of three rural schools with varied contextual characteristics enabled this study to examine how differences in rural school environments mediated PSETs' experiences, shaped their interpretations of teaching challenges and successes, and contributed to the development of TSE and TI throughout the entire teaching practicum.

3.4 Research Participants

This study employed purposive sampling to select participants who could provide rich, in-depth insights into the development of PSETs' TSE and TI during their teaching practicum in rural school contexts. Purposive sampling, a non-random selection strategy commonly used in qualitative research, was particularly appropriate because it enabled me to intentionally select participants whose experiences were directly relevant to the research focus and theoretical framework (Creswell, 2007). Rather than seeking statistical generalization, this approach prioritized information-rich cases that could illuminate the complex, situated processes through which TSE and TI are constructed during the practicum.

The participant selection criteria were designed to identify PSETs with meaningful, diverse practicum experiences in rural EFL settings and the capacity to articulate reflective accounts of their professional development. Specifically, participants were required to meet the following criteria:

1. Enrollment in the Internship IV course in the Bachelor of Education (English) program at Sueksa University during the 2024 academic year.
2. Completion of a teaching practicum in a rural school, thereby engaging directly with the contextual challenges and opportunities of rural education.
3. Willingness and ability to participate in the study, including reflecting on and clearly articulating their practicum experiences (Stake, 1995).

Of the 48 PSETs enrolled in Internship IV, 17 were assigned to rural school placements. Although all 17 PSETs had relevant practicum experience, this study purposefully selected three participants for in-depth exploration to enable a detailed, case-oriented analysis while maintaining variation in teaching backgrounds and perceived levels of TSE. This small number of cases was consistent with qualitative case study research, which emphasizes depth of understanding over breadth (Merriam, 1998).

Table 3.4 Participants of the Study

No.	Aspect	Number
1.	PSETs enrolled in the 'Internship IV' academic year 2024	48
2.	PSETs undertaking teaching practicum in rural schools	17
3.	Selected participants (cases)	3

Internship IV was the final and most comprehensive stage of the teacher education program, requiring PSETs to complete a full-semester teaching practicum at certified Participatory or Partnership Schools approved by the Teachers Council of Thailand. During this internship, PSETs assumed primary responsibility for classroom teaching, including lesson planning, instructional delivery, assessment, classroom management, and participation in school activities. This immersive experience marked a critical transition from university-based coursework to professional teaching practice and provided an ideal context for examining changes in TSE and TI.

Despite having multiple placement options, only 17 PSETs chose rural school settings. These schools were characterized by limited infrastructure, small student populations, and constrained instructional resources, conditions that differed markedly from those in urban and suburban schools. PSETs who voluntarily selected rural placements therefore offered a distinctive perspective on how TSE and professional identity develop under challenging and resource-limited EFL teaching conditions. Their experiences provided valuable insights into how contextual demands shape novice English teachers' beliefs, practices, and emerging professional identities.

3.4.1 The Case Selection

The final selection of three participants was conducted through a multi-stage process designed to ensure that the cases represented a range of TSE levels among PSETs teaching in rural schools. This systematic approach strengthened the rigor of the case selection and enhanced the study's capacity to capture variation in TSE development and its relationship to TI formation. The selection process involved three main stages, as outlined below.

Stage 1: Preliminary Observations and Rapport Building

Between July and August 2024, I conducted preliminary classroom observations at Sueksa University and engaged informally with PSETs to gain an

initial understanding of their motivations for selecting rural practicum placements. During this period, I also observed their interactions and teaching-related discussions and expressed expectations regarding the practicum. These early engagements served two purposes: first, to build rapport and trust with potential participants; and second, to gain contextual insight into the range of beliefs, concerns, and aspirations held by PSETs before entering rural school settings. Establishing rapport at this stage was essential to ensure that participants later felt comfortable sharing honest reflections on their teaching experiences, challenges, and professional development.

Stage 2: Identifying Diverse Levels of TSE

Following the preliminary observations, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) was administered on September 27, 2024, to the 17 PSETs undertaking teaching practicums in rural schools. The TSES is a widely used and validated instrument for measuring teachers' self-efficacy across three core domains of teaching practice:

1. Student Engagement – the extent to which teachers feel confident in motivating students and fostering active participation in learning.

2. Instructional Strategies – teachers' perceived capability to design, deliver, and adapt instruction to meet diverse learner needs.

3. Classroom Management – teachers' efficacy in managing student behavior, maintaining discipline, and creating an effective learning environment.

Administering the TSES provided quantitative evidence of variation in TSE levels among the PSETs. This step was critical in ensuring that the subsequent case selection was grounded in empirical data rather than subjective judgment. The TSES results enabled me to identify distinct efficacy profiles and ensured that the selected cases reflected the complexity and diversity of TSE development within rural ELT contexts.

Stage 3: Selecting Three Cases with Varied TSE Levels

Based on the analysis of the TSES results, three participants were purposefully selected to represent high, moderate, and low levels of TSE, respectively:

1. High TSE case: This participant demonstrated strong efficacy across all three TSES domains, indicating a high level of perceived competence in engaging students, employing instructional strategies, and managing classrooms.

2. Moderate TSE case: This participant exhibited a balance of efficacy and uncertainty, with identifiable strengths alongside areas of difficulty in teaching practice.

3. Low TSE case: This participant reported considerable doubts regarding their ability to engage learners, implement effective instructional strategies, and manage classroom behavior.

Including participants with varied TSE levels enabled a nuanced examination of how differences in efficacy beliefs influenced PSETs' adaptation to rural teaching environments, their instructional practices, and their emerging professional identities. Selecting three cases also supported an in-depth, case-oriented analytical approach consistent with qualitative case study research (Merriam, 1998). A larger number of cases may have limited the depth of individual analysis, while a smaller number could have reduced the diversity of perspectives.

The TSES-informed selection process enhanced the study's credibility and methodological rigor by providing a clear empirical rationale for participant differentiation. This approach facilitated a rich, context-sensitive exploration of how TSE, both strong and fragile, shaped the development of TI among PSETs in rural ELT contexts.

3.4.2 The Case

In this section, I describe the three selected cases to provide contextual background for the analysis. The three participants, all 22 years old, had prior teaching experience and were placed in diverse rural schools across four districts. Their placements covered a variety of grade levels, school types, and teaching environments, ensuring that the study captured a wide range of rural practicum experiences. By working in different schools with varied student populations, classroom structures, and resource levels, each participant contributed a distinct perspective to the study.

The three PSETs were assigned to various schools, ranging from small, multi-grade primary schools to medium-sized institutions that included lower-secondary levels. Their teaching assignments differed: some taught early primary education, while others taught upper primary or lower secondary students. This variation allowed me to examine differences in instructional demands, student engagement strategies,

and classroom management challenges across contexts. Table 3.5 presents the demographic characteristics and practicum placements of the three participants.

Table 3.5 The Demographics and Placement Details

Category	Ariya	Kuzan	Maysa
Age	22	22	22
Gender	Female	Male	Female
English Learning Background	Began learning English in Grade 4 at a rural public school	Learned English from primary school with intense family exposure	Early exposure to English through tutoring and media
Assigned English Subjects (Practicum)	Basic English (Grades 7–9)	English for Communication (Grades 4–6)	Integrated English Skills (Grades 7–8)
Medium of Instruction	Mainly Thai	Mainly Thai	Thai–English
Initial English Teaching Self-Efficacy	Low	Medium	High
Prior ELT Experience	A few weeks teaching English in a rural primary school	Informal English teaching at his father's school	English tutor at a private language center

Case 1: Ariya

Ariya is a 22-year-old PSET enrolled in an English education program. Unlike many of her peers, she did not initially aspire to become a teacher. Prior to entering the program, she envisioned a future in fields such as logistics, international business, or the airline industry, professions she associated with English use, global communication, and mobility. Her decision to pursue a teaching degree was primarily shaped by family influence, particularly the belief that teaching offers long-term stability and secure employment.

This background played a significant role in shaping Ariya's early sense of TI. Rather than entering the program with a strong commitment to teaching, she

approached it with a sense of responsibility and compliance, which initially made her identification with the role of an English teacher fragile. Although she recognized the importance of English as an international language, she expressed uncertainty about her ability to teach it effectively, particularly in formal classroom settings.

In terms of ELT experience, Ariya had completed two semesters of teaching English at a primary school before her practicum. However, these experiences were limited in scope and did not involve full instructional responsibility. As a result, she perceived herself as lacking sufficient pedagogical efficacy and practical competence, contributing to her self-assessed low level of TSE at the outset of the practicum. She reported particular concerns about managing learners, sustaining classroom interaction, and using English confidently as the medium of instruction.

Ariya entered the practicum with a developing but uncertain TI and low self-efficacy in ELT. Her background positions her as a case through which I explore how externally shaped motivations may influence the development of TI and self-efficacy during the practicum.

Case 2: Kuzan

Kuzan is a 22-year-old PSET whose entry into the profession was strongly influenced by family background. His father is an English teacher, and this close exposure played a central role in shaping Kuzan's educational pathway. Despite this influence, Kuzan initially resisted the idea of becoming a teacher. His early experiences as an English learner were characterized by strict, form-focused, and repetitive instructional practices, leading him to associate English learning with pressure rather than enjoyment.

Over time, Kuzan's perspective shifted as his father emphasized the practical value of English for academic advancement and social mobility. This pragmatic view, rather than an intrinsic interest in teaching, motivated Kuzan to enroll in an English education program. Upon entering the program, he viewed teaching as a viable and meaningful career option, although his sense of identity as an English teacher was still developing.

Prior to the practicum, Kuzan gained informal ELT experience by assisting with English instruction at his father's school. This exposure provided early familiarity with classroom routines and learner interaction, contributing to a moderate sense of

efficacy in his instructional abilities. Consequently, he self-assessed his initial TSE level as medium. He perceived himself as capable of managing classroom procedures and explaining lesson content, but remained uncertain about lesson design and responsiveness to diverse learners' needs.

Kuzan entered the practicum with a pragmatic and evolving TI. His case allows me to examine how intergenerational influence and early exposure to teaching interact with self-efficacy and identity development in ELT contexts.

Case 3: Maysa

Maysa is a 22-year-old PSET whose pathway into teaching was shaped by personal experiences, community ties, and early educational influences. Raised by her grandmother in her hometown, she developed a strong attachment to her local school and viewed education as a meaningful way to contribute to her community. A particularly influential experience occurred during her lower-secondary education, when she was inspired by an energetic English teacher intern, shaping her positive perceptions of ELT.

Although Maysa initially wished to pursue a degree in Liberal Arts, financial constraints led her to enroll in the Faculty of Education at Sueksa University. Rather than diminishing her motivation, this redirection strengthened her commitment to teaching, aligning with her interest in English and her desire to support learners in contexts similar to her own schooling experience.

Before the practicum, Maysa gained ELT experience at a language tutoring center, where she designed lessons, interacted with learners, and used English as the primary medium of instruction. As a result, she entered the practicum with strong English proficiency and teaching abilities, as evidenced by her self-assessed high TSE score. She perceived herself as capable of engaging learners, managing classroom interaction, and adapting instructional materials.

Maysa entered the practicum with a relatively well-established English TI grounded in intrinsic motivation and positive role models. Her case contrasts with the other participants and enables me to investigate how prior ELT experience and strong efficacy beliefs shape identity development during the practicum.

3.5 Research Instruments

To understand the complex processes underlying the development of PSETs' TSE and TI during teaching practicums in rural schools, I employed three qualitative research instruments: semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and self-reflection writings. These instruments were selected for their ability to generate rich, contextualized data on ELT practices, beliefs, and professional experiences. Together, they supported the study's interpretivist orientation and phenomenological focus by capturing participants' lived experiences from multiple perspectives and across different stages of the practicum. The use of multiple instruments also enabled data triangulation, thereby enhancing methodological rigor and credibility.

3.5.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were employed as the primary method of qualitative data collection. I selected this interview format because it offers flexibility for exploring participants' individual ELT experiences while ensuring that core topics related to TSE and TI development are systematically addressed. Merriam (1998) notes that semi-structured interviews are particularly suitable for qualitative case studies because they balance guided inquiry with openness, allowing researchers to explore participants' unique perspectives in depth. Similarly, Patton (2002) emphasizes that this format enables the interviewer to probe, clarify, and follow up on participants' responses, which is essential when examining complex professional learning processes.

Table 3.6 Characteristics of Semi-Structured Interviews

Category	Semi-Structured Interviews
Purpose	To explore PSETs' perceptions, beliefs, and experiences related to ELT during the rural teaching practicum
ELT Focus	English teaching practices, use of English as the medium of instruction, ELT challenges, instructional decision-making
Type of Data	Verbal narratives and in-depth responses
Timing	Pre-practicum, during practicum, and post-practicum
Key Constructs	Teacher Self-Efficacy (instructional strategies, classroom management, student engagement); Teacher Identity
Role in the Study	Primary data source for understanding changes in beliefs, identity, and self-efficacy in ELT contexts

In this study, semi-structured interviews were especially appropriate given the dynamic and evolving nature of TSE and TI construction among PSETs in rural ELT contexts. Teaching practicum experiences vary considerably depending on school conditions, student proficiency levels, instructional resources, and expectations regarding the use of English as a medium of instruction. A strictly structured interview format would have constrained participants' ability to articulate these context-specific experiences. In contrast, the semi-structured approach allowed participants to reflect freely on their English teaching practices, discuss challenges related to classroom communication and language use, and describe critical incidents that influenced their efficacy and sense of identity as English teachers.

The interview protocol was developed and reviewed in August 2024 to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research objectives. To establish content validity, I sought expert feedback from three specialists in qualitative research and teacher education, each with extensive experience in ELT and case study methodology. The validation process employed the Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) form (Turner, 2010) to evaluate the alignment between individual interview questions and the study's objectives. The experts rated each item using a three-point scale (+1, 0, -1) and provided qualitative feedback.

Following this process, the completed evaluation forms were returned to me with recommendations for minor revisions. These suggestions primarily addressed the wording and clarity of specific questions, the sequencing of items to facilitate a more logical conversational flow, and the depth of prompts designed to elicit richer ELT-related narratives. In response, I revised the interview protocol by refining question phrasing, reorganizing specific sections, and adding follow-up prompts where appropriate to enhance coherence and analytical depth.

The finalized interview protocol was organized into three chronological phases, reflecting the developmental trajectory of PSETs' TSE and TI across the practicum period. The first phase, conducted before the practicum, focused on participants' motivations for becoming English teachers, their prior ELT experiences, and their expectations for teaching English in rural areas. This phase established a baseline understanding of participants' initial beliefs and concerns. It also included a self-assessment of TSE in ELT-related domains such as lesson planning, classroom management, student engagement,

and the use of English in instruction. Participants rated their perceived efficacy on a five-point scale and then elaborated on their ratings through open-ended responses.

The second phase, conducted during the practicum, examined participants' ongoing experiences teaching English in rural classrooms. Questions in this phase focused on instructional challenges, classroom interaction, student engagement, and adaptations to contextual constraints such as limited resources or mixed-proficiency learners. This phase also explored changes in TSE as participants reflected on how their real classroom experiences influenced their efficacy and instructional decision-making. Professional identity development was addressed by inviting participants to describe moments of affirmation, doubt, and pedagogical adjustment as they negotiated their roles as English teachers.

The third and final phase, conducted after the practicum, encouraged participants to reflect holistically on their professional growth. Participants compared their initial expectations with their actual experiences of rural ELT and evaluated how successes and challenges influenced their TSE and TI. This phase explicitly examined the role of the four sources of TSE, mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological states (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), in shaping their development as English teachers. Participants also reflected on how the practicum informed their future aspirations and long-term commitment to ELT.

By structuring the interview protocol in this developmental sequence, I ensured that the interviews captured both continuity and change in participants' TSE and TI formation. The semi-structured format provided sufficient flexibility for participants to share detailed, contextually grounded ELT narratives while maintaining a clear analytical focus aligned with the study's research questions.

3.5.2 Classroom Observations

I employed classroom observations to obtain firsthand, contextualized insights into PSETs' ELT practices, TSE, and professional identity development during their rural teaching practicum. Classroom observation is a well-established qualitative research method that allows researchers to document instructional behaviors, interactions, and classroom dynamics as they occur, offering perspectives that extend beyond self-reported data (Merriam, 1998). Patton (2002) notes that observations enable the collection of naturalistic data that reflect actual teaching practices rather than retrospective accounts,

which may be influenced by memory or personal interpretation. Similarly, Creswell (2013) emphasizes that classroom observations help researchers understand contextual factors such as student engagement, teacher–student interaction, and classroom management within authentic learning environments.

In this study, classroom observations were particularly valuable for examining how PSETs enacted their TSE and emerging TI in English-language classrooms. TSE in ELT is manifested through observable instructional behaviors, such as language choice, lesson delivery, interactional patterns, and classroom presence. By directly observing English lessons, classroom management strategies, and student engagement, I was able to verify, supplement, and contextualize data obtained from interviews and self-reflection writings. This triangulation enhanced the credibility and depth of the findings. Observations were conducted throughout the teaching practicum and followed a structured protocol with two phases: pre-practicum observations (orientation phase) and in-practicum observations (teaching practice phase).

Table 3.7 Characteristics of Classroom Observations

Category	Classroom Observations
Purpose	To document actual ELT practices and classroom interactions in real instructional settings
ELT Focus	Lesson delivery in English, teacher–student interaction, classroom language use, ELT classroom management
Type of Data	Field notes and observation records
Timing	Orientation phase and throughout the teaching practicum
Key Constructs	Enacted Teacher Self-Efficacy; Identity-in-practice
Role in the Study	To validate and contextualize interview and reflection data through direct observation

The pre-practicum observations took place during the orientation period, before the PSETs formally assumed teaching responsibilities. This phase focused on familiarizing PSETs with the rural school context and collecting baseline data on their initial adjustment to the practicum. During this phase, I observed three main aspects: (1) the school environment, including physical facilities, availability of ELT resources, and contextual constraints typical of rural schools; (2) PSETs' interactions with school personnel, such as

mentor teachers and administrators, to assess their professional efficacy, adaptability, and emerging sense of TI; and (3) opportunities for engagement with the local community, including interactions with students' families and community members. These observations helped establish an initial understanding of how PSETs perceived their placement and positioned themselves as English teachers within the school community.

The in-practicum observations focused on PSETs' actual ELT practices. I observed lesson planning and delivery, instructional strategies, classroom language use, and techniques employed to promote student engagement in ELT classrooms. Particular attention was paid to classroom management strategies, including how PSETs established rules, responded to student behavior, and maintained a productive learning environment. I also examined the overall classroom atmosphere to determine whether it supported interaction, participation, and language learning.

In addition to general instructional practices, I systematically documented indicators of TSE and TI. Instances demonstrating efficacy and instructional competence, such as effective use of English, successful adaptation of ELT materials, and positive teacher–student interactions, were recorded as evidence of strengthening TSE. Conversely, moments of uncertainty or challenge, including difficulties with language use, lesson pacing, or student engagement, were noted to identify factors influencing professional growth. Observations also focused on how PSETs enacted their roles as English teachers, including their instructional decisions, authority, and alignment of their practices with personal beliefs about language teaching. Through these observations, I captured the dynamic, evolving nature of TSE and TI as PSETs transitioned from learners to practicing English teachers in rural school contexts.

3.5.3 Self-Reflection

Self-reflection writing was used in this study to capture PSETs' introspective accounts of their experiences, emotions, and professional development as English language teachers during the teaching practicum. Reflection is widely recognized as a central component of teacher education, as it enables PSETs to critically examine their experiences and refine their pedagogical beliefs and practices (Schön, 1983). Dewey (1933) emphasized reflection as a purposeful, active process that promotes professional growth, while Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory highlights reflection as a key mechanism by which experience is transformed into learning.

In ELT contexts, reflective writing is critical because it helps PSETs analyze language use, instructional effectiveness, and learner responses across diverse classroom settings. Previous research suggests that structured reflection enhances self-awareness, problem-solving skills, and professional identity development among language teachers (Farrell, 2016). Reflection also contributes to the development of TSE, as teachers who critically analyze their teaching experiences are better able to recognize successful strategies, address challenges, and build efficacy in their instructional abilities (Dumlao & Pinatacan, 2019). Based on these theoretical foundations, I employed self-reflection writings to explore how PSETs constructed their TI and developed TSE in ELT during their rural practicum.

Table 3.8 Characteristics of Self-Reflection

Category	Self-Reflection Writings
Purpose	To capture PSETs' reflective accounts of their English teaching experiences and professional growth
ELT Focus	Emotional responses to teaching English, perceived instructional development, and language use in the classroom.
Type of Data	Written reflections (narrative and analytic)
Timing	During the practicum and post-practicum
Key Constructs	Reflective Teacher Self-Efficacy; Teacher Identity Construction
Role in the Study	To provide introspective, longitudinal insights into identity and self-efficacy development

Self-reflection writings were collected at two key points: during the teaching practicum and after its completion. A structured reflection template was used to guide participants' writing while allowing flexibility for personal expression. During the practicum, reflections focused on ongoing ELT experiences and real-time classroom challenges. PSETs were asked to describe specific English lessons, teaching activities, or classroom interactions that they found significant, highlighting both successes and difficulties. They reflected on their emotional responses to teaching English, including feelings of efficacy, anxiety, frustration, or achievement. Participants were also

encouraged to analyze ELT-related challenges, such as classroom management, student engagement, or adapting English materials to learners' proficiency levels, and explain how they addressed these issues. A central focus of these reflections was the connection between classroom experiences and TSE, particularly how specific teaching events influenced their efficacy in using English and managing ELT classrooms in rural contexts.

Post-practicum reflections focused on the practicum's broader impact on participants' professional development. PSETs were prompted to reflect on how their experiences shaped their teaching philosophy, TSE, and TI as English educators. They evaluated changes in their beliefs about student-centered learning, classroom management, and the role of English in rural education. This stage also encouraged participants to identify lasting developments in their TSE, recognizing both areas of increased efficacy and areas of uncertainty in ELT. A key component of the post-practicum reflections was examining TI development, including participants' commitment to teaching English, their self-perceptions as English teachers, and their willingness to work in rural or underserved school contexts. To support depth and authenticity, participants were encouraged to reflect openly and could incorporate additional materials, such as images or audio recordings, to enrich their written narratives.

Together with interviews and classroom observations, self-reflection writings contributed to a comprehensive, multi-dimensional understanding of how PSETs developed TSE and TI in ELT during their rural teaching practicum. By combining reflective, observational, and interview data, I ensured methodological triangulation, thereby strengthening the study's credibility and depth (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

I employed a systematic three-phase data collection procedure designed to capture the development of PSETs' TSE and TI throughout their rural teaching practicum. Each phase is aligned with specific research objectives, ensuring a structured yet flexible approach to collecting rich, in-depth qualitative data. The data collection process integrated semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and

self-reflection writing to provide a comprehensive, multi-perspective understanding of participants' ELT experiences over time.

Prior to data collection, I obtained formal ethical approval from the university and permission from the participating schools. The university issued official letters to inform school administrators and mentor teachers of the study's objectives, procedures, and data collection methods. This process ensured transparency and institutional support for the research. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before their involvement. Each PSET received detailed information about the study's purpose, data collection procedures, confidentiality measures, and ethical considerations. Participants read and signed consent forms confirming their voluntary participation and their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty. An overview of the three data collection phases is presented in Table 3.9

Table 3.9 Description of Research Phases

Phase	Objectives	Methods	Frequency of Data Collection	Number of sources obtained
1	Establish a baseline understanding of PSETs' backgrounds, self-efficacy, and expectations.	1. Observations	1	3
		2. Interviews	1	3
2	Real-time data collection	1. Observations	1	3
		2. Interviews	1	3
		3. Reflections	1	3
3	Assessing the impact of the teaching practicum on the PSETs' self-efficacy and TI	1. Interviews	1	3
		2. Reflections	1	3
	Total			**21**

3.6.1 Phase 1

The first phase of data collection aimed to establish a baseline understanding of the PSETs' backgrounds, initial beliefs about ELT, levels of TSE, and expectations prior to their full assumption of teaching responsibilities. This phase was essential for documenting pre-practicum perceptions and served as a reference point for examining changes in TSE and TI across later phases. To achieve this objective, I employed classroom observations and semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection methods.

Phase 1 data collection took place between October 28, 2024, and November 7, 2024. As the PSETs were placed in different rural schools across multiple districts, I scheduled one full day for each participant to allow sufficient time for travel, contextual observation, and in-depth interviews. This approach enabled me to engage meaningfully with each school environment and to document contextual factors influencing ELT in rural settings.

I conducted pre-practicum observations in the morning, typically between 6:45 and 9:00 a.m. These observations focused on the school context, the availability of ELT resources, and initial interactions among PSETs, students, mentor teachers, and school staff. Particular attention was paid to how PSETs positioned themselves as emerging English teachers and to their perceived readiness to assume teaching roles. I observed participants in their natural school environments before conducting interviews, which provided valuable contextual insights that informed subsequent interview discussions.

Following the observations, I conducted individual semi-structured interviews with each participant. Each interview lasted between 45 minutes and one hour and explored participants' motivations for becoming English teachers, expectations for the rural teaching practicum, and concerns related to lesson planning, classroom management, student engagement, and English language use. Interviews were conducted separately at each school to ensure focused, uninterrupted conversations.

To enhance data accuracy and depth, I recorded detailed field notes in the afternoon following each day of observations and interviews. Writing field notes immediately after data collection helped minimize recall bias and preserve contextual detail. These notes included descriptions of school settings, participant behaviors, key

interview moments, and emerging patterns related to TSE and TI development in ELT contexts. I also recorded reflective memos to capture initial interpretations and unexpected observations that informed subsequent phases of data collection.

3.6.2 Phase 2

The second phase of data collection focused on capturing PSETs' real-time ELT experiences during the practicum. This phase was critical for understanding how participants enacted instructional strategies, managed classroom challenges, and negotiated their developing professional identities within rural ELT contexts. To obtain a dynamic and comprehensive perspective, I employed classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and self-reflection writings.

Phase 2 data collection occurred between December 18, 2024, and January 24, 2025. This phase extended longer than initially planned due to unexpected disruptions in the school calendar, including Sports Day activities, holiday celebrations, Boy Scout Camp, the New Year break, and academic competitions. These events required flexibility in scheduling and adjustments to the original data collection plan to ensure that observations and interviews did not interfere with participants' teaching responsibilities.

Classroom observations during Phase 2 focused on participants' actual ELT practices. Depending on school schedules, observations were conducted in either the morning or the afternoon and lasted one to two class periods (approximately one to two hours per participant). During these sessions, I observed the lesson structure, instructional techniques, use of English and Thai, classroom management strategies, student engagement, and indicators of TSE, such as lesson delivery efficacy and responsiveness to unexpected classroom situations. A structured observation protocol guided the process to ensure consistency across cases.

Immediately after each observation, I conducted one-on-one semi-structured interviews lasting 45 minutes to one hour. These interviews allowed participants to reflect on lessons learned, explain their instructional decisions, and discuss the challenges they encountered in teaching English in rural classrooms. The interviews also examined changes in participants' TSE, particularly in relation to lesson planning, student engagement, classroom management, and language use. Combining

observations with follow-up interviews enabled me to capture both observable teaching behaviors and participants' subjective interpretations of their experiences.

In addition to observations and interviews, self-reflection writings were collected to encourage deeper personal engagement with the practicum experience. Recognizing participants' heavy workload, I allowed flexibility in submission deadlines and invited PSETs to submit reflections through Google Forms at their convenience. I provided open-ended guiding questions to prompt analysis of teaching experiences, emotional responses, successes, and challenges. These reflections offered valuable insights into participants' internal thought processes, professional growth, and evolving perceptions of themselves as English teachers.

3.6.3 Phase 3

The final phase of data collection aimed to evaluate the overall impact of the teaching practicum on PSETs' TSE and TI in ELT. This phase focused on participants' retrospective reflections and consolidation of learning following the completion of their practicum. Data were collected through post-practicum semi-structured interviews and self-reflection writings.

Phase 3 data collection occurred between February 24, 2025, and March 6, 2025. Compared with earlier phases, scheduling during this period was more flexible because teaching and administrative responsibilities were reduced near the end of the academic semester. This allowed for longer, uninterrupted interviews.

I conducted individual post-practicum interviews lasting between 45 minutes and one hour. These interviews encouraged participants to reflect on their overall professional growth and compare their initial expectations with their actual teaching experiences. Interview questions focused on three main areas: (1) changes in TSE before and after the practicum, particularly in lesson planning, student engagement, and classroom management; (2) development of TI, including shifts in teaching philosophy, professional values, and commitment to ELT; and (3) future career goals and intentions regarding teaching in rural or similar contexts. These discussions provided insights into how participants perceived themselves as English teachers moving forward.

In addition to interviews, self-reflection writings were collected to promote deeper, individualized analysis of the practicum experience. Participants were again

given flexibility in submission timing and were provided with guiding questions to structure their reflections. These reflections enabled participants to articulate key moments of change, persistent challenges, and areas for continued professional development. The reflective writings complemented interview data by allowing participants to express thoughts and emotions without time constraints, offering a nuanced understanding of how their TSE and TI evolved throughout the practicum.

3.7 Data Analysis

The dataset for this study consisted of multiple qualitative data sources collected from three PSETs during their rural teaching practicum. These data were generated across three phases of the practicum and were designed to capture both developmental change and contextual complexity within ELT settings. In total, the dataset comprised:

1. Nine semi-structured interviews (three interviews per participant), conducted before, during, and after the practicum;
2. Classroom observation field notes totaling approximately 36 hours, collected during orientation and teaching phases, documenting English instructional practices, classroom interactions, language use, and contextual features of rural schools;
3. Six self-reflection writings (two per participant), completed during and after the practicum, focusing on ELT experiences, emotional responses, perceived instructional competence, and professional identity development.

In qualitative case study research, data collection and data analysis occur concurrently rather than sequentially (Merriam, 1998). Following this principle, I began analyzing data immediately after each phase of data collection. This iterative and reflexive approach allowed me to engage continuously with the data, refine emerging interpretations, and deepen my understanding of participants' experiences. As outlined in the data collection procedures, intentional pauses were incorporated between phases to allow time for preliminary analysis. This process enabled me to

identify early patterns, adjust interview prompts as needed, and explore key themes related to ELT self-efficacy and TI in greater depth in subsequent phases.

3.7.1 Transcription and Translation Process

The first step in the data analysis process was to transcribe all interview data. In total, 18 interviews were conducted in Thai, the participants' first language. Conducting interviews in Thai helped create a comfortable and supportive environment, allowing participants to express their thoughts, emotions, and teaching experiences more naturally and in greater depth. I transcribed each interview verbatim to preserve linguistic detail and meaning, including pauses, hesitations, intonation, and emotional expressions, as these features can provide important interpretive insights during qualitative analysis.

After transcription, I translated the interview data into English to facilitate coding, thematic analysis, and presentation of findings to an international academic audience. Throughout the translation process, I took care to preserve the original meaning, cultural context, and pedagogical nuances related to ELT. To enhance reliability and reduce the risk of misinterpretation, I sought assistance from a colleague with extensive expertise in translation studies and English language education. This colleague reviewed and refined the translated transcripts to ensure linguistic accuracy and contextual appropriateness. This collaborative process strengthened the trustworthiness of the translated data and ensured that participants' voices were authentically represented in subsequent stages of analysis.

3.7.2 Coding as the Data Analysis Method

After completing transcription and translation, I employed coding as the primary method of qualitative data analysis. Coding is a fundamental qualitative technique that enables researchers to organize, categorize, and interpret large volumes of textual data systematically (Saldaña, 2013). This method was particularly appropriate for the present study, as it allowed me to examine how PSETs constructed TSE and TI through their ELT experiences in rural school contexts.

Following Charmaz's (2006) constructivist grounded theory principles, I approached coding as an inductive and flexible process, allowing meanings and patterns to emerge from the data rather than imposing predetermined categories. I employed a three-stage coding process, initial coding, axial coding, and selective

coding, to move from descriptive labeling to more abstract thematic interpretation. This structured approach enabled me to address the research questions systematically while remaining grounded in participants' lived experiences of ELT.

During the initial coding stage (open coding), I examined the data line by line and segmented it into smaller meaning units. Each segment was assigned a descriptive code that captured its core idea. To preserve participants' voices and meanings, I frequently used in vivo coding, drawing directly on participants' own words (Saldaña, 2013). This strategy was beneficial for capturing how PSETs articulated their efficacy, doubts, and identity negotiations as English teachers.

In the axial coding stage, I explored relationships among initial codes and grouped them into broader categories. At this stage, I focused on identifying connections between instructional practices, contextual challenges, and sources of TSE in ELT settings. For example, codes such as "mentor feedback on English use," "peer encouragement," and "student responses in English" were clustered under the category "social persuasion and instructional support." Similarly, codes such as "adapting English lessons," "using online materials," and "teaching with limited ELT resources" were grouped into the category "adaptive ELT strategies in rural contexts."

In the final stage, selective coding, I identified core themes that integrated the categories and directly addressed the study's research questions. This stage involved refining and synthesizing categories into overarching themes that explained how TSE and TI developed through real-world English teaching experiences. Themes such as "confronting ELT realities in rural schools," "forming TI through instructional struggle," and "building TSE through meaningful English teaching interactions" captured the dynamic and interconnected nature of participants' professional development. Table 3.6 presents examples of the coding process from raw data to final themes.

Table 3.10 Example of Coding Process

Raw Data (Interview Excerpt)	Initial Codes (Open Coding)	Axial Codes (Categories)	Selective Coding (Themes)
"At first, I was nervous about controlling the class in English. However, after my mentor encouraged me, I felt more confident."	Classroom management anxiety; Mentor support; Growing efficacy	Social persuasion and support; TSE development	Building ELT efficacy through mentorship
"We had no textbooks, so I searched for materials online and created my own English lessons."	Lack of ELT resources; Lesson adaptation; Creativity	Adaptive ELT strategies; Instructional flexibility	Overcoming ELT constraints in rural schools
"I started to see myself as a real English teacher when students understood my lesson."	Identity realization; Student engagement	Professional identity affirmation	Transformational moments in ELT practice

By applying this systematic coding process across interviews, classroom observations, and self-reflection writings, I ensured consistency and integration in the analysis. Analyzing multiple data sources enabled me to develop a comprehensive, nuanced understanding of how PSETs' TSE and TI evolved in rural ELT contexts.

3.7.3 Within-Case and Cross-Case Analysis

To further strengthen the analysis, I employed both within-case and cross-case analytical strategies, as recommended by Merriam (1998). This combined approach enabled me to preserve the depth and uniqueness of each participant's experience while also identifying broader patterns across cases.

I began with within-case analysis to examine each PSET as an individual case. Each participant's interviews, classroom observations, and self-reflection writings were analyzed holistically to construct a detailed narrative of their ELT practicum experience. This approach allowed me to identify critical incidents, instructional challenges, sources of TSE, and moments of identity negotiation specific to each

PSET. Conducting within-case analysis first ensured that cross-case generalizations did not overshadow individual voices and contextual details.

After completing the within-case analysis, I conducted a cross-case analysis to systematically compare the three cases. At this stage, I examined similarities and differences in how PSETs developed TSE and TI across diverse rural ELT settings. This comparison highlighted shared patterns, such as the importance of mentor support and successful English instruction, while also revealing variations shaped by school context, resource availability, and personal backgrounds.

The integration of within-case and cross-case analyses enhanced the study's credibility and theoretical contribution. Within-case analysis provided deep, context-sensitive insights into individual ELT experiences, whereas cross-case analysis enabled broader interpretation of how TSE and TI development unfolded across cases. Together, these analytical strategies allowed the study to balance rich description with analytic generalization, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of PSETs' professional development during rural ELT practicums.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Conducting research involving human participants, particularly in educational and ELT contexts, requires a rigorous commitment to ethical principles that protect participants' rights, dignity, and well-being. Accordingly, this study adhered to institutional regulations and internationally recognized research ethics standards. Ethical considerations guiding the study included informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, institutional approval, minimization of risk, and transparency throughout the research process.

3.8.1 Informed Consent and Participant Autonomy

Prior to data collection, I provided all participating PSETs with comprehensive information about the study's purpose, objectives, procedures, potential risks, and anticipated benefits. Written informed consent forms were distributed and explained in detail. These forms clearly stated that participation was voluntary and that

participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or negative consequences.

To ensure complete understanding and participant autonomy, I encouraged PSETs to ask questions and seek clarification before signing the consent forms. This process emphasized transparency and supported participants in making informed, independent decisions regarding their involvement in the study.

3.8.2 Confidentiality and Data Protection

Protecting participants' confidentiality was a fundamental ethical principle in this study. I assigned pseudonyms to all participants to ensure anonymity in interview transcripts, classroom observation notes, self-reflection writings, and research reports. In addition, identifying information related to schools, locations, and individuals was removed or anonymized to prevent traceability.

All data were stored securely on password-protected and encrypted digital devices, with access limited solely to me as the researcher. Any hard-copy materials were kept in locked storage. Throughout data analysis and reporting, I carefully reviewed all excerpts and quotations to ensure that no information could be used to identify participants or their practicum schools. These measures ensured that participants' personal, academic, and professional information remained protected throughout the research.

3.8.3 Voluntary Participation and Right to Withdraw

Participation in this study was entirely voluntary, and no form of pressure or coercion was applied. I clearly communicated to participants that their decision to participate or withdraw would not affect their academic evaluation, relationships with supervisors or mentor teachers, or future professional opportunities. Participants were reminded of their right to withdraw at multiple points during the study, particularly during interviews and reflective writing tasks. This emphasis on voluntariness reinforced participant autonomy and ensured that continued participation was based solely on informed and willing consent.

3.8.4 Ethical Approval and Institutional Oversight

Before commencing the study, I obtained ethical approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Mae Fah Luang University (Certificate of Approval No. COA 183/2024). The IRB reviewed the research design, data collection procedures,

participant protection measures, and data management strategies to ensure compliance with ethical standards. This approval confirmed that the study met institutional and regulatory requirements and that appropriate safeguards were in place to protect participants throughout the research process.

3.8.5 Minimization of Risk and Psychological Well-Being

Although the study posed minimal risk and was conducted within a professional educational setting, I took deliberate steps to safeguard participants' psychological well-being. Some research activities, such as interviews or self-reflection on challenging ELT experiences, could evoke discomfort or emotional distress. To address this, I used supportive, flexible interviewing techniques that allowed participants to pause, skip questions, or discontinue participation at any time.

Participants were also informed of available counseling and professional support services if they needed assistance beyond the scope of the study. These measures ensured that participant well-being was prioritized throughout the research process.

3.8.6 Transparency, Reciprocity, and Respect for Participants

This study emphasized transparency and respectful researcher–participant relationships. I maintained open communication with participants throughout data collection and analysis, providing opportunities for clarification, follow-up questions, and additional input. Upon completion of the study, I shared a summary of the research findings with participants to acknowledge their contributions and demonstrate how their experiences informed the study's conclusions.

By engaging in this reciprocal process, I aimed to honor participants' time, effort, and insights, uphold ethical integrity, and contribute meaningfully to scholarly discussions on TSE and TI development in ELT contexts.

In conclusion, I have outlined the methodological framework employed to investigate the development of TSE among PSETs during their rural teaching practicum in Thailand. Grounded in a qualitative, interpretive research paradigm, the study was designed to capture participants' lived experiences and meaning-making processes within authentic ELT contexts. By situating the inquiry in real rural school environments, the methodology enabled an in-depth exploration of how contextual,

emotional, and social factors shaped participants' self-efficacy beliefs as emerging English language teachers.

The use of multiple data collection methods, semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and self-reflective writings enabled methodological triangulation and strengthened the credibility of the findings. These complementary instruments provided rich, nuanced insights into both the PSETs' internal perceptions and their external teaching practices. Thematic analysis was systematically employed to identify patterns across the data while remaining sensitive to individual developmental trajectories, ensuring that participants' voices were represented authentically and ethically.

Furthermore, rigorous ethical considerations were integrated throughout the research process to protect participants' rights, autonomy, and well-being. Institutional approval, informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation were carefully upheld, reflecting adherence to both institutional and international research ethics standards. These measures were significant given the vulnerable position of PSETs navigating challenging rural ELT contexts.

The methodological approach adopted in this study provides a robust foundation for addressing the research questions and contributes methodological rigor to qualitative research in ELT and teacher education. The following chapter presents and analyzes the findings, focusing on how PSETs' self-efficacy evolved during their rural teaching practicum and the key experiences that shaped this development.

CHAPTER 4

PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL TEACHING PRACTICUM

In this chapter, I will present the findings addressing the first research question: How does the self-efficacy of PSETs develop during their teaching practicum in Thai rural schools? Drawing on data from semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and self-reflection, I examine how TSEs of three PSETs evolved as they navigated the pedagogical, emotional, and institutional challenges of teaching English in under-resourced rural school contexts.

The findings reveal that TSE development was neither linear nor uniform. Instead, it emerged as a dynamic and context-sensitive process shaped by participants' prior experiences, beliefs about English teaching, interactions with mentors and students, and the structural conditions of rural schools. Participants' efficacy in teaching English fluctuated as they encountered mismatches between theoretical preparation and classroom realities, negotiated multiple professional roles, and gradually accumulated practical teaching experience.

The analysis is organized thematically into three interconnected stages of TSE development. The first theme, Entering the Unknown: Divergent Beginnings and the Fragile Foundations of Self-Efficacy, explores participants' initial orientations toward becoming English teachers and highlights how family influence, prior schooling, and teacher education shaped their early TSE beliefs. The second theme, Confronting Reality: From Expectation to Reality Shock, captures participants' transition from university-based preparation to real classroom practice, where they faced pedagogical complexity, emotional strain, and institutional constraints that challenged their perceived teaching competence. The final theme, Developing TSE Through Lived Experience, illustrates how participants gradually reconstructed their TSE through mastery experiences, mentorship, social support, and emotional resilience within the practicum setting.

Table 4.1 provides an overview of the themes, subthemes, and key findings related to Research Question 1.

Table 4.1 A Short Summary of the Findings (Research Question 1)

Research Question	Theme	Subtheme	Summary
1. How does PSETs' self-efficacy develop during their teaching practicum in Thai rural schools?	Entering the Unknown: Divergent Beginnings and the Fragile Foundations of Self-Efficacy	Chosen by Others, Questioned by Self	Ariya entered the teaching practicum primarily due to parental influence rather than personal commitment. Her emotional detachment from teaching English led her to question her teaching competence and long-term suitability for the profession.
		Equipped but Uncertain in an Inherited Role	Kuzan's early exposure to strict English instruction and familial expectations shaped his teaching identity. Despite strong academic preparation, he struggled with a fear of making mistakes and persistent self-doubt regarding his English proficiency and teaching ability.
		Passion with Purpose: Transforming Early Inspiration	Maysa's strong interest in English and positive role models contributed to a high initial TSE. Even when confronted with rural teaching challenges, her student-centered beliefs sustained her motivation and efficacy.
	Confronting Reality: From Expectation to Reality Shock	Surviving the System: Emotional Strain and Institutional Neglect	Ariya was required to teach independently due to her mentor's absence while also managing administrative and extracurricular duties. These demands caused emotional exhaustion and reduced her teaching to a survival-oriented practice.
		Institutional Promises and Ground Realities	Kuzan's placement in a so-called "model school" revealed severe understaffing and weak classroom control. He struggled with discipline, lesson flow, and persistent doubts about his competence in English teaching.

Table 4.1 (continued)

Research Question	Theme	Subtheme	Summary
		The Weight of Multifaceted Teacher Roles	Maysa was required to teach multiple subjects, manage school operations, and work with limited resources. These overlapping responsibilities intensified emotional pressure and tested her professional resilience.
	Developing TSE Through Lived Experience	A Little Success Matters	Participants' TSE strengthened through minor but repeated teaching successes, such as effective lesson delivery, improved classroom management, and positive student responses in English lessons.
		Learning from Significant Others	Mentors, peers, and family members served as important models. Observing teaching strategies and receiving guidance helped participants bridge the gap between ELT theory and classroom practice.
		Their Words Truly Warmed My Heart	Positive feedback from mentors, students, peers, and parents enhanced participants' efficacy, sense of belonging, and willingness to persist despite challenges.
		Wow, I Really Did All That?	Participants experienced emotional breakdowns, fatigue, and self-doubt; however, reflection, emotional regulation, and social support enabled them to rebuild TSE and sustain professional growth.

4.1 Entering the Unknown: Divergent Beginnings and the Fragile Foundations of Teacher Self-Efficacy

This chapter focuses exclusively on three PSETs—Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa—to present a clear, coherent account of how English teaching self-efficacy TSE emerged and evolved during their rural teaching practicum. Although all three participants were enrolled in the same English teacher education program and undertook their practicum in rural schools, they entered the classroom with distinct English learning histories, prior ELT experiences, and initial levels of efficacy in using English for instruction. These differences shaped how they perceived the practicum, how they responded to early challenges, and how they positioned themselves as English teachers.

Across the cases, the initial stage of the practicum was characterized by uncertainty about teaching English in contexts where students had limited exposure to the language, instructional resources were scarce, and English was rarely used beyond the classroom. Classroom observations revealed that early anxieties were not primarily about general teaching routines, but about English-specific concerns, such as explaining vocabulary and grammar in accessible ways, managing classroom interaction when students were reluctant to speak English, and deciding when to rely on Thai (L1) versus English (L2) as the medium of instruction. These ELT-related decisions became critical sites where participants' self-efficacy was tested and negotiated.

The three cases illustrate divergent beginnings. Ariya entered the practicum with low self-efficacy in English teaching, expressing doubts about her pronunciation, her use of English in the classroom, and her ability to sustain student engagement in English lessons. Kuzan began with moderate efficacy, drawing on prior informal English teaching experience, yet remained uncertain about adapting English content for mixed-ability learners. In contrast, Maysa demonstrated relatively high initial self-efficacy in teaching English, grounded in her background as a private English tutor and her familiarity with communicative activities. However, even for Maysa, the rural classroom introduced new challenges that complicated her sense of competence.

This section establishes a clear analytical structure that allows us to trace how English teaching self-efficacy was initially fragile, uneven, and closely tied to participants' English-related experiences. The following sections draw on interview excerpts, ELT-focused classroom observations, and reflective writings to examine how specific teaching moments, such as managing English-only activities, responding to student silence, or improvising materials, shaped the early foundations of each PSET's self-efficacy and emerging TI.

4.1.1 Chosen by Others, Questioned by Self

Ariya's early practicum experience reveals how fragile English teaching self-efficacy can emerge when entry into the profession is shaped more by external expectations than by personal commitment. Although Ariya began her practicum with a genuine desire to build rapport with students and create a supportive classroom atmosphere, her pathway into ELT was not self-directed. Instead, it was primarily shaped by parental influence, leading to persistent self-questioning about her legitimacy and effectiveness as a future English teacher. As she reflected:

"*Honestly, I never wanted to be a teacher. When I was in Grade 12 and had to choose a university major, I wanted to study logistics… My parents suggested that I study to become an English teacher since English is essential for daily life.*"

Ariya (Interview 1, November 5, 2024)

This account highlights a key tension underlying Ariya's initial self-efficacy in teaching English. While her parents viewed English as a useful, practical subject, Ariya did not initially see English instruction as central to her identity or aspirations. This lack of personal ownership shaped how she evaluated her early teaching performance, particularly on ELT-specific tasks. Classroom observations during Ariya's first weeks of teaching revealed that she appeared socially confident and approachable, smiling, circulating the classroom, and encouraging students in Thai. However, when lessons required extended use of English, such as explaining grammar points, giving instructions for communicative activities, or responding to spontaneous student questions in English, Ariya's efficacy visibly declined. In one observed Grade 8 lesson on basic sentence structure, Ariya relied heavily on Thai to explain English concepts, switching to English only to read textbook examples. When students

appeared confused, she quickly reverted to Thai explanations rather than attempting to paraphrase or provide scaffolding in English. This pattern suggests that her self-efficacy was stronger in general classroom interaction than in English-mediated instruction, a core component of ELT.

Ariya herself acknowledged these uncertainties when reflecting on her teaching preparation. While she felt relatively comfortable managing students and maintaining rapport, she expressed concern about lesson planning and pedagogical decision-making in English lessons. She noted her frustration with instructional practices she had experienced as a student, particularly the frequent use of worksheets without sufficient explanation. From her perspective, such practices placed pressure on learners and conflicted with what she had learned at university about effective English teaching. However, during the practicum, she struggled to translate these theoretical understandings into confident ELT practice. This gap between theory and practice further weakened her sense of competence as an English teacher.
Her self-assessment reflects this tension clearly:

"*I am still a PSET and new to teaching. I am not sure if my teaching methods are the best yet.*"

Ariya (Interview 1, November 5, 2024)

From a self-efficacy perspective, Ariya's early experiences illustrate how limited mastery experiences in English teaching, combined with uncertainty about career choice, contributed to a cautious and tentative professional stance. Although she demonstrated care for students and a willingness to learn, her efficacy in performing core ELT tasks, such as lesson sequencing, explaining language forms, and sustaining English interaction, remained fragile. These early doubts were not simply technical but deeply tied to questions of identity: whether she truly saw herself as an English teacher or merely someone fulfilling an assigned role.

In conclusion, Ariya's case demonstrates that English teaching self-efficacy can be undermined not only by instructional challenges but also by a lack of intrinsic motivation and professional ownership. Entering the practicum with externally driven career choices, she experienced a tension between outward enthusiasm and internal uncertainty. This resulted in a hesitant start to her English teaching journey,

highlighting how PSETs without a strong personal identification with ELT may require additional support to develop both efficacy and a stable professional identity during the practicum.

4.1.2 Equipped but Uncertain in an Inherited Role

Kuzan's entry into the teaching practicum was shaped by a strong familial legacy in English teaching, which both provided him with early exposure to the profession and imposed expectations he struggled to internalize. His father, an English teacher, served as both a role model and a benchmark against which Kuzan measured himself. However, Kuzan's early encounters with English learning were marked by highly controlled and punitive instructional practices. During his primary school years, English lessons emphasized rote memorization and accuracy, particularly vocabulary drills in which a single mistake required him to restart the entire task. By the time he was in lower secondary school, English grammar instruction became increasingly rigid, reinforcing his fear of making errors, especially in spoken English. These experiences left a lasting emotional imprint, shaping his cautious relationship with English use and performance.

Despite these early challenges, Kuzan acknowledged that his university-based teacher education equipped him with substantial pedagogical knowledge relevant to ELT. He reported increased effectiveness in lesson planning, classroom management, instructional media design, and understanding of learner psychology. During the practicum, he actively applied these skills in his English classes at a medium-sized primary school, where he taught English for Communication to Grades 4–6. His moderate initial TSE reflected this dual positioning: he perceived himself as technically prepared to teach English, yet emotionally uncertain about his own linguistic performance and authority as an English teacher.

Classroom observations revealed this tension clearly. In observed lessons, Kuzan demonstrated careful lesson structuring and precise instructional sequencing. For example, in a Grade 5 English lesson focusing on daily routines, he prepared visual aids and PowerPoint slides with simple sentence patterns (e.g., I wake up at…, I go to school at…). He was effective in organizing activities and maintaining classroom order, indicating relatively strong self-efficacy in classroom management. However, when it came to spoken English, Kuzan frequently limited himself to

scripted phrases and pre-prepared instructions. During communicative activities, such as pair practice or role-play, he monitored students silently or provided feedback in Thai rather than English, particularly when students struggled to produce correct forms.

One observed moment highlighted this uncertainty. When a student asked a spontaneous question in English about verb tense usage, Kuzan paused briefly, smiled, and then responded in Thai, offering a grammatical explanation rather than modeling the answer in English. Although the explanation was accurate, this moment reflected his hesitation to engage in extended, unscripted English interaction. Such moments suggest that, while Kuzan possessed adequate linguistic knowledge, his self-efficacy in using English spontaneously in teaching remained fragile. Kuzan himself articulated this anxiety when describing his early practicum experiences:

"*On the first day, we had an online class, and the first thing I saw was a foreign teacher. I could understand what the teacher was saying, but when I had to speak, I was afraid. I was scared of making grammatical mistakes and mispronouncing words.*"

Kuzan (Interview 1, November 4, 2024)

This fear of error was not limited to interactions with foreign teachers but extended into his classroom practice. It influenced his instructional choices, leading him to prioritize accuracy and control over fluency-oriented or communicative activities. From a self-efficacy perspective, Kuzan's experiences illustrate how vicarious experiences and past mastery failures continued to shape his beliefs, even when current teaching experiences were largely successful. A coexistence of pedagogical competence and emotional restraint thus characterized his moderate TSE. At the same time, Kuzan's practicum revealed early signs of identity negotiation. While he did not initially embrace the role of "English teacher" effectively, he demonstrated a growing awareness of the responsibilities and relational dimensions of teaching. He expressed concern about meeting his mentor teacher's expectations and about living up to his father's professional standards, which further intensified his self-evaluation. This inherited role created an internal pressure that shaped how he interpreted feedback and assessed his teaching performance.

Kuzan's case illustrates a form of TSE that is technically grounded but emotionally cautious. His practicum experience highlights how PSETs may enter classrooms well-equipped with pedagogical tools yet remain uncertain about their legitimacy and competence as English-language users. This uncertainty constrained his willingness to take linguistic risks in teaching, thereby influencing both his instructional practices and his emerging TI. Kuzan's experience underscores the importance of addressing not only skill development but also emotional histories and language-related anxieties in supporting the development of English teaching self-efficacy during the practicum.

4.1.3 Passion with Purpose: Transforming Early Inspiration

Maysa's story illustrates how early inspiration and sustained engagement with English can cultivate a strong sense of purpose and relatively high TSE before entering the practicum. From a young age, she was recognized as a capable learner, particularly in English. Her interest in the language was not incidental but developed through formative encounters that shaped both her proficiency in English and her aspiration to teach. A defining moment occurred during her lower secondary school years, when she encountered an English teaching intern whose energetic personality and communicative teaching style left a lasting impression. Unlike her previous teachers, this intern emphasized interaction, creativity, and meaningful use of English rather than rote memorization. Maysa recalled being captivated not only by the intern's language proficiency but also by how English was used as a tool for connection and expression. This experience planted the initial seed of her desire to become an English teacher.

Although financial constraints prevented her from pursuing a degree in Liberal Arts, Maysa redirected her aspirations toward English education, viewing teaching as both a practical and meaningful career path. Growing up with her grandparents following her parents' separation further strengthened her sense of responsibility and resilience. Her early relationship with English was deeply personal. She vividly recalled spending long hours studying vocabulary independently and described a dictionary she treasured as a symbol of her commitment to the language. When the dictionary was stolen and later returned damaged, she felt a profound sense of loss, which underscored the emotional significance English held for her. These experiences

fostered a strong sense of ownership over her linguistic development and contributed to her efficacy as an English learner.

During her university studies, Maysa consistently performed well in English-related courses and actively sought opportunities to improve her communicative competence. She highlighted the impact of guest lectures by international speakers, which exposed her to diverse accents, discourse styles, and cultural perspectives. These experiences strengthened her listening and speaking efficacy and reinforced her belief that effective English teaching involves cultural awareness as well as linguistic accuracy. Entering the practicum, Maysa clearly recognized the challenges of rural schools, including limited resources, time constraints, and varying levels of community involvement. However, unlike the other participants, she framed these challenges as manageable rather than intimidating:

"*I knew that whatever happened, I would have to face it and get through it. I believed that having my friends here would help. I assumed that resources might be lacking since it is a small school.*"

Maysa (Interview 1, October 28, 2024)

Classroom observations during her practicum revealed how this efficacy translated into ELT practice. Maysa was assigned to teach Integrated English Skills to Grades 7 and 8 and regularly conducted lessons using a Thai–English bilingual approach. In observed lessons, she demonstrated strong self-efficacy in using English as the medium of instruction, frequently giving instructions, modeling language, and managing classroom interaction in English before strategically switching to Thai for clarification. For example, during a reading lesson focused on short descriptive texts, she introduced key English vocabulary, elicited students' prior knowledge through guided questions, and encouraged pair discussions before checking comprehension as a whole class.

Maysa's instructional decisions reflected a learner-centered ELT orientation. Rather than enforcing strict classroom rules, she emphasized collaboration and peer support, particularly when working with students who had differing proficiency levels or learning difficulties:

"*Some students have learning difficulties, which makes it harder for them to meet the class's needs. I do not enforce strict rules like 'you must work alone.' Instead, I encourage collaboration.*"

Maysa (Interview 1, October 28, 2024)

This approach was evident in classroom observations, where she allowed students to work in mixed-ability groups during speaking and writing activities. She circulated actively around the classroom, offering individualized feedback in both English and Thai, and responded flexibly to students' questions. Her willingness to adapt lesson pacing and content based on students' reactions demonstrated strong efficacy beliefs in instructional decision-making and classroom management. Importantly, Maysa's high TSE was also visible in her emotional responses to challenges. When lessons did not proceed as planned, she did not express frustration or self-doubt. Instead, she treated these moments as opportunities for adjustment and learning. For instance, when a technology-based activity failed due to internet issues, she immediately shifted to a paper-based discussion task without interrupting the lesson flow. This adaptability reinforced her sense of competence and agency as an English teacher.

Maysa's experience demonstrates how early passion, sustained engagement with English, and positive mastery experiences can foster strong TSE and a proactive teaching identity. Her efficacy was not rooted in the absence of challenges but in her belief that she could respond effectively to them. By integrating communicative ELT practices, flexible classroom management, and reflective decision-making, she enacted an identity as a competent and caring English teacher. Her case illustrates how intrinsic motivation, combined with preparation and responsiveness to context, can transform early inspiration into a resilient, learner-centered professional identity during the rural teaching practicum.

In conclusion, the divergent beginnings of Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa reveal that TSE at the start of the rural practicum was fragile, uneven, and profoundly shaped by prior experiences with English and ELT. Ariya entered the practicum with low TSE rooted in external career choices and uncertainty about her legitimacy as an English teacher. Kuzan began with moderate TSE, supported by pedagogical knowledge and

family exposure to English teaching, yet constrained by long-standing anxieties about linguistic accuracy and performance. In contrast, Maysa's relatively high TSE was grounded in early positive experiences with communicative English instruction, sustained engagement with the language, and strong proficiency in using English for instruction. These contrasting profiles illustrate that initial TSE is not determined solely by formal training but instead emerges from the interaction of personal history, language-learning experiences, and beliefs about what it means to teach English. As such, these initial efficacy beliefs functioned as starting conditions that shaped how each PSET interpreted challenges, enacted ELT practices, and began negotiating their professional identities during the rural teaching practicum. This section thus establishes the foundation for understanding how subsequent practicum experiences would either destabilize or strengthen both TSE and identity in the subsequent stages.

4.2 Confronting Reality: From Expectation to Reality Shock

Upon entering their assigned rural classrooms, Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa encountered a pronounced gap between their expectations of ELT and the realities of classroom practice. Although all three had completed university coursework in ELT methodology, lesson planning, and classroom management, their initial teaching experiences revealed that these preparations did not adequately align with the contextual demands of rural English classrooms. The shift from theory to practice was immediate rather than gradual, particularly as they were required to teach English to learners with limited exposure to the language, mixed proficiency levels, and minimal access to instructional resources.

For Ariya, the reality shock came during her first English lessons with lower-secondary students, when she struggled to maintain students' attention while using English to explain and provide simplified instructions. Classroom observations showed that she frequently reverted to Thai when students failed to respond, which reinforced her doubts about her effectiveness as an English teacher. In Kuzan's case, the shock was most evident during oral English activities. Although he was assigned to teach communicative English lessons at the primary level, observations revealed

that he hesitated to model spoken English extensively, reflecting lingering anxiety about pronunciation and grammatical accuracy. By contrast, Maysa experienced reality shock not through linguistic insecurity but through contextual overload. Despite her proficiency in English and in designing interactive ELT activities, she encountered difficulties managing her time, balancing curricular demands, and adapting communicative tasks to students with varying language proficiency levels.

Across all three cases, classroom observations highlighted that reality shock was closely tied to English-specific teaching demands, including using English as the medium of instruction, managing classroom interaction in a foreign language, and adapting ELT materials for resource-limited settings. These early encounters disrupted participants' initial beliefs about teaching readiness and triggered fluctuations in their TSE. Rather than representing failure, however, this reality shock marked a critical turning point in which PSETs began to reassess their expectations, confront their vulnerabilities as English teachers, and initiate the process of reconstructing both their instructional practices and professional identities.

4.2.1 Surviving the System: Emotional Strain and Institutional Neglect

Ariya's practicum experience exemplifies how institutional instability and systemic neglect can intensify reality shock and undermine TSE in ELT. Upon arriving at her assigned rural school, she was immediately confronted with the physical and emotional aftermath of a recent flood. Classroom observations documented visible damage across the campus, including mud-stained walls, broken furniture, and missing instructional materials (Ariya, Observation 1, November 5, 2024). These conditions disrupted the school calendar and led to an accelerated academic schedule, forcing Ariya to adjust her English lesson plans without adequate preparation time or curricular guidance.

The absence of her mentor teacher during the early weeks of the semester further magnified these challenges. With her mentor hospitalized, Ariya was required to independently plan, deliver, and assess English lessons across multiple classes. This included tasks such as grading English assignments, calculating scores, and maintaining records, responsibilities for which she felt insufficiently prepared. As she reflected,

"*There were so many things I had never done before, such as grading students and calculating their averages. I was not even sure if I had learned how to do that before.*"

Ariya (Interview 1, November 5, 2024)

Beyond instructional duties, Ariya was repeatedly assigned administrative and extracurricular responsibilities. School-wide events, such as Children's Day, required extensive preparation, leading to the cancellation of English classes. Classroom observations showed that these disruptions fragmented instructional continuity, making it difficult for Ariya to sequence English lessons or revisit previously taught vocabulary and structures. Although these tasks were not directly related to ELT, they significantly reduced her instructional time and energy, indirectly weakening her efficacy as an English teacher.

Within the classroom, Ariya encountered acute ELT-specific difficulties. She was assigned to teach multi-grade classes with mixed-age learners whose English proficiency was minimal. Observation data revealed that many students struggled with basic spelling and vocabulary recognition, even when tasks involved high-frequency English words (Ariya, Observation 2, January 20, 2025). During English activities, students frequently arrived late, engaged in off-task behavior, or remained passive when asked to respond in English. Ariya resorted to Thai to regain attention or explain instructions, which further reduced opportunities for English exposure and interaction. Technical and logistical issues compounded these instructional challenges. Difficulties connecting her iPad to the classroom television delayed the start of English lessons, shortening already limited instructional time. These interruptions heightened classroom management problems and increased Ariya's anxiety about maintaining lesson flow. In her reflections, she wrote,

"*There were discouraging moments. I felt disheartened when a few students resisted my authority… These moments made me question whether I was managing the classroom effectively enough.*"

Ariya (Self-reflection 1)

Ariya's low self-efficacy in her own English proficiency further constrained her teaching. She reported feeling comfortable teaching isolated vocabulary and basic grammatical forms, but avoided more complex explanations or communicative activities. As a result, observed lessons remained surface-level, with limited opportunities for meaningful language use. Instructions were sometimes unclear, leading to student confusion and further classroom disruption. Over time, Ariya adopted a survival-oriented teaching approach, prioritizing lesson completion over communicative engagement or differentiated support.

Emotionally, the cumulative strain was severe. Ariya described crying daily during her first two weeks and working late into the night to prepare English lessons while managing administrative demands. Her reflections increasingly featured expressions of resignation, such as "just do it" and "never mind," signaling a shift from reflective engagement to emotional withdrawal. Rather than experimenting with ELT strategies or adapting lessons creatively, she focused on enduring the practicum period with minimal disruption. Thus, Ariya's case illustrates how institutional neglect and excessive non-teaching responsibilities can erode TSE in ELT. Her experience demonstrates that reality shock in rural practicum contexts is not limited to instructional difficulty but is deeply intertwined with systemic conditions that restrict pedagogical agency. For Ariya, these conditions constrained her ability to implement communicative ELT practices, diminished her effectiveness as an English teacher, and positioned survival, rather than professional growth, as her primary goal during the early stages of the practicum.

4.2.2 Institutional Promises Versus Ground Realities

Kuzan's practicum experience illustrates how institutional reputations can mask the everyday ELT challenges faced by PSETs in rural schools, leading to a pronounced form of reality shock. His assigned school was officially recognized under the national One District, One Quality School initiative and frequently described as a "dream school" and a "good school near home." At first glance, the school appeared well-established, serving over 200 students from kindergarten through Grade 6 and equipped with multiple facilities (Kuzan, Observation 1, November 4, 2024). However, shortly after beginning his practicum, Kuzan realized that these labels did not reflect the instructional realities he encountered as an English teacher.

Despite the school's size, there were only 11 teachers, resulting in large class sizes and heavy teaching loads. Kuzan was assigned to English classes of 30–40 students, many of whom had high energy levels and diverse learning needs. Classroom observations documented frequent interruptions during English lessons, including students leaving their seats, talking over instructions, teasing peers, and disengaging during language activities (Kuzan, Observation 2, January 21, 2025). Several students had diagnosed with ADHD, while others struggled to maintain attention during teacher-fronted instruction. These conditions made it difficult for Kuzan to maintain lesson flow, particularly during grammar explanations and controlled practice.

ELT-specific challenges further weakened Kuzan's teaching self-efficacy. Although he carefully prepared lessons aligned with the prescribed curriculum, he reported limited proficiency in his own grammar. This was especially evident when teaching explicit grammar points, such as verb tense usage and sentence structure. During observed lessons, Kuzan relied heavily on the textbook and avoided extended explanations, moving quickly from presentation to mechanical exercises. Reflecting on this difficulty, he stated:

"*Sometimes I do not completely understand a grammar point, but I still have to teach it because it is part of the curriculum. That makes it difficult to explain.*"

Kuzan (Interview 2, January 21, 2025)

This insecurity affected his classroom interaction patterns. Rather than encouraging student questions or extended use of English, Kuzan tended to minimize discussion to avoid exposing his own uncertainty. Observation data showed that when students asked follow-up questions in Thai, Kuzan provided brief answers or redirected them to workbook exercises instead of elaborating in English. These moments reflect how low content-related TSE constrained his pedagogical choices and limited opportunities for communicative ELT practices.

Pronunciation also emerged as a critical source of anxiety. During English reading and speaking activities, some students laughed or mimicked Kuzan's pronunciation of unfamiliar sounds, particularly consonant clusters and final consonants. Although these reactions were not overtly hostile, they had a cumulative emotional impact. Kuzan later reflected that such moments made him increasingly

self-conscious and reluctant to model spoken English extensively (Kuzan, Observation 2, January 21, 2025). Over time, this led him to reduce oral practice activities and rely more on written exercises, further narrowing the scope of his ELT instruction.

Beyond the classroom, Kuzan encountered a workload that extended far beyond teaching English. His mentor teacher was responsible not only for instruction but also for scheduling, material procurement, event organization, and administrative reporting. Similarly, Kuzan was frequently assigned non-instructional duties, including cleaning school grounds, preparing Teacher's Day ceremonies, setting up venues for activities, and purchasing supplies. These tasks occurred during or immediately after teaching hours, leaving limited time for lesson planning or reflection. As he noted, "Teachers do everything. It is not just about teaching; there is so much more involved."

The accumulation of ELT difficulties, administrative burdens, and emotional strain gradually shifted Kuzan's orientation toward teaching. Initially motivated to apply his university training, he began to adopt a survival-focused approach similar to Ariya's. While he continued to prepare English lessons and fulfill assigned duties, his goals shifted from improving instruction to completing tasks. Rather than experimenting with new ELT techniques, he focused on maintaining classroom order and covering required content.

Kuzan's experience reveals a clear gap between institutional discourse and classroom reality. Although his school was publicly promoted as a model rural institution, structural constraints, large classes, and limited instructional support significantly undermined his TSE in English teaching. His practicum did not immediately strengthen his efficacy as an English teacher; instead, it exposed vulnerabilities in his language proficiency, pedagogical preparedness, and emotional resilience. Nevertheless, the experience also prompted critical reflection. Through confronting these challenges, Kuzan began to recognize that effective ELT in rural contexts requires not only subject knowledge but also adaptability, emotional regulation, and sustained institutional support, qualities he now views as central to the kind of teacher he hopes to become.

4.2.3 The Weight of Resource Constraints and Multifaceted Roles

Maysa's teaching practicum took place at a small, remote school located deep in the mountains, approximately 70 kilometers from the nearest town. The school

served 158 students from kindergarten through Grade 9 and reflected the severe material and human resource constraints that characterize many rural Thai schools. While Maysa entered the practicum with relatively high TSE and strong preparation in ELT, the realities of teaching English in this context quickly tested her efficacy and adaptability.

One of the most immediate challenges was the lack of basic resources that directly affected English instruction. The school had no reliable internet connection, limited technological equipment, and insufficient instructional materials. During observed English lessons, Maysa had to abandon planned activities that required audio input, videos, or online resources and instead rely on the whiteboard, her own voice, and improvised worksheets (Maysa, Observation 1, October 28, 2024). This constrained her ability to implement communicative and multimodal ELT approaches she had learned at university. As a result, lessons frequently shifted toward vocabulary explanation and sentence-level practice, even when her original intention was to promote listening or speaking skills.

Teacher shortages further intensified these constraints. In the English program, only one qualified English teacher was responsible for all nine grade levels. Maysa observed that this teacher was overwhelmed and occasionally relied on temporary instructors to cover classes. While Maysa admired her mentor's dedication, this situation also meant limited pedagogical guidance and feedback specific to ELT. In practice, Maysa was left to independently design and deliver English lessons across different proficiency levels, sometimes with little alignment between curriculum expectations and students' actual language abilities.

Classroom observations revealed that student engagement in English lessons was uneven and fragile. Many students demonstrated low efficacy and negative attitudes toward English, remaining silent during speaking activities or responding only in Thai. During an observed lesson, Maysa conducted a pair-work speaking activity using simple, everyday expressions. However, most students avoided using English, instead whispering answers in Thai or waiting for Maysa to provide the correct responses (Maysa, Observation 2, January 13, 2025). Although she encouraged participation through games and group activities, she found that students were primarily motivated by entertainment rather than language learning objectives. As she

reflected, “Students enjoyed games the most, but we cannot just play games all the time.”

When lessons required greater cognitive engagement, such as explaining grammar or constructing sentences, maintaining students’ attention became increasingly complex. Maysa noted that once mobile phones were introduced as learning tools, students repeatedly requested their use, even when they were no longer pedagogically appropriate. This created ongoing classroom management challenges and disrupted lesson flow. These moments led Maysa to question her ability to balance engagement with instructional rigor, revealing cracks in her otherwise strong TSE as an English teacher.

Beyond ELT challenges, Maysa was frequently required to teach outside her subject area, including mathematics, when other teachers were unavailable. While she approached these tasks with a sense of responsibility, they diverted time and energy away from lesson preparation and reflection for English classes. Additionally, she was expected to contribute to non-instructional tasks such as preparing decorations for school events, planting vegetables, repairing equipment, and assisting with health-related activities. As she explained:

“*In rural schools, you have to do everything. Besides lesson plans, teachers also need to organize ceremonies, plant vegetables, repair technology, and even oversee health initiatives.*”

Maysa (Interview 2, January 13, 2025)

These cumulative demands gradually affected her perception of what it meant to be an effective English teacher. Although Maysa remained resilient and committed, she began to recognize that success in rural ELT was not determined solely by pedagogical knowledge or language proficiency. Instead, it required a broad set of practical skills and emotional endurance that were rarely addressed in formal teacher education. As she later reflected:

“*Those with practical outside skills, such as fixing printers or repairing TVs, are sometimes more valuable to the school than those with only academic abilities.*”

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

Maysa's experience highlights how severe resource constraints and multifaceted teacher roles can place sustained pressure on PSETs' teaching self-efficacy, even when they enter the practicum with intense preparation and motivation. While she continued to demonstrate adaptability and reflective awareness, the combination of limited ELT resources, low student engagement, minimal instructional support, and extensive non-teaching responsibilities occasionally weakened her effectiveness as an English teacher. Her case illustrates that in remote rural contexts, high initial TSE does not guarantee stability; instead, it must be continually negotiated in response to contextual demands that extend far beyond the classroom.

Across the three cases, the transition from university preparation to rural school practicum generated a profound "reality shock" that disrupted participants' initial assumptions about English teaching and accelerated the reconfiguration of their teaching self-efficacy. While Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa entered the practicum with varying levels of efficacy, all encountered contextual constraints that hindered their ability to implement ELT practices as envisioned in their teacher education programs. These shared challenges included limited resources, heavy non-instructional workloads, diverse student needs, and minimal pedagogical support, yet their impact on TSE varied according to each participant's background, motivation, and prior relationship with English.

For Ariya, reality shock was primarily emotional and organizational. The sudden absence of mentor support, combined with heavy administrative duties and classroom management difficulties, quickly undermined her already fragile self-efficacy in English teaching. Her uncertainty about her own English proficiency led her to simplify content, rely on surface-level instruction, and prioritize lesson completion over meaningful language learning. In this case, reality shock led to a survival-oriented teaching identity, in which maintaining classroom order and meeting basic requirements took precedence over ELT pedagogy.

Kuzan's reality shock was essentially linguistic and professional. Despite institutional claims of school quality, he struggled with large classes, behavioral challenges, and persistent insecurity about his English accuracy and pronunciation. Classroom incidents in which students mocked his language use intensified his fear of making mistakes and weakened his efficacy as an English teacher. For Kuzan, reality

shock exposed a gap between theoretical knowledge and enacted ELT competence, leading to a cautious, restrained teaching approach that limited opportunities for communicative language use.

In contrast, Maysa experienced reality shock as a gradual erosion rather than an immediate collapse of efficacy. Although she entered the practicum with high TSE and strong ELT preparation, sustained exposure to severe resource constraints, low student motivation, and multifaceted teacher roles challenged her ability to maintain pedagogical quality. Her struggle lay not in linguistic efficacy but in reconciling learner-centered ELT ideals with contextual limitations. Over time, her teaching identity shifted from aspirational innovation toward pragmatic adaptation, revealing the vulnerability of even high initial TSE in remote rural contexts.

These cases demonstrate that reality shock in rural practicums is not a singular event but a differentiated process that interacts with PSETs' prior experiences, English-related efficacy, and emerging professional identities. Rather than uniformly diminishing TSE, reality shock served as a critical juncture at which participants reassessed what it means to be an English teacher in constrained environments. This recalibration shaped both their instructional decisions and their evolving sense of professional self, laying the groundwork for subsequent identity negotiation and efficacy reconstruction discussed in the following section.

4.3 Developing Teacher Self-Efficacy Through Lived Experience

After the initial period of uncertainty and the disruption caused by reality shock, the three PSETs—Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa—began to reconstruct their TSE through direct engagement in ELT during the rural practicum. Rather than developing linearly or uniformly, their TSE evolved through situated classroom experiences that required them to teach English under constrained conditions. In this section, the development of TSE is examined through specific ELT moments drawn from interviews, classroom observations, and self-reflection writings, with a focus on how the four sources of self-efficacy proposed by Bandura (1997), mastery experiences,

vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological and affective states, were enacted in practice.

Across the three cases, mastery experiences emerged most clearly in moments when PSETs successfully facilitated English lessons despite limited resources, mixed-ability classrooms, or low student motivation. These moments included managing basic English activities, explaining vocabulary or grammar in simplified ways, and maintaining student engagement long enough to complete communicative tasks. Classroom observations documented how small instructional successes, such as students responding to English prompts, completing worksheets, or participating in games, contributed incrementally to participants' English teaching efficacy.

Vicarious experiences were evident when PSETs observed mentor teachers or peers conducting English lessons and adapted these practices to their own classrooms. Observations revealed that exposure to alternative instructional strategies, such as code-switching between Thai and English or using locally available materials, helped participants recalibrate their expectations of effective ELT in rural contexts. These experiences provided practical reference points that shaped how participants evaluated their own teaching competence.

Social persuasion, particularly feedback from mentor teachers, students, and peers, played a critical role in shaping TSE. Positive comments from students, such as expressing enjoyment of English activities or showing improvement in vocabulary use, reinforced participants' beliefs that their efforts were meaningful. Conversely, the absence of feedback or critical responses sometimes intensified self-doubt, highlighting the fragile and context-sensitive nature of TSE development.

Finally, physiological and affective states, including stress, anxiety, exhaustion, and moments of emotional relief, strongly influenced how participants interpreted their ELT experiences. Classroom observations captured visible signs of nervousness, hesitation in using English, and relief following successful lessons. Over time, learning to manage these emotional responses became part of the process through which PSETs gained efficacy and began to see themselves as capable English teachers.

By focusing on these concrete ELT-related experiences across the three cases, this section demonstrates that TSE development during the rural practicum was deeply contextual, uneven, and closely tied to everyday teaching encounters. Rather than

emerging from abstract beliefs or theoretical preparation alone, TSE was constructed through repeated cycles of action, reflection, and emotional negotiation within the realities of rural English classrooms. This process not only strengthened participants' efficacy in teaching English but also shaped their evolving professional identities as rural English teachers.

4.3.1 "A Little Success Matters."

Despite persistent constraints in rural school contexts, the three PSETs gradually developed TSE through small but concrete mastery experiences in ELT. These experiences did not emerge from dramatic breakthroughs but from repeated moments in which participants successfully explained content, managed ELT activities, or elicited student responses in English. Such moments became pivotal in reshaping their beliefs about their capability as English teachers.

For Ariya, mastery experiences developed through incremental improvement in grammar-focused instruction, an area she initially found intimidating. Early classroom observations showed that her English lessons relied heavily on worksheets and teacher-fronted explanations, with frequent pauses due to unclear instructions or technical difficulties (Ariya, Observation 1, November 5, 2024). However, over time, Ariya learned to simplify grammatical explanations by using short Thai–English comparisons and examples drawn from students' daily lives. In one observed Grade 5 lesson on simple past tense, she guided students through sentence construction using familiar verbs (e.g., eat, go, play), checked comprehension through choral repetition, and followed up with individual written practice (Ariya, Observation 3, January 20, 2025). Although the lesson was introductory, students were able to complete the task with fewer disruptions, which marked a clear contrast to her earlier classes. Reflecting on this progression, Ariya noted:

"*I got to know the students better and learned how to teach effectively, how to approach different topics, which methods to use, and how to adjust when students did not understand.*"

Ariya (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

These moments of instructional control, managing grammar explanation, pacing activities, and maintaining attention, became sources of efficacy. While her

lessons remained modest in scope, helping students “understand English better than before” served as a meaningful mastery experience that strengthened her TSE.

Kuzan’s mastery experiences were closely tied to material adaptation and pronunciation-focused teaching. Early observations documented his hesitation when explaining grammar points and his tendency to rely strictly on the textbook (Kuzan, Observation 1, November 4, 2024). However, as the practicum progressed, Kuzan began redesigning English lessons by adding games, chants, and visual aids to support vocabulary learning. In one observed Grade 4 lesson, he introduced new vocabulary related to daily routines using hand-drawn flashcards and repetition drills, followed by a short speaking activity where students practiced asking and answering simple questions (e.g., What time do you wake up?). Although pronunciation errors persisted, students participated actively and responded positively to the activity (Kuzan, Observation 3, January 21, 2025). Kuzan later reflected that repeatedly teaching the duplicate content helped strengthen both his pedagogical efficacy and his own English proficiency:

“*When I create teaching materials, I make them fun and humorous. I follow the textbook but add techniques to improve it… Even when I am not teaching, I review pronunciation or spelling.*”

Kuzan (Interview 3, March 10, 2025)

For Kuzan, completing an English lesson, even when the content was straightforward, proved he could function as an English teacher despite lingering self-doubt. Maysa’s mastery experiences were most clearly evident in interactive and communicative ELT practices. Classroom observations showed that she frequently used games, pair work, and group activities to encourage students to use English, particularly vocabulary and short spoken responses (Maysa, Observation 2, January 13, 2025). In one Grade 7 lesson, she organized a vocabulary-based team game in which students competed to match words to pictures of food and everyday objects. Although students initially relied heavily on Thai, Maysa consistently modeled English phrases and gently prompted students to repeat or respond in English. Student engagement noticeably increased, and several typically quiet students volunteered

answers during the activity. These observable student responses reinforced her belief in her teaching effectiveness. Reflecting on her experience, Maysa stated:

"*At first, I thought it would be too difficult, but in the end, I succeeded. I am proud of myself.*"

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

While Maysa remained aware of the limitations of game-based learning, these moments validated her ability to motivate students and manage English lessons under challenging conditions.

Across the three cases, these small ELT successes, e.g., explaining grammar clearly, sustaining student participation, completing a lesson as planned, or eliciting English responses, functioned as powerful mastery experiences. Although modest, they accumulated over time and contributed to a gradual strengthening of TSE. Significantly, these experiences also marked a shift in participants' self-perception: teaching English was no longer merely an assigned task but an activity in which they could experience competence and professional growth. In this way, mastery experiences in everyday ELT practice became foundational to both the development of TSE and the early consolidation of TI.

4.3.2 "Learning from Significant Others."

In addition to direct teaching experiences, the development of PSETs' TSE was strongly shaped by vicarious experiences, particularly through observing and interacting with more experienced teachers, family members, and peers. These encounters allowed PSETs to visualize effective English teaching in practice, providing concrete models for classroom interaction, instructional strategies, and language use that they could later adapt to their own lessons. In rural practicum contexts, where formal training and resources were limited, such vicarious learning played a critical role in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and actual ELT practice.

Kuzan's practicum experience clearly demonstrates how mentor modeling contributed to the development of TSE in English teaching. His cooperating teacher, Teacher Nui, demonstrated how an engaging ELT environment could be created despite material constraints. Classroom observations revealed that Teacher Nui's

English lessons were highly interactive, with visible student involvement. For example, in a Grade 5 lesson observed, students used vocabulary boxes made from recycled milk cartons to practice spelling and word recognition. Students took turns drawing word cards, pronouncing them aloud, and using them in short sentences, while Teacher Nui provided immediate, supportive corrective feedback (Kuzan, Observation 2, January 21, 2025). This approach impressed Kuzan because it showed how English learning could be both structured and enjoyable without relying on expensive teaching aids.

Beyond observing classroom routines, Kuzan also learned specific ELT techniques through guided participation. During an early pronunciation-focused lesson, Kuzan struggled to encourage students to repeat unfamiliar English sounds, particularly consonant clusters that Thai learners find difficult. When students became disengaged, his mentor intervened by modeling the use of praise and small incentives, such as stickers, to motivate participation. Kuzan later adopted this strategy in his own lessons, reporting that it helped students become more willing to speak English aloud. Reflecting on this experience, he explained:

"*She always gave me suggestions on how to improve my teaching materials, how to adjust them, or what to add in case an observer came to watch my lesson.*"

Kuzan (Interview 3, March 10, 2025)

These guided observations allowed Kuzan to see how classroom management, motivation, and language instruction could be integrated seamlessly, reinforcing his belief that he could eventually perform similar practices himself.

Kuzan's vicarious learning extended beyond the practicum school to his family background. Observing his father teach English during his early university years provided him with informal exposure to classroom routines, teacher talk, and student management. Although he was not yet formally trained, stepping in to teach in his father's absence allowed him to draw on these observations instinctively. This early exposure to the image of himself standing in front of an English classroom later contributed to a sense of familiarity and partial efficacy during his practicum. Even when his TSE wavered, these remembered experiences functioned as internal reference points for "how teaching is done."

For Maysa, vicarious experiences were most strongly shaped through peer learning and collaborative reflection. Although her practicum school had limited English teaching support, Maysa regularly consulted with fellow PSETs placed at nearby schools. These peer exchanges focused on practical ELT concerns, such as simplifying grammar explanations, managing mixed-ability classrooms, and designing communicative activities suitable for rural learners. For instance, after discussing vocabulary games with her peers, Maysa adapted a peer-recommended matching activity for her Grade 7 class. Classroom observations showed that she implemented the activity using bilingual instructions and visual cues to support comprehension (Maysa, Observation 2, January 13, 2025). While not all students used English consistently, their willingness to participate increased, reinforcing her efficacy in experimenting with new strategies.

Maysa emphasized that these peer discussions helped her feel less isolated and more assured in her teaching decisions:

"*We often share activity ideas. They say certain methods work well.*"

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

By observing peers' successes and struggles, conveyed through informal conversations rather than formal observation, Maysa gained reassurance that challenges in ELT were shared rather than personal failures. This collective sense of learning strengthened her TSE and encouraged reflective experimentation.

Across cases, these vicarious experiences functioned as powerful sources of reassurance and professional modeling. By observing how others taught English, managed student participation, and navigated constraints, PSETs were able to imagine themselves succeeding in similar situations. Importantly, these models did not need to be idealized or perfect; instead, they demonstrated that effective ELT was possible within the limitations of rural schools. In this way, learning from significant others helped gradually strengthen TSE and contributed to the emerging professional identities of the PSETs as capable English teachers.

4.3.3 "Their Words Truly Warmed My Heart."

The development of TSE among the PSETs was strongly shaped by social persuasion, particularly through encouragement, praise, and constructive feedback

related to their English teaching practices. In the rural practicum context, where uncertainty and emotional strain were common, verbal validation from mentors, colleagues, and students functioned as an important source of reassurance. Such feedback did not merely affirm participants' efforts; it directly influenced how they evaluated their effectiveness as English teachers and whether they perceived themselves as capable of meeting classroom demands.

Ariya's experience illustrates how social persuasion became a critical source of TSE, especially when linked to concrete ELT outcomes. After her mentor teacher was hospitalized, Ariya was required to teach multiple English classes across Grades 7 to 9 independently. During this period, classroom observations documented her efforts to simplify grammar explanations by using Thai-supported explanations and short-sentence patterns on the board (Ariya, Observation 2, January 20, 2025). Although she initially doubted her instructional clarity, student feedback became a powerful source of encouragement. Several students approached her after lessons to say that they understood English grammar better when she explained it step by step and used familiar examples. In her reflection, Ariya wrote:

"*Some students came up to me and told me that they found my lessons easy to understand… that they enjoyed learning with me. Their words truly warmed my heart.*"

Ariya (Self-reflection 2)

This student feedback validated her instructional decisions and strengthened her belief that she could explain English content effectively, even under pressure. In addition, Ariya received encouragement from other teachers in the school, who praised her willingness to take responsibility and her calm classroom presence. These comments were later relayed to her mentor teacher, reinforcing her sense of being trusted and recognized as a legitimate English teacher. Such social validation helped Ariya reinterpret her struggles not as failures, but as part of professional growth.

For Kuzan, social persuasion was closely tied to feedback on lesson structure and language use. During an observed Grade 5 English lesson, Kuzan used cartoons and flashcards to introduce new vocabulary before asking students to form simple sentences (Kuzan, Observation 2, January 21, 2025). After the lesson, both his mentor

teacher and university supervisor commented positively on his sequencing of activities and his use of visuals to support comprehension. His mentor teacher suggested beginning each lesson with vocabulary practice before moving to sentence-level tasks, a strategy Kuzan adopted in subsequent lessons. Reflecting on this feedback, Kuzan explained that it helped him feel more confident that his teaching choices were pedagogically sound:

"*When they said I was doing it the right way, I felt more confident that I could teach English, not just follow the textbook.*"

Kuzan (Interview 2, January 21, 2025)

Student reactions also reinforced his TSE. When students laughed, responded enthusiastically to his cartoon-based explanations, or completed pronunciation drills, Kuzan interpreted these moments as evidence that his English teaching was effective. These minor but repeated affirmations countered his ongoing self-doubt about his language proficiency and encouraged him to continue experimenting with teaching strategies.

Maysa's development of TSE through social persuasion was shaped by a supportive school culture that emphasized encouragement rather than criticism. During observed lessons, Maysa introduced vocabulary games and group activities to encourage student participation in English (Maysa, Observation 2, January 13, 2025). When students showed limited engagement, her mentor teacher reassured her that resistance was common in rural ELT contexts and advised her to focus on responsive learners rather than trying to engage everyone at once. This reframing reduced Maysa's self-blame and helped her sustain motivation. Notably, her mentor demonstrated trust in her ideas by purchasing materials for a vocabulary activity Maysa had designed, signaling institutional support for her instructional creativity.

"*They understand and provide support instead of being strict or dismissive, Maysa noted, emphasizing how this emotional safety strengthened her efficacy as an English teacher.*"

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

Peer support further reinforced her TSE. Regular discussions with fellow PSETs about English activities, student responses, and classroom challenges created a shared space for validation and emotional relief. Knowing that others faced similar difficulties normalized her struggles and encouraged her to persist.

Across the three cases, social persuasion functioned as a robust emotional and cognitive scaffold for developing TSE in ELT. Praise and feedback were most impactful when they were linked to specific teaching actions, such as explaining grammar clearly, sequencing language activities effectively, or engaging students through interactive tasks. These affirmations helped PSETs reinterpret classroom challenges as manageable and reinforced their emerging identities as competent English teachers. In rural practicum contexts, where formal evaluation was limited, such everyday words of encouragement played a decisive role in sustaining efficacy, motivation, and professional commitment.

4.3.4 "Wow, I Really Did All That?"

The development of PSETs' TSE during the rural teaching practicum was closely intertwined with their physiological responses and emotional states, particularly in relation to ELT. Feelings of stress, exhaustion, frustration, and self-doubt were not peripheral experiences; instead, they were central to how participants interpreted their teaching competence. At the same time, moments of emotional recovery, endurance, and reflection became powerful indicators of growing TSE. In this study, emotional and physiological states shaped how PSETs perceived their effectiveness in teaching English and whether they believed they could continue in the profession.

For Ariya, emotional strain was most visible during English grammar instruction. Classroom observations showed that she frequently paused mid-explanation, rephrased instructions in Thai, and carefully checked students' comprehension when teaching basic sentence structures and verb forms (Ariya, Observation 2, January 20, 2025). Although these strategies reflected pedagogical awareness, they also revealed her anxiety about clarity and accuracy. Ariya openly admitted that grammar lessons triggered the most stress because she feared confusing students or being unable to answer questions. Beyond cognitive pressure, emotional

fatigue gradually set in. She described a sense of emotional numbness rather than panic:

"*I was lazier than stressed. Lazy to write lesson plans, lazy to teach. I still did everything, but I just felt lazy.*"

Ariya (Interview 2, January 20, 2025)

This emotional detachment was not a sign of indifference, but rather a coping mechanism in response to prolonged pressure. Observations confirmed that even on days when she felt disengaged, Ariya continued to teach English lessons, assign vocabulary exercises, and guide students through worksheet-based grammar tasks. At times, however, emotional overload surfaced. Ariya recalled moments when accumulated stress led to private emotional breakdowns:

"*Some days, I even cried… I had endured so much, but then I reached a breaking point.*"

Ariya (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

Crucially, these emotional lows did not result in withdrawal from teaching. Instead, Ariya developed a personal emotional regulation strategy, repeatedly telling herself to reset and begin each day again. This process of emotional recovery became a form of mastery in itself, allowing her to continue teaching English despite ongoing insecurity. Over time, surviving emotionally demanding English lessons strengthened her belief that she could endure and function as a teacher, contributing to a gradual rebuilding of TSE.

Kuzan's emotional experiences were closely tied to students' responses to his English instruction. During classroom observations, Kuzan monitored students' facial expressions and participation levels while teaching vocabulary and simple sentence patterns (Kuzan, Observation 2, January 21, 2025). When students struggled to recall words or failed to respond during drills, he interpreted this as evidence of his own inadequacy. He explained:

"*When students do not understand or remember what I have taught… I question whether I did a good enough job.*"

Kuzan (Interview 2, January 21, 2025)

His uncertainty about alternative teaching approaches intensified this emotional response. Although he recognized the need to adapt, he could not change his methods effectively. His emotional state fluctuated between determination and self-doubt, particularly when teaching grammar points that he himself felt unsure about. These emotional reactions directly influenced his TSE, as moments of student confusion were internalized as personal failure. Nevertheless, Kuzan continued to prepare lessons, revise materials, and rehearse pronunciation outside class hours. His persistence, despite emotional discomfort, reflects how managing negative affect became part of his developing professional resilience.

For Maysa, emotional fatigue was most pronounced in response to student disengagement during English lessons. Observations revealed that while she used interactive activities such as vocabulary games and group tasks, participation varied significantly across grade levels (Maysa, Observation 2, January 13, 2025). In particular, Grade 8 students resisted participation, avoided submitting assignments, and showed minimal interest in English tasks. Maysa described these experiences as emotionally draining:

"*The students already have a negative attitude toward English… they are not interested.*"

Maysa (Interview 2, January 13, 2025)

Despite this discouragement, Maysa actively reflected on contextual differences, noting that younger students responded more positively to games and collaborative activities. Emotionally, she oscillated between frustration and determination. In addition to instructional challenges, she faced the burden of non-ELT responsibilities and occasional teaching outside her subject area, which further depleted her energy. However, unlike earlier moments of discouragement, Maysa increasingly reframed emotional exhaustion as part of professional learning. She emphasized growth and endurance: "Since I am still young, I have the energy to keep

learning and improving myself." Near the end of the practicum, her reflection revealed a decisive shift in self-perception:

> "*Looking back on the past semester… I think, 'Wow, I really did all that?'*"
>
> Maysa (Self-reflection 2)

This realization marked a turning point, where emotional survival itself became evidence of competence. Importantly, Maysa acknowledged that this growth was supported by mentors, peers, and colleagues, highlighting that emotional resilience in ELT was collectively sustained rather than individually achieved. Across the three cases, emotional and physiological states played a decisive role in shaping TSE. Stress, exhaustion, and doubt accompanied English teaching, particularly when lessons did not proceed as planned or when students failed to engage. However, the ability to recover emotionally, persist through discomfort, and reflect on these experiences became a source of growing efficacy. Rather than undermining TSE, emotional struggle functioned as a catalyst for self-awareness, resilience, and identity consolidation. In this sense, managing emotional demands in ELT became not only a challenge but also a meaningful indicator of developing TSE.

Therefore, the development of TSE among the three PSETs was a cumulative and experiential process grounded in their everyday practices of teaching English in rural classrooms. Mastery experiences emerged through small but meaningful instructional successes, such as explaining grammar clearly, engaging students in vocabulary activities, or managing participation during English lessons. Vicarious experiences, particularly through mentor teachers, family members, and peers, provided concrete models of ELT practice that helped participants translate theory into action. Social persuasion, including feedback from mentors, supervisors, colleagues, and students, validated their instructional efforts and reinforced their emerging sense of competence. Finally, emotional and physiological states, characterized by stress, exhaustion, self-doubt, and recovery, shaped how participants interpreted their teaching experiences and gradually internalized a sense of efficacy in their ability to teach English. Across the practicum, these four sources did not operate in isolation; instead, they interacted dynamically within specific ELT moments, classroom encounters, and reflective practices. Through this process, the PSETs moved from

uncertainty toward a more stable belief in themselves as English teachers, highlighting that TSE development in rural contexts is deeply situated, relational, and inseparable from lived teaching experience.

In summary, this chapter examined the development of TSE among three PSETs during their rural teaching practicum in Thailand. The findings demonstrate that TSE is not a stable or fixed attribute; rather, it is a dynamic, evolving construct shaped by the interaction of personal histories, contextual conditions, and social relationships within the practicum setting. Organized around three central themes, Entering the Unknown, Confronting Reality, and Developing TSE Through Lived Experience, the chapter traced the participants' trajectories from tentative and uneven beginnings, through moments of disruption and reality shock, toward the gradual reconstruction of a more resilient and contextually grounded sense of TSE.

At the outset of the practicum, participants entered rural schools with differing levels of efficacy shaped by family expectations, prior learning experiences, academic preparation, and motivations for becoming English teachers. These initial foundations, however, were quickly tested by the complex demands of rural schooling. Limited resources, multi-grade classrooms, teacher shortages, and the expectation to perform multiple non-instructional roles exposed a significant gap between pedagogical theory and classroom reality. As a result, the PSETs were compelled to confront not only instructional challenges related to ELT but also emotional, relational, and institutional pressures embedded within small rural school communities.

Despite these early disruptions, the practicum emerged as a critical site for professional and personal growth. Drawing on Bandura's (1997) four sources of self-efficacy, the chapter illustrated how participants gradually strengthened their TSE through mastery experiences, vicarious learning from mentors and peers, social persuasion, and the management of emotional and physiological states. Small yet meaningful successes, such as improving student participation, clarifying grammar explanations, or managing classroom behavior, served as key turning points that reshaped participants' beliefs about their instructional competence. These experiences were deeply intertwined with emotional processes, including self-doubt, fatigue, perseverance, and eventual pride in their developing roles as English teachers.

In addition, the findings suggest that the rural teaching practicum functions as a powerful context in which TSE is continuously tested, deconstructed, and reconstructed through lived experience. While the structural challenges of rural education can threaten PSETs' sense of efficacy, they also create opportunities to develop practical teaching skills, emotional resilience, and a more realistic, situated understanding of teaching effectiveness. This chapter underscores that TSE development during the practicum is neither linear nor uniform; rather, it reflects a complex, context-dependent journey shaped by the interplay of personal aspirations, contextual constraints, and social-emotional engagement. These insights provide a foundation for the next chapter, which examines how evolving beliefs about TSE contribute to the broader process of TI formation during the practicum.

CHAPTER 5

THE CONTRIBUTION OF TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF TEACHER IDENTITY IN RURAL TEACHING PRACTICUM

In this chapter, I will address the second research question: In what ways does TSE contribute to the construction of TI among PSETs during their teaching practicum in rural schools in Thailand? Building on the analysis presented in Chapter 4, I will shift the analytical lens from developmental patterns of TSE to its constitutive role in shaping how PSETs came to understand, negotiate, and position themselves as teachers within rural practicum contexts.

TI is conceptualized in this study as a dynamic, socially constructed, and context-sensitive process that evolves through participation in practice, social interaction, and reflective meaning-making. Within the rural ELT practicum, participants' emerging identities were closely intertwined with their beliefs about instructional competence, emotional regulation, and professional legitimacy as English teachers. As PSETs confronted classroom realities, institutional constraints, limited resources, and culturally situated expectations of teachers, fluctuations in their TSE shaped not only what they believed they could accomplish pedagogically but also how they interpreted their roles, responsibilities, and future trajectories within the profession.

Drawing on the same three focal participants, I examine how changes in TSE influenced key dimensions of TI construction, including perceptions of professional competence, emotional positioning, role enactment, social recognition, and career-oriented decision-making. The findings demonstrate that moments of efficacy, doubt, adaptation, and validation functioned as critical identity resources, enabling participants to move from tentative, student-like positions toward more agentive and professionally grounded teacher identities. As summarized in Table 5.1, the analysis is organized around six interconnected themes that illustrate how TSE operated as a mediating force in participants' identity development.

Table 5.1 A Short Summary of the Findings (Research Question 2)

Research Question	Theme	Summary
2. In what ways does TSE contribute to the construction of TI among PSETs during their teaching practicum in rural schools in Thailand?	1. From Student to Teacher: Role Transition	PSETs entered the practicum with differing levels of TSE, which shaped their initial professional self-positioning. Participants with low self-efficacy (e.g., Ariya and Kuzan) experienced uncertainty and hesitation, which led to fragile or tentative teacher identities. In contrast, Maysa's stronger initial TSE enabled her to assume the teacher role more effectively. As TSE developed over time, participants increasingly shifted from viewing themselves as student teachers to seeing themselves as legitimate teachers.
	2. Becoming a Teacher through Doing	Engagement in authentic teaching practices strengthened TSE and contributed to identity consolidation. Mastery experiences, such as independently managing classrooms (Ariya) and witnessing student progress (Maysa), reinforced participants' beliefs in their teaching capabilities. Through practice, PSETs shifted from passive recipients of pedagogical knowledge to active, agentive teachers.
	3. Learning to Become from Others	Observations of mentors, peers, and in-service teachers influenced participants' pedagogical beliefs and identity formation. Positive role models provided guidance and inspiration (e.g., Maysa and Kuzan), while negative examples clarified professional boundaries and values. These socially mediated experiences, when filtered through reflection, contributed to the ongoing construction of TI.

Table 5.1 (continued)

Research Question	Theme	Summary
4. Being Seen as a Teacher: Validation and Affirmation	External recognition from mentors, students, and colleagues played a critical role in reinforcing both TSE and TI. Affirmative feedback enhanced efficacy (e.g., Kuzan), while students' trust and appreciation (e.g., Ariya and Maysa) strengthened participants' sense of professional legitimacy. Recognition, responsibility, and trust signaled social acceptance as "real teachers."	
5. Emotional Investment and Regulation	Emotional experiences, such as stress, empathy, exhaustion, and fulfillment, were central to identity construction. Participants demonstrated deep emotional engagement with teaching, particularly in response to students' needs. Emotional resilience following moments of distress contributed to professional growth and reinforced a relational, care-oriented TI.	
6. Motivation and Persistence: Staying or Leaving the Profession	Levels of TSE were closely linked to motivation and career commitment. Participants with stronger or developing self-efficacy (e.g., Maysa and Kuzan) demonstrated greater resilience and future-oriented commitment to teaching. At the same time, fragile TSE (e.g., Ariya) was associated with burnout and career uncertainty. Sustained TSE supported identity stability and professional persistence.	

5.1 From Student to Teacher: Role Transition

The development of TI during the practicum was closely connected to how PSETs perceived their abilities to teach English in real classroom settings. TSE, defined as teachers' beliefs in their capacity to successfully carry out teaching-related tasks, played a central role in shaping how participants positioned themselves as English teachers. As PSETs entered rural schools with varying levels of English proficiency and pedagogical skills, their beliefs about their ability to teach English meaningfully shaped whether they viewed themselves as tentative learners or emerging professionals.

For participants who began the practicum with low TSE, early classroom experiences reinforced a fragile and hesitant TI. Ariya, for example, entered the practicum with limited proficiency in English and instructional clarity. This uncertainty was particularly evident during grammar-focused lessons, where she worried about explaining rules accurately and responding to students' questions. Her self-description reflected a cautious stance toward teaching English:

"*I am still a PSET and new to teaching. I am not sure if my teaching methods are yet the best. I am concerned that my teachings may not be clear to my students. I wanted to improve my teaching by designing fun and engaging activities for my students.*"

Ariya (Interview 1, November 5, 2024)

Classroom observations revealed that Ariya initially relied heavily on the textbook and followed lesson plans closely, limiting spontaneous interaction in English. She checked her notes before explaining grammar points and avoided extended English explanations, opting instead for brief instructions or Thai support. These instructional choices reflected not only limited efficacy in her language use but also an identity still grounded in being a learner rather than a teacher with authority over content. Her concern about student comprehension underscored a more profound uncertainty about whether she could fulfill the role of an effective English teacher.

Kuzan experienced a similar struggle during the early stage of the practicum, particularly when teaching pronunciation and speaking activities. Entering an unfamiliar school environment intensified his fear of making linguistic errors in front of students and mentor teachers. During initial speaking drills, he limited student talk time and avoided open-ended questions, fearing he might not be able to respond accurately. His reflection highlights this insecurity:

"*I would do it in a new school, new things, teachers, students. I was afraid I would not be good enough. Sometimes, I questioned whether I did a good enough job or if I was not skilled enough yet.*"

Kuzan (Interview 1, November 4, 2024)

These early instructional patterns revealed a novice identity characterized by hesitation, self-monitoring, and a reliance on external validation. Low TSE constrained Kuzan's ability to fully assume the teacher role, positioning him psychologically closer to a student seeking approval than a teacher exercising pedagogical agency.

In contrast, Maysa entered the practicum with comparatively stronger TSE, which enabled her to adopt the teacher role more readily, even in challenging ELT contexts. From the beginning, she demonstrated a willingness to use English actively in class, introduce communicative games, and experiment with student-centered activities. When students struggled or showed limited engagement, she interpreted these challenges as part of the learning process rather than as evidence of her inadequacy. As she explained: "I knew that whatever happened, I would have to face it and get through it."

Classroom observations showed that Maysa frequently modified activities in response to students' reactions, such as simplifying instructions, adding visual support, or shifting from whole-class grammar explanations to group-based vocabulary tasks. These adaptive practices reflected a sense of agency rooted in her belief that she could meet the demands of English teaching. Her identity was constructed not merely through task completion but through professional values such as responsibility, perseverance, and responsiveness to learners' needs.

Over time, sustained teaching experiences enabled all participants to renegotiate their identities as their TSE developed. Ariya gradually moved beyond

rigid lesson delivery and became more responsive to student understanding. As she grew familiar with students' learning styles, she adjusted her explanations, provided clearer examples, and used simple English supported by gestures and repetition: "At first, I was not [confident]. However, over time, I began to understand my students. I learned how they think and react. So, I could adjust my teaching accordingly."

This shift marked a transition from self-doubt to pedagogical awareness, indicating that her emerging TSE supported a more confident and teacher-oriented identity. Similarly, Kuzan's repeated engagement with pronunciation practice and daily classroom interaction strengthened both his instructional efficacy and self-perception:

"*I would say I am about 30% more confident now. I feel more confident speaking and expressing myself in class. Also, I think my teaching skills have improved somewhat because I get to practice every day.*"

Kuzan (Interview 3, March 10, 2025)

As he became more comfortable using English spontaneously and responding to students' questions, he began to view himself less as a hesitant novice and more as an emerging professional capable of guiding learning. Maysa's reflections most clearly illustrated a psychological transition from student to teacher. Her growing efficacy was evident not only in classroom performance but also in how she thought about teaching outside class:

"*My confidence has increased… Now, when I start thinking about a lesson, my mind immediately goes to what I should teach. Sometimes I even dream about my lessons.*"

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

Her identity was increasingly defined by decision-making, planning, and concern for students' learning, signaling a deep internalization of the teacher role.

In summary, the transition from student to TI was profoundly shaped by participants' initial and evolving levels of TSE. Fragile TSE at the beginning of the practicum resulted in cautious ELT practices and tentative professional identities. In

contrast, stronger TSE enabled participants to engage more confidently in English instruction and adopt teacher-like roles earlier. Across the practicum, however, TSE and TI developed in tandem: as PSETs gained experience teaching English, responding to students, and managing classrooms, their efficacy and professional self-concept strengthened simultaneously. This process marked a psychological shift from seeing themselves as "student teachers" to internalizing an English teacher identity, highlighting the central role of TSE in mediating identity construction during rural teaching practicums.

5.2 Teacher Role: Becoming a Teacher through Doing

The transition from student teacher to professional educator is shaped not merely by time spent in schools but by the quality and intensity of teaching experiences encountered during the practicum. Central to this process are mastery experiences, successful engagements with authentic teaching tasks such as lesson planning, classroom management, instructional decision-making, and responding to students' learning needs in real time. For the PSETs in this study, these experiences were particularly significant in rural contexts, where limited staffing and resources meant they had to assume full responsibility for English teaching. Through "doing" English teaching, participants developed stronger TSE, which in turn supported a shift in how they perceived themselves, from university students fulfilling practicum requirements to teachers capable of guiding learners.

For many participants, mastery experiences emerged most clearly when they were required to take on responsibilities typically associated with full-time teachers. Ariya's experience illustrates how professional identity can be shaped through necessity and crisis. When her mentor teacher was unexpectedly hospitalized, Ariya was left to manage all English classes on her own. This included designing lesson plans, delivering grammar and vocabulary lessons, preparing assessments, and managing classroom behavior without supervision. Reflecting on this period, she explained:

"*After I managed a full week of lessons without my mentor's help, I felt like I was finally a teacher, not just a trainee.*"

Ariya (Interview 2, January 20, 2025)

Classroom observations during this period showed that Ariya began to speak more confidently when explaining grammar points, used the board more strategically to scaffold sentence structures, and adjusted activities when students appeared confused. Although she initially relied heavily on worksheets, she gradually incorporated short oral drills and repetition exercises to support vocabulary retention. These instructional decisions marked a shift from cautious compliance to purposeful teaching, indicating growing TSE and a stronger identification with the teacher role.

Similarly, Kuzan's mastery experiences were closely tied to moments when he observed tangible student learning in English—one particularly meaningful experience involved teaching basic sentence patterns and pronunciation through visual aids and short speaking activities. After several lessons of repetition and practice, Kuzan noticed that students were able to construct simple sentences independently and pronounce key words more accurately. He reflected:

"*Observing them grasp the material and enjoy the learning process was incredibly fulfilling.*"

Kuzan (Reflection 2)

This sense of fulfillment was rooted in concrete instructional success. Classroom observations showed Kuzan gradually increasing student talk time, moving from choral repetition to pair practice, and confidently modeling pronunciation. These changes reflected his growing belief in his instructional competence. The satisfaction he derived from students' progress reinforced both his TSE ("I can teach English effectively") and his emerging TI ("I am someone who helps students learn").

For Maysa, mastery experiences extended beyond classroom instruction to encompass a wide range of English-related responsibilities. In addition to teaching lessons, she was involved in training students for English competitions, judging language

activities, and organizing school-wide events that required English. Reflecting on this accumulation of responsibilities, she noted:

"*I helped organize school events, judged English competitions, trained students… I never thought I could do it all.*"

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

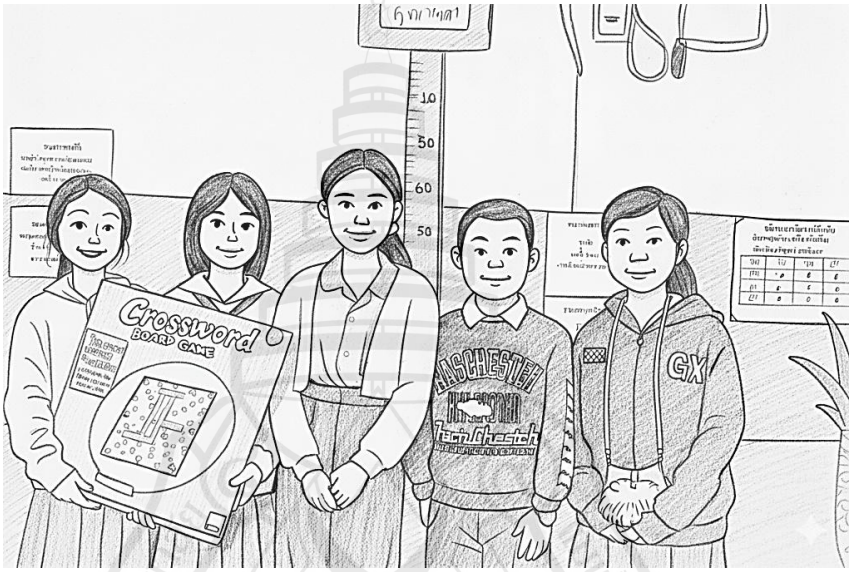


Figure 5.1 "The Proudest Moment". An Attached Photograph in Maysa's Reflection

These experiences demanded not only pedagogical knowledge but also leadership, decision-making, and efficacy in using English in public and institutional contexts. Classroom observations indicated that Maysa became increasingly flexible in her ELT practices, modifying activities to suit students' proficiency levels and using games, visuals, and simplified instructions to maintain engagement. Her involvement extended beyond school hours, further blurring the boundary between personal and professional identity. As she humorously remarked, "Even my social media is filled with teaching content now." This immersion illustrates a deep internalization of the teacher role, where teaching English became central to how she understood herself.

Across participants, mastery experiences emerged as the most influential factor in shaping the teacher role during the practicum. When PSETs successfully navigated real English teaching tasks, e.g., explaining grammar clearly, engaging students in communicative activities, managing classrooms independently, or witnessing student

progress, they began to see themselves as teachers rather than students completing a requirement. These experiences strengthened their TSE by providing concrete evidence of competence and adaptability. Significantly, mastery experiences were reinforced through social validation, including positive student responses, peer recognition, and mentor feedback, which further solidified participants' beliefs in their abilities.

This finding demonstrates that TI is actively constructed through practice. By engaging in the everyday work of English teaching under challenging and unsupported conditions, PSETs learned to inhabit the role of the teacher. Their growing TSE did not merely motivate them to persist; it functioned as a mechanism through which TI was shaped and affirmed. Becoming a teacher, for these PSETs, was not a matter of formal status but the result of repeated acts of teaching that gradually transformed belief into identity.

5.3 Role Model: Learning to Become from Others

The development of TI is inherently social and relational rather than an isolated, individual process. During the teaching practicum, PSETs learned not only through direct teaching but also by observing how other English teachers taught in real classrooms. These vicarious experiences, i.e., gained through watching mentor teachers, local colleagues, and peers teach English, played a significant role in shaping participants' beliefs about effective ELT practice, influencing both their TSE and their emerging professional identities. By observing how experienced teachers managed English lessons, interacted with learners, and navigated contextual constraints, PSETs began to imagine who they could become as teachers.

For Kuzan, observing his mentor teacher's English classroom provided concrete models of classroom management and instructional decision-making. He recalled watching his mentor handle a noisy class during an English lesson focused on basic vocabulary and sentence patterns. Instead of raising her voice, the mentor paused the lesson, re-established attention using simple English commands, and restructured

the activity into shorter, more manageable tasks. Reflecting on this moment, Kuzan noted:

"*Observing how my mentor handled a noisy class made me realize I could develop my own way of managing students.*"

Kuzan (Interview 2, January 21, 2025)

This observation was not passive imitation. Classroom observations indicated that Kuzan later adapted similar strategies in his own English lessons, such as breaking pronunciation drills into smaller segments and using visual cues to regain student focus. His mentor's feedback further reinforced this learning, offering suggestions on pacing English explanations and sequencing activities. These moments of guided observation and immediate application strengthened Kuzan's TSE and helped him envision himself as a capable English teacher rather than a hesitant novice.

Maysa's practicum experience illustrates how sustained mentorship can shape both pedagogical understanding and professional identity. Her mentor teacher regularly observed her English lessons and provided weekly feedback, particularly on how to respond to students' varying levels of proficiency. Maysa explained:

"*My mentor teacher gives me advice weekly… they help me understand each student's learning habits.*"

Maysa (Interview 2, January 13, 2025)

Through these interactions, Maysa learned to interpret student silence, hesitation, and disengagement not simply as a lack of motivation but as indicators of linguistic difficulty. Classroom observations showed that she began to simplify instructions, strategically switch between English and Thai, and use more modeling when teaching grammar or vocabulary. Her mentor's emphasis on knowing learners individually encouraged Maysa to adopt a more empathetic, learner-centered approach to ELT. Over time, this approach became part of how she defined herself as a teacher, someone attentive to students' needs rather than focused solely on content delivery.

Peer collaboration also functioned as an important source of vicarious learning. Informal discussions among PSETs about English activities, classroom management,

and lesson sequencing allowed participants to learn from one another's successes and failures. Maysa described how peers frequently exchanged ideas about games, worksheets, and strategies for encouraging reluctant learners. These peer interactions helped normalize struggle and reinforced the idea that teaching English is a shared, evolving practice. Through these exchanges, participants developed a collective understanding of teaching as collaborative rather than solitary, which supported both their TSE and their sense of belonging to the teaching profession.

However, vicarious experiences were not always positive. Ariya's experience highlights how inconsistent modeling can also shape identity, albeit in different ways. She noted that while one physical education teacher occasionally offered guidance, PSETs were left mainly to manage English classes independently:

"*There was one PE teacher who guided me sometimes, but in the end, the PSETs had to manage things on their own.*"

Ariya (Interview 2, January 20, 2025)

This lack of consistent ELT modeling meant that Ariya had limited opportunities to observe effective English teaching practices. Instead, she relied on brief observations of neighboring teachers and her own trial-and-error teaching. Nevertheless, these observations still provided valuable insight. Ariya noted how teachers around her were constantly occupied with marking, lesson preparation, and administrative work, teaching multiple subjects:

"*Looking at my mentor teacher and the teacher in the classroom next door, I see that they constantly have work coming in. They never really get a break.*"

Ariya (Interview 2, January 20, 2025)

These observations prompted Ariya to reflect on the realities of the profession, helping her recalibrate her expectations of teaching. Rather than idealizing the role, she began to understand teaching as emotionally demanding and labor-intensive. This realism influenced her emerging TI, grounding it in endurance, responsibility, and adaptability rather than idealized competence alone. Across cases, reflection played a critical role in transforming observation into identity formation. PSETs did not simply

copy what they saw. Instead, they interpreted, adapted, and sometimes rejected observed practices based on their own beliefs and experiences. Kuzan, for instance, adapted his mentor's classroom management strategies rather than replicating them exactly, while Maysa selectively incorporated her mentor's feedback into her ELT practices. This reflective filtering process marked a shift from observing teaching to becoming a teacher.

In summary, vicarious experiences during the rural teaching practicum served as a vital bridge between theoretical preparation and lived classroom practice. By observing English lessons, classroom interactions, and teachers' daily work, PSETs learned not only instructional techniques but also professional dispositions, emotional regulation, and realistic expectations for teaching. Mentor teachers played a particularly influential role by modeling ELT practices, providing feedback, and offering emotional support, thereby strengthening both TSE and TI. Peers functioned as reflective partners, while local teachers and school contexts exposed PSETs to the complexity and variability of teaching. Importantly, these role models were not simply imitated; they were actively interpreted. Through reflection and adaptation, PSETs constructed their own professional identities, demonstrating that vicarious experiences are central, not incidental, to the development of TSE and TI during the practicum.

5.4 Validation and Affirmation: Being Seen as a Teacher

Social and verbal persuasion, manifested through feedback, encouragement, recognition, and everyday interactions, played a crucial role in shaping the PSETs' developing teacher identities. During the rural teaching practicum, participants were acutely aware of how they were perceived and treated by mentors, students, peers, and school staff, particularly regarding their English teaching practices. These moments of validation, whether explicit or subtle, functioned as powerful signals that affirmed or challenged their legitimacy as English teachers. Through these interactions, external recognition became internalized, strengthening participants' TSE and contributing to the construction of their professional identities.

Kuzan's experience illustrates how specific feedback on ELT practice directly reinforced both TSE and TI. After delivering an English grammar lesson focused on sentence structure, Kuzan received immediate and targeted praise from his mentor teacher: "That was a great lesson. You explained the grammar clearly." Reflecting on this moment, Kuzan noted that the comment helped him reconsider his self-perception: "I started to believe I really could do this" (Kuzan, Reflection 2). Classroom observation data indicated that this affirmation followed a lesson in which Kuzan slowed down his explanation, used examples on the board, and checked comprehension through short oral responses. The mentor's recognition validated not only his effort but also his instructional decision-making in ELT. This moment marked a shift from viewing himself as a hesitant trainee to seeing himself as a competent English teacher capable of facilitating understanding. The specificity of the feedback, focused on clarity of explanation, was particularly influential in strengthening his TSE and legitimizing his professional identity.

Student responses also served as powerful sources of affirmation. For Ariya, students' verbal and behavioral reactions during English lessons played a central role in shaping her sense of being accepted as a teacher. She described moments when students commented positively on her teaching style and expressed enjoyment of her English lessons. Classroom observations showed that students were more willing to answer questions and participate in vocabulary activities when Ariya adopted a supportive tone and simplified explanations. Reflecting on these interactions, Ariya noted that students' casual compliments and respectful engagement made her feel "fulfilled" and emotionally connected to her role. These moments signaled that she was not merely filling in for a teacher but was being recognized by students as a legitimate English instructor. Such student affirmation helped stabilize her fragile TSE and strengthened her emerging identity as a teacher who could build rapport and facilitate learning.

For Maysa, validation extended beyond formal classroom interactions into broader social recognition connected to her role as an English teacher. She described how students followed her on social media and continued to ask questions related to English learning and personal development outside class time.

"*Students follow me on Instagram and ask questions; even personal ones like about skincare… They see me as a role model. They notice how I dress, my nails, my hair.*"

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

This visibility reflected how students perceived her as an authoritative yet approachable figure. Classroom observations supported this perception, showing that students frequently sought her help during English activities and remained engaged during group work. Being viewed as a role model reinforced her sense of responsibility and professionalism, further consolidating her TI. However, this affirmation also introduced tension by blurring the boundaries between personal and professional roles. Navigating this complexity required Maysa to reflect on what it meant to be a teacher beyond instructional competence, incorporating moral responsibility and social influence into her identity.

Affirmation, however, was not always consistent or straightforward. Ariya's experience highlights how fluctuating recognition can both challenge and strengthen identity construction. She described instances in which PSETs were overlooked or excluded from decision-making, followed by moments of sudden acknowledgment: "They will suddenly acknowledge us and say, 'You are a teacher too'" (Ariya, Interview 3, March 3, 2025). Despite the inconsistency, these moments of recognition were significant. Field notes revealed that students consistently referred to Ariya as their English teacher and expressed enthusiasm about learning with her. Such student recognition, though informal, provided a stable source of validation that counterbalanced institutional ambiguity. These experiences demonstrate that learner affirmation can be particularly influential in reinforcing TI, even when institutional support is uneven.

Leadership opportunities also functioned as symbolic validation. When Maysa was asked to serve as a judge for an English-related school activity, she interpreted it as evidence that the school trusted her professional judgment. This responsibility affirmed her growing TSE and reinforced her perception of herself as a competent and valued member of the teaching community. Although such roles added pressure, they

also prompted reflection and growth, encouraging her to internalize the identity of a teacher who contributes beyond the classroom.

These findings show that social and verbal persuasion operated through concrete ELT-related interactions rather than abstract encouragement alone. Feedback on English lessons, student engagement during language activities, trust demonstrated through leadership roles, and everyday recognition all contributed to shaping participants' beliefs about their capabilities and their identities as teachers. Validation led to increased TSE, which in turn strengthened the sense of TI. At the same time, moments of neglect or conflicting recognition prompted reflection, helping PSETs clarify the kind of English teachers they aspired to become.

In summary, validation and affirmation served as critical mechanisms that enabled TSE and TI to develop simultaneously. External recognition, whether from mentors, students, or the wider school community, served as a mirror reflecting participants' emerging professional selves. Through these interactions, PSETs gradually shifted from seeing themselves as students attempting to teach English to viewing themselves as legitimate teachers with a rightful place in the profession.

5.5 Emotional Regulation: Becoming Emotionally Invested in Teaching

The emotional and physiological dimensions of the teaching practicum played a central role in shaping the PSETs' identities. Teaching English in rural, resource-limited contexts required far more than instructional competence; it demanded sustained emotional engagement, empathy, and self-regulation. Across participants' experiences, emotions such as anxiety, frustration, care, pride, and exhaustion were not peripheral reactions but integral to how they understood themselves as English teachers. Their ability to manage these emotional states influenced both their TSE and their emerging professional identities, highlighting emotional regulation as a key mechanism in becoming a teacher.

Maysa's experiences clearly illustrate how emotional investment emerged through everyday ELT practice. During English lessons, she frequently encountered students who were disengaged or resistant, particularly during grammar-focused

activities. Classroom observations showed that she paused instruction to check students' understanding, offered encouragement in Thai when students hesitated to respond in English, and praised small attempts at participation. Reflecting on these moments, Maysa explained:

"*I care not just about their studies but also about their well-being… When they go home, I wonder how they are.*"

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

This statement reflects an identity grounded in relational and emotional care, extending beyond language outcomes to students' overall development. Although she sometimes felt discouraged when students remained silent or disengaged, moments when even a few learners attempted to speak English or completed tasks motivated her to continue.

"*Sometimes I get discouraged… but seeing even a few students trying keeps me going.*"

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

These small ELT-related successes functioned as emotional anchors, reinforcing her belief that her efforts mattered. Her emotional regulation, acknowledging disappointment while sustaining commitment, contributed to a TSE rooted not only in skill but also in perseverance and care. Peer support further strengthened this process. Sharing frustrations and teaching ideas with fellow PSETs helped normalize emotional struggles and reinforced her sense of belonging to a professional community.

Ariya's journey highlights how emotional regulation developed through repeated exposure to challenging English teaching situations. In the early weeks, she experienced intense anxiety, particularly when teaching grammar and spelling to mixed-ability classes. Classroom observations documented moments when students struggled to follow her explanations, leading to visible tension and self-doubt. Emotionally overwhelmed, she described episodes of crying after school. However,

rather than withdrawing, Ariya developed coping strategies that allowed her to continue teaching:

"*Some days, I even cried… However, after crying, I told myself, 'It is okay. Start again.'*"

Ariya (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

She consciously reframed each new day as a fresh start, which enabled her to enter the classroom with renewed composure. Over time, this emotional regulation translated into calmer lesson delivery and improved classroom interaction. By the end of the practicum, Ariya noted a shift in her emotional experience during English lessons:

"*I was so nervous during the first few weeks, but by the end of the teaching practicum, I felt calm and in control. I started to enjoy teaching, not just get through it.*"

Ariya (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

This transition from anxiety to enjoyment signals a strengthening of TSE and an identity grounded in emotional stability. Her ability to regulate stress while responding to students' needs reflected the emergence of a more mature TI, characterized by resilience and reflective practice.

Kuzan's experience further illustrates the connection between emotional regulation, ELT practice, and identity formation. Despite facing serious health challenges during the practicum, he remained emotionally invested in his English classes. Classroom observations showed that he took pride in small relational moments, such as students voluntarily helping him organize materials or participating more actively in pronunciation drills. Reflecting on these interactions, Kuzan stated:

"*Some students are lovely… they come help clean the room without being asked.*"

Kuzan (Interview 3, March 10, 2025)

These moments of connection reinforced his sense of purpose and belonging as a teacher. Rather than focusing solely on physical or emotional hardship, Kuzan interpreted his experiences as meaningful professional growth:

"*I will build upon all the experiences I have gained from teaching.*"

Kuzan (Interview 3, March 10, 2025)

His ability to sustain emotional commitment to teaching English, despite personal adversity, reflects a form of TSE rooted in resilience and moral purpose. Teaching was not merely a practicum requirement but a meaningful part of his life narrative, shaping his identity as a dedicated and caring teacher. Across these cases, emotional experiences were not distractions from teaching but fundamental to it. Managing emotions while teaching English, whether calming anxiety before explaining grammar, sustaining patience with disengaged learners, or finding joy in small moments of progress, was central to participants' perceptions of themselves as teachers. Emotional regulation enabled PSETs to remain engaged, reflective, and committed, even in challenging rural contexts. In turn, this emotional competence reinforced their TSE, as feeling capable became inseparable from feeling emotionally grounded.

In summary, the physiological and emotional states experienced during the practicum were closely intertwined with the construction of TI. Emotional engagement functioned as both a challenge and a resource, providing moments of reflection through which PSETs clarified their values, strengthened their commitment, and developed resilience. By learning to regulate emotions in English teaching contexts, participants moved beyond survival toward professional ownership. Their stories demonstrate that becoming an English teacher involves not only pedagogical knowledge but also the emotional capacity to care, persist, and find meaning in teaching.

5.6 Motivation and Persistence: To Quit or to Stay in the Profession

The teaching practicum in Thai rural schools presented complex emotional and professional challenges for PSETs, testing not only their instructional competence in English but also their motivation to persist in the teaching profession. For many participants, the practicum served as a critical turning point, either reinforcing or destabilizing their emerging beliefs about teaching English. This theme examines how TSE shaped participants' motivation and persistence when confronted with ELT-related difficulties, and how these experiences, in turn, contributed to the construction of their teacher identities.

Across the cases, a clear pattern emerged. PSETs who developed or sustained positive TSE during the practicum demonstrated stronger motivation, greater adaptability, and higher persistence in their English teaching. These participants tended to interpret classroom challenges, such as students' limited English proficiency, low participation, or a lack of teaching resources, not as evidence of personal inadequacy but as pedagogical problems that could be addressed through effort and adjustment. Their belief in their ability to influence student learning in English served as a key source of professional endurance.

Maysa exemplified this relationship between TSE, motivation, and persistence. Classroom observations showed that she frequently adapted her English lessons when students struggled, simplifying instructions, switching between English and Thai for clarification, and incorporating games or visual aids to maintain engagement. Although these adjustments required additional preparation and emotional energy, she viewed them as evidence of her growing competence rather than as failures. Reflecting on her practicum, she stated:

"*Even though it is tiring, when I saw the results, I realized I did it. I feel happy and very proud of myself.*"

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

Her motivation was closely tied to observable student progress, such as learners beginning to respond in simple English phrases or showing increased efficacy during speaking activities. These ELT-specific successes reinforced her belief that her teaching mattered. As her TSE strengthened, so did her commitment to the profession. Rather than merely completing the practicum, she articulated clear long-term goals:

"*I am studying hard for the teacher exam… I want to teach in a mountain school.*"

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

This aspiration reflects a developing TI grounded in resilience and purpose. Her statement, "If I can handle teaching here, I can teach anywhere," suggests that the challenges of rural ELT became a source of empowerment rather than a deterrent. The practicum thus functioned as a formative experience through which motivation, persistence, and identity were mutually reinforced.

Kuzan's experience further illustrates how increasing TSE can transform motivation. Early in the practicum, he struggled with managing English lessons in mixed-ability classrooms, particularly when students were reluctant to speak or lacked basic vocabulary. Classroom observations documented his initial hesitation and careful reliance on textbooks. Over time, however, he began experimenting with pronunciation drills, short dialogues, and oral repetition activities, gradually gaining efficacy as students responded more actively. These pedagogical breakthroughs strengthened his sense of agency and commitment. Reflecting on his future, he stated:

"*Right now, I want to be a teacher 100%. If I pass the exam and get placed somewhere far away, I will have to accept it and give it my best shot.*"

Kuzan (Interview 3, March 10, 2025)

This shift from externally driven participation to internal motivation highlights TSE's role in sustaining persistence. Teaching English was no longer something he endured; it became a profession he actively chose. His willingness to accept remote placements demonstrates a TI grounded in adaptability and efficacy in coping with uncertainty.

In contrast, participants whose TSE remained low or declined over time experienced significant motivational erosion. Ariya's experience illustrates how persistent ELT-related difficulties can undermine both motivation and identity development. Classroom observations revealed frequent struggles with classroom management during English lessons, particularly when students became disengaged during grammar explanations or spelling tasks. Despite her efforts, limited student response and minimal institutional support led her to question her effectiveness. As a result, her motivation shifted from professional growth to mere survival:

"*My two words are: must survive… If I did not survive, I would not graduate.*"

Ariya (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

Teaching English became an obligation rather than a meaningful activity. She admitted that her effort decreased over time:

"*I became too lazy to prepare lessons and teach. I just did whatever it took to survive in the work environment.*"

Ariya (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

This decline in motivation was closely linked to her weakened TSE. Without the belief that her teaching could make a difference, it became increasingly complex for her to maintain her identity as a teacher. Although she persisted physically in the practicum, her emotional and professional withdrawal indicates a stalled identity development, driven more by necessity than commitment.

These findings demonstrate that TSE is a central factor shaping motivation and persistence during the rural teaching practicum. When PSETs believed they could teach English effectively, even imperfectly, they were more likely to invest effort, adapt pedagogically, and remain committed to the profession. In these cases, persistence reflected not only endurance but also a growing sense of professional purpose. Conversely, when TSE declined, motivation weakened, and identity development was disrupted. Participants persisted only to meet graduation requirements, not because they saw themselves as future teachers. In short, motivation and persistence during the practicum were not merely personal traits but outcomes of ongoing interactions between TSE, ELT

experiences, and contextual challenges. For PSETs who sustained or strengthened their TSE, persistence became a pathway to becoming teachers. For those whose TSE eroded, persistence became an act of survival, leaving their teacher identities fragile and uncertain.

In conclusion, I have demonstrated that TSE plays a central role in shaping the construction of TI during the practicum experience in Thai rural schools. The findings revealed that TSE functions not only as a psychological resource that enables persistence, resilience, and motivation, but also as a formative lens through which PSETs interpret their professional roles, responsibilities, and values. As participants gained confidence in managing classrooms, engaging students, and adapting to unpredictable challenges, they also began to see themselves as authentic teachers rather than PSETs. This transformation stresses the reciprocal and reinforcing relationship between self-efficacy and TI, where growth in one domain fuels development in the other.

The analysis further highlighted that the construction of TI is not a linear process but a dynamic negotiation of self-perceptions, social recognition, emotional investment, and contextual realities. Mastery experiences, vicarious learning, external validation, and emotional regulation all contributed to shaping participants' evolving identities. Nevertheless, the findings also revealed tensions and vulnerabilities: instances in which fragile self-efficacy limited professional commitment or discouraging practicum contexts weakened motivation. These intricacies affirm that identity development during the practicum is deeply contingent on the interplay between individual beliefs and the institutional and social environments in which PSETs are embedded.

The findings in this chapter emphasize that building strong TSE is essential not only for effective teaching but also for the sustainable development of a professional TI. By examining how self-efficacy influences participants' sense of self as teachers, this chapter contributes to a deeper understanding of the psychological and relational aspects of professional growth during practicum experiences in rural contexts. As the study progresses, the next chapter examines the challenges and opportunities that arise in developing self-efficacy and identity among PSETs. While findings to date indicate that self-efficacy contributes to identity construction, Chapter 6 will critically examine the conditions that both hinder and facilitate this process.

CHAPTER 6

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN DEVELOPING PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY AND IDENTITY

In this chapter, I will address the third research question: What challenges and opportunities do PSETs encounter in developing TSE and TI during their teaching practicum in rural schools in Thailand? Drawing on the lived experiences of three PSETs, I examine how the rural teaching practicum functioned as both a site of constraint and a site of possibility in the development of both TSE and TI.

Rather than viewing challenges and opportunities as separate or opposing forces, I conceptualize them as interrelated and co-constitutive elements of the practicum experience. As summarized in Table 6.1, the findings are organized into two broad thematic categories: challenges and opportunities. The first set of themes highlights structural, pedagogical, emotional, and institutional constraints that tested participants' TSE and destabilized their developing teacher identities. These challenges included limited teaching resources and infrastructure, language barriers and gaps in student proficiency, professional isolation, emotional and psychological pressures, and conflicting expectations between university coursework and school practices. Collectively, these factors generated uncertainty, frustration, and tension over identity.

Conversely, the second set of themes focuses on the opportunities embedded within the rural practicum context. These included opportunities for authentic teaching experience and autonomy, strong community and student engagement, expanded professional roles and responsibilities, and reflection on long-term professional commitment. Through these experiences, PSETs developed resilience, adaptability, and a more profound sense of purpose, which helped strengthen or reconfigure both TSE and TI. By examining the interplay between these challenges and opportunities, this chapter demonstrates that the development of TSE and identity is a dynamic, context-dependent process shaped by struggle, reflection, and relational learning within the realities of Thai rural schools.

Table 6.1 A Short Summary of the Findings (Research Question 3)

Research Question	Theme	Summary
3. What challenges and opportunities do PSETs encounter in developing TSE and TI during their teaching practicum in rural schools in Thailand?	1. Limited Teaching Resources and Infrastructure	PSETs faced significant material and infrastructure constraints, exacerbated by natural disasters such as flooding. The mismatch between university-based pedagogical training and rural school realities disrupted participants' TSE and their sense of efficacy. However, these constraints also prompted creativity, problem-solving, and resilience.
	2. Language Barriers and Student Proficiency Gaps	Students' low English proficiency and literacy gaps challenged PSETs' ability to implement communicative and student-centered methodologies. These difficulties initially triggered self-doubt but gradually fostered adaptability, patience, and a broader understanding of learner diversity and success.
	3. Isolation and Lack of Professional Support	Limited mentorship and peer interaction contributed to professional and emotional isolation. While some PSETs developed independence and autonomy, others experienced diminished TSE and uncertainty in their professional self-concept due to insufficient guidance and feedback.
	4. Emotional and Psychological Pressures	Emotional strain emerged from classroom management challenges, workload, self-doubt, and institutional demands. These pressures tested participants' emotional resilience but also promoted reflection, emotional awareness, and deeper engagement with the affective dimensions of TI.
	5. Conflicting Expectations between University and School	Discrepancies between theoretical preparation and school-based expectations led to disillusionment and tension with identity. Misalignments in pedagogical approaches, assessment practices, and supervisory support undermined TSE and challenged participants' professional coherence.
	6. Authentic Teaching Experience and Autonomy	Opportunities to exercise autonomy in lesson planning and classroom management strengthened PSETs' sense of agency and TSE. These experiences enabled a shift from compliance to pedagogical innovation, contributing to a more personalized and confident TI.

Table 6.1 (continued)

Research Question	Theme	Summary
	7. Strong Community and Student Engagement	Supportive rural communities and close relationships with students fostered a sense of belonging and professional value. These relational experiences encouraged empathy, cultural responsiveness, and a care-oriented approach to ELT.
	8. Role Expansion and Responsibility	Engagement in multiple roles beyond classroom teaching broadened participants' understanding of the teaching profession. These expanded responsibilities served as mastery experiences that enhanced TSE and promoted a holistic, context-sensitive TI.
	9. Professional Commitment and Purpose Clarification	The practicum prompted critical reflection on career intentions and professional values. While some PSETs reaffirmed their commitment to teaching, others reconsidered their career paths. This reflective process clarified professional purpose and shaped long-term identity trajectories.

6.1 Challenges

6.1.1 Limited Teaching Resources and Infrastructure

One of the most pervasive and deeply felt challenges PSETs faced during their rural teaching practicum was the severe lack of teaching resources and basic infrastructure, particularly those needed for effective ELT. The rural schools in this study frequently lacked essential technological tools, functional facilities, and instructional materials, conditions that directly constrained pedagogical choices and undermined participants' developing sense of TSE. These limitations also disrupted the professional roles PSETs had envisioned through their university-based ELT training, which strongly emphasized CLT, technology-enhanced instruction, and student-centered practices.

A central tension identified across participants' experiences was the gap between ELT pedagogy promoted in teacher education programs and the realities of rural classrooms. While PSETs were trained to use audiovisual input, interactive activities, and communicative tasks to develop learners' listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, these approaches were impractical due to the lack of basic teaching tools. In several classrooms, projectors, speakers, and televisions were either broken or unavailable, and English textbooks were outdated, incomplete, or shared among students. As a result, participants were frequently forced to abandon planned communicative activities and revert to teacher-fronted instruction, translation, and board-based explanations, even when these conflicted with their pedagogical beliefs.

These challenges were intensified by a natural disaster that struck the province shortly before the practicum began. Severe flooding damaged school buildings and classrooms, further limiting access to ELT resources. During my first observation at Ariya's school, classrooms were visibly affected: walls were stained with mud, desks were unevenly arranged, and teaching materials were stacked outside to dry. In one English lesson observation, Ariya attempted to conduct a vocabulary lesson on daily routines. Without visual aids or handouts, she relied solely on chalkboard drawings and oral explanation. Students struggled to follow the lesson, particularly lower-

proficiency learners who relied on visual input to understand the material. Ariya later reflected:

"Facilities in the classroom are not ready and sufficient. Some equipment, such as projectors and TVs, is either broken or missing. Rural schools lack the same equipment, technology, and learning materials as urban schools. Budget limitations mean that some activities have to be changed or canceled."

Ariya (Interview 2, January 20, 2025)

The flood damage symbolized not only the fragility of rural educational infrastructure but also the emotional burden placed on novice English teachers whose sense of preparedness was suddenly tested by the crisis. Ariya described feeling discouraged when communicative lesson plans developed at the university could not be implemented. This mismatch between expectations and reality led her to question her effectiveness as an English teacher, contributing to a temporary decline in her TSE.

Beyond the flood, chronic infrastructural limitations were evident across all sites. At Maysa's school, although conditions had slightly improved in recent years, ELT remained constrained by systemic shortages. Classroom observations revealed that one English teacher taught all nine grade levels, resulting in large class sizes and limited individualized support. In a lower-secondary English lesson observed, Maysa taught a reading-comprehension activity using a single photocopy of a text shared among groups of students. Without sufficient copies, students took turns reading aloud while others waited passively, reducing opportunities for engagement and interaction. The rigid national curriculum further compounded these challenges, as teachers were required to cover content that exceeded students' proficiency levels, particularly in listening and speaking.

Maysa's mentor explained that, due to limited funding, English teaching materials such as flashcards, graded readers, and audio recordings were purchased either with personal funds or through parental donations. Even basic infrastructure, including functional restrooms and paved walkways, depended on community fundraising. These constraints placed additional emotional and professional pressure

on teachers, reinforcing the perception that ELT in rural contexts required constant improvisation rather than systematic planning.

Despite these limitations, participants demonstrated adaptability and creativity. Maysa reflected that the lack of resources forced her to redesign English lessons using locally available materials, such as role-plays based on students' daily lives, vocabulary drawn from the school environment, and speaking activities conducted without written prompts. While these adaptations fostered some growth in her teaching efficacy, she also acknowledged persistent frustration at not being able to fully enact the communicative ELT practices she valued. This tension illustrates how limited resources simultaneously constrained pedagogical possibilities and shaped professional learning.

The recurring experience of teaching "without" adequate resources was therefore not only a logistical issue but also a threat to participants' developing TSE and TI. Being unable to deliver what they perceived as "good English lessons" led some PSETs to feel inadequate or illegitimate as teachers, particularly in the early stages of the practicum. Their emerging identities as English teachers were shaped within environments that demanded survival, flexibility, and emotional endurance rather than pedagogical idealism.

Nevertheless, these experiences also contributed to a more grounded and realistic understanding of ELT in rural Thailand. Through confronting structural limitations, participants developed empathy for rural learners and teachers, a heightened sense of responsibility, and a clearer awareness of systemic inequality in education. While limited teaching resources and infrastructure significantly challenged the development of TSE and TI, they also created an authentic context for learning, one that required resilience, reflective practice, and a redefinition of what it means to be an English teacher in under-resourced settings.

6.1.2 Language Barriers and Student Proficiency Gaps

Another persistent and emotionally demanding challenge PSETs faced during their rural teaching practicum was a significant language barrier stemming from students' low English proficiency and gaps in foundational literacy. In many rural classrooms, English lessons became sites of struggle not because of student apathy or inadequate teaching, but because of a profound mismatch between curriculum

expectations and students' actual linguistic readiness. This gap shaped not only how lessons were delivered but also how PSETs evaluated their own effectiveness, directly influencing their TSE and emerging identities as English teachers.

Across the three cases, participants consistently described students who struggled with the English alphabet, basic phonics, high-frequency vocabulary, and elementary sentence structures. In several observed lessons, students were unable to recognize or pronounce common words introduced in textbooks designed for their grade level. These limitations severely constrained the use of CLT approaches emphasized in university coursework. Activities such as pair work, role-play, or task-based interaction were abandoned because students lacked the linguistic resources to participate meaningfully.

Ariya's classroom provided a clear example of this challenge. During one observed lower-secondary English lesson focused on simple present tense sentences, students struggled to write even isolated words correctly. Several misspelled their own names in English, while others copied from the board letter by letter without understanding the meaning. Ariya later reflected that many students "could not spell simple words" and lacked basic grammatical awareness (Ariya, Interview 2, January 20, 2025). She also noted that some students did not bring notebooks or learning materials, suggesting deeper systemic issues such as inconsistent prior instruction and limited parental support. These classroom realities forced her to significantly slow down instruction, reducing lessons to spelling practice and repetition drills, far removed from the interactive ELT methods she had planned.

Kuzan encountered similar difficulties when teaching vocabulary. In one observed lesson, he introduced a set of everyday English words using flashcards and short games. Although students appeared engaged initially, many were unable to recall the words minutes later. He explained:

> *"Even though I teach vocabulary many times, the students forget quickly."*
>
> Kuzan (Interview 2, January 21, 2025)

After the activity, students struggled to match images to their corresponding words, and some resorted to guessing at random. These moments led Kuzan to question his instructional effectiveness. He reflected on whether the problem lay in his

teaching methods or in students' long-standing lack of exposure to English. This uncertainty weakened his TSE because repeated instructional failures made it difficult for him to see tangible evidence of progress, a key source of efficacy beliefs.

Maysa's experience further illustrates how language barriers shaped ELT practices and emotional labor. She actively implemented bilingual teaching strategies, combining English input with Thai explanations to scaffold understanding. During one observed lesson, she greeted students in English, modeled simple classroom expressions, and then translated them into Thai. However, student responses remained minimal, and many avoided speaking English altogether. She explained:

"I want to use English to teach students, but right now, the students are not very willing to use English with me."

Maysa (Interview 2, January 13, 2025)

To maintain comprehension, Maysa frequently repeated instructions, alternating between English and Thai. While this approach supported understanding, it significantly slowed the pace of lessons and reduced opportunities for communicative practice. She later reflected that the effort required to balance exposure and comprehension was exhausting and left her unsure whether meaningful language learning was occurring.

These language barriers affected not only instructional decisions but also PSETs' emotional engagement and professional self-concept. Many participants entered the practicum with idealized images of effective English teaching shaped by university coursework and practicum expectations. Confronted with students who could not read, write, or speak at expected levels, they struggled to reconcile these ideals with classroom realities. Several participants described moments when they felt more like classroom managers or caretakers than English teachers, simplifying lessons to the point where they felt disconnected from both the subject matter and their professional identity.

However, amid these challenges, subtle shifts in perception and practice began to emerge. Over time, participants recalibrated their definitions of success in ELT. Rather than measuring achievement through curriculum completion or grammatical accuracy, they began to value small but meaningful gains: a student correctly writing a

familiar word, responding to a greeting in English, or volunteering to read aloud. These moments, though modest, became critical sources of encouragement and emerging TSE.

Through this process, participants developed greater patience, empathy, and pedagogical flexibility. The persistent language barrier, while initially destabilizing, eventually prompted deeper reflection on what it means to teach English in under-resourced contexts. Participants began to see themselves not only as language instructors but also as facilitators of efficacy, motivation, and foundational learning. In this way, students' low proficiency, once perceived solely as an obstacle, gradually became a central component of participants' developing teacher identities. Their experiences underscored that effective English teaching in rural contexts requires not only linguistic competence but also emotional resilience, contextual sensitivity, and a willingness to redefine professional success.

6.1.3 Isolation and Lack of Professional Support

Isolation and a lack of professional support emerged as significant challenges shaping PSETs' experiences during their rural teaching practicum. Although many entered the practicum with enthusiasm and a strong desire to apply pedagogical knowledge gained from university coursework, the realities of working in geographically remote and under-resourced schools left them professionally and emotionally unsupported. The limited availability of experienced mentors, minimal opportunities for peer collaboration, and infrequent supervisory visits created conditions in which PSETs were required to manage English teaching responsibilities primarily on their own. This professional solitude weakened their developing TSE and complicated the construction of a coherent and confident TI.

Ariya's experience illustrates how isolation was embedded in everyday ELT practice. She reported that "all the work has been given or tasked to me as a PSET" (Ariya, Interview 2, January 20, 2025). In the absence of other interns or English teachers, Ariya was solely responsible for lesson planning, material preparation, classroom management, and assessment. During an observed English lesson, she independently designed a vocabulary activity using hand-drawn flashcards because there were no printed materials or technological support. While she managed the lesson competently, she later expressed uncertainty about whether her instructional

choices were appropriate, as no mentor observed or commented on her teaching. Without professional dialogue or feedback, routine ELT decisions, such as pacing, error correction, or language use, became sources of self-doubt rather than learning opportunities.

Ariya further described a fragmented school culture, noting that "teachers are divided into groups and do not support each other." This lack of collegial interaction intensified her sense of professional isolation and made it difficult for her to seek guidance. She stated, "They just abandoned us… I still had to represent the school," revealing a tension between her formal status as a trainee and the responsibilities she was expected to fulfill. This mismatch undermined her sense of legitimacy as a developing English teacher and disrupted the relational processes central to TI formation.

Kuzan's experience similarly reflects how inconsistent mentorship affected ELT practice and efficacy. Although his mentor teacher was generally supportive, she was frequently unavailable due to administrative duties. "Sometimes the mentor teacher leaves me to teach alone, depending on their duties," he explained (Kuzan, Interview 2, January 21, 2025). In several observed lessons, Kuzan independently taught grammar and vocabulary without receiving post-lesson feedback. While this autonomy allowed him to experiment with visual aids and simplified explanations, it also heightened his anxiety about instructional quality. Without guidance, Kuzan struggled to evaluate whether student confusion stemmed from his teaching methods or from students' low language proficiency. This lack of professional reassurance weakened his TSE and delayed his ability to assume the role of teacher.

Maysa's reflections further demonstrate the emotional and professional impact of isolation. Despite her strong commitment and proactive engagement, she admitted feeling overwhelmed by the breadth of responsibilities she carried alone:

"Sometimes it felt overwhelming, like I had to carry everything alone. Some tasks felt too big for me, and I doubted whether I could handle them."

Maysa (Interview 2, January 13, 2025)

In her case, isolation extended beyond lesson delivery to broader school involvement, including organizing English activities and assisting with extracurricular tasks. Although she succeeded, these accomplishments were rarely acknowledged or discussed with mentors, leaving her unsure whether she was developing professionally or merely coping. The absence of structured mentoring limited opportunities for reflective dialogue about ELT practices, such as adapting tasks for mixed-ability learners or balancing English and Thai use in instruction.

Across cases, the quality and consistency of mentorship varied significantly. Some mentors were overburdened and unable to provide sustained guidance, while others adopted a hands-off approach, leaving PSETs to navigate challenges independently. In such contexts, PSETs relied heavily on self-reflection and improvisation. For novice English teachers still forming their professional identities, this reliance on internal resources was destabilizing. Without external affirmation or constructive feedback, instructional challenges were internalized as personal inadequacies rather than understood as part of the learning process.

From a TSE perspective, social interactions with mentors, peers, supervisors, and students play a critical role in shaping efficacy beliefs. When these interactions were limited or absent, participants experienced role ambiguity and professional insecurity. Many questioned not only their instructional decisions but also their suitability for the teaching profession. In these circumstances, TI development risked becoming oriented toward survival rather than growth, with teaching framed as endurance rather than professional becoming.

At the same time, isolation occasionally fostered independence and problem-solving skills. Some participants learned to trust their instincts, adapt materials creatively, and manage classrooms autonomously. However, this self-reliance came at an emotional cost. Successes were rarely celebrated, and challenges felt intensely personal. Without a supportive professional community, isolation hindered reflective growth and weakened the relational foundations essential for sustained TSE and TI development.

6.1.4 Emotional and Psychological Pressures

The teaching practicum in rural schools generated not only logistical and instructional challenges but also significant emotional and psychological pressures for

the PSETs. These internal struggles, while invisible, played a critical role in shaping the development of TSE and TI. Teaching English in under-resourced contexts, managing linguistically diverse and unmotivated learners, addressing behavioral issues, and coping with limited professional support placed sustained emotional demands on the participants. Over time, these pressures blurred their sense of purpose, diminished their enthusiasm, and slowed the process of internalizing an identity as competent and confident English teachers.

A recurring source of emotional strain was classroom management during English lessons, notably when students displayed disruptive behavior or had special educational needs. Most PSETs reported feeling unprepared to support students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), learning disabilities, or low literacy skills, especially in English. Only one school had a designated special education teacher, leaving most PSETs to manage these challenges independently. During observed English lessons, participants struggled to balance lesson delivery with behavior control, frequently pausing activities to regain students' attention or repeating instructions multiple times. These disruptions interrupted lesson flow and reduced opportunities for meaningful language practice, increasing frustration and emotional fatigue.

Kuzan's experience illustrates how emotional pressure intersected with English teaching practice. He recalled being mocked by students for his English pronunciation during oral explanations, particularly when modeling vocabulary or reading sentences aloud. This experience not only lowered his TSE but also made him hesitant to speak English confidently in subsequent lessons. In addition, Kuzan found it challenging to manage disruptive behavior during group activities, a common ELT strategy he used to increase engagement. When students ignored instructions or disrupted peers, he questioned whether the problem lay in his classroom management skills or in his instructional clarity. These recurring doubts led him to reflect inwardly, interpreting students' lack of understanding as a personal failure rather than a contextual or developmental issue.

Similarly, Ariya experienced intense emotional stress during her early weeks of teaching English. She frequently encountered students arriving late to class, talking during lessons, or disengaging during vocabulary and grammar activities. In one

lesson, after repeated attempts to explain a simple sentence structure, several students continued chatting and refused to participate, leaving Ariya visibly discouraged. These moments caused her to question her authority and her ability to manage an English classroom effectively. She later reflected, “Some days, I did not even want to prepare or teach. I had no motivation” (Ariya, Interview 3, March 3, 2025). Her demotivation did not stem from a lack of commitment but from emotional exhaustion caused by repeated mismatches between her expectations for teaching and the realities she faced.

Even Maysa, who generally demonstrated strong efficacy and proactive engagement, admitted experiencing emotional strain. She reflected,

“Sometimes, I felt a bit discouraged when students were not interested in learning… It makes you feel drained or demotivated.”

Maysa (Interview 2, January 13, 2025)

During English lessons, Maysa invested significant effort in designing interactive activities, such as games and pair work, but received minimal student participation. When students resisted using English or remained silent during speaking activities, she questioned whether her strategies were effective. These moments of disengagement affected not only her instructional efficacy but also her emotional connection to the teaching role. The slow pace of student progress intensified feelings of self-doubt, especially when improvements were not immediately visible.

Across participants, emotional pressure was closely tied to how student responses were interpreted. When students struggled, resisted participation, or showed limited progress in English, PSETs internalized these outcomes as personal shortcomings. They questioned their teaching methods, their English proficiency, and their overall suitability for the profession. As a result, emotional exhaustion extended beyond physical tiredness to include a more profound sense of professional inadequacy. Teaching became emotionally demanding not only because of the workload but also because of the constant negotiation among effort, expectations, and outcomes.

However, within these emotional struggles, moments of growth and reflection also emerged. Participants gradually began to recognize emotional regulation as an essential component of teaching. Ariya, for example, shared that although she cried

almost daily during the first two weeks of the practicum, she eventually developed a coping routine. “After crying,” she said, “I told myself, ‘It is okay. Start again.’” This practice of emotional resetting allowed her to re-enter the classroom with renewed determination. Over time, her ability to manage emotional distress contributed to a more resilient sense of self and a slowly strengthening TI.

Overall, emotional and psychological pressures played a decisive role in shaping PSETs’ development of TSE and TI during the rural practicum. These pressures tested their mental resilience, strained their emotional well-being, and frequently disrupted their efficacy as English teachers. In the absence of systematic emotional support, structured reflection, or institutional scaffolding, many participants struggled to maintain motivation and a positive professional self-image. Nevertheless, for those who persisted, emotional challenges became formative experiences. Through coping, reflection, and gradual adaptation, participants developed a deeper, more empathetic understanding of teaching. Their emerging identities were shaped not only by pedagogical knowledge and classroom performance but also by resilience, vulnerability, and the emotional labor inherent in becoming an English teacher in challenging contexts.

6.1.5 Conflicting Expectations between University and School

A persistent and disorienting challenge faced by PSETs during the rural teaching practicum was the tension between university-based expectations and the realities of school-based practice. Participants consistently described feeling caught between two systems with different priorities, norms, and definitions of effective teaching. While university training emphasized structured lesson planning, CLT, and reflective practice, rural school contexts required flexibility, improvisation, and survival-oriented teaching. This mismatch created significant strain on TSE's development and complicated the construction of a coherent TI.

One key source of conflict lay in the pedagogical gap between theory and practice in ELT. Participants reported that university coursework strongly promoted student-centered instruction, communicative activities, and the integration of teaching materials and technology. However, in rural classrooms characterized by significant proficiency gaps, limited resources, and inconsistent attendance, these approaches were impractical. During English lessons, PSETs frequently had to abandon carefully

planned communicative activities and revert to basic drills, translation, or repetition simply to maintain classroom order and comprehension. This forced adjustment led to feelings of inadequacy, as participants questioned whether they were failing to meet university standards or simply responding appropriately to contextual realities. The inability to fully enact what they had been taught undermined their efficacy and blurred their sense of what "good English teaching" should look like.

Beyond pedagogy, conflicting expectations also emerged in administrative and logistical responsibilities. PSETs were required to juggle university reporting requirements, lesson plans, and reflective journals while simultaneously fulfilling school duties such as supervising exams, organizing school events, substituting for absent teachers, and managing extracurricular activities. Ariya described this tension vividly. She explained that university deadlines overlapped with mandatory school activities, leaving her feeling torn between competing obligations.

"Sometimes I needed to submit reports and also join school events, but they clashed," she reflected.

Ariya (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

This lack of coordination increased her stress and diminished her motivation, as she felt unable to satisfy either side fully.

Another primary source of conflict was the limited presence of university supervisors during the practicum. Many participants reported infrequent observations and minimal feedback, which left them uncertain about their performance and professional growth. Without regular supervisory visits, PSETs lacked opportunities to discuss ELT challenges, such as adapting communicative approaches for low-proficiency learners or managing mixed-ability classrooms. This absence of academic validation contributed to feelings of invisibility and self-doubt. In Maysa's case, the conflict was intensified by rigid school-level curriculum mandates. She explained that the nationally imposed, top-down English curriculum was unrealistic for rural students' proficiency levels and school resources.

"The top-down curriculum… not applicable in the school context," she stated.

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

Teachers were expected to cover the prescribed content while also adapting it to suit students who struggled with basic vocabulary and sentence construction. This contradiction forced PSETs to prioritize compliance over pedagogical integrity, creating frustration and disillusionment.

These conflicting expectations produced significant tension in identity. Participants oscillated between being "student teachers," accountable to university assessment criteria, and "real teachers," expected to manage full instructional and administrative responsibilities in schools. This dual positioning created ambiguity about their professional status and complicated the development of a stable TI. Ariya, for example, expressed a sense of fragmentation as she continually adapted to institutional demands beyond her control. Whether teaching English without adequate materials, covering for absent teachers, or completing administrative tasks unrelated to instruction, she felt increasingly disconnected from the TI she had envisioned. Her experience illustrates how external pressures can compel PSETs to compromise their pedagogical beliefs and values, leading to emotional exhaustion and weakened professional self-concept.

The conflict between university preparation and school-based expectations represented a significant challenge in the rural practicum. Pedagogical mismatches, limited supervisory support, logistical overload, and unclear role boundaries collectively undermined participants' TSE and disrupted the formation of TI. Instead of functioning as a bridge between theory and practice, the practicum positioned PSETs at the intersection of incompatible systems, leaving them uncertain and unsupported. These findings suggest that teacher education programs should better align coursework with the realities of rural teaching, strengthen supervisory engagement, and provide structured spaces for reflection. Only through such alignment can the practicum become a context that genuinely supports PSETs in developing both professional competence and a coherent, confident TI.

Despite the significant challenges outlined in the preceding sections, the rural teaching practicum was not experienced solely as a site of constraint or deficit. Alongside limited resources, language barriers, emotional pressures, and conflicting institutional expectations, the practicum also offered meaningful opportunities for professional growth and identity development. Confronting these difficulties

compelled PSETs to adapt, reflect, and assume greater responsibility, thereby creating conditions under which TSE and TI could be reshaped and strengthened. The following section, therefore, shifts focus from the challenges faced by PSETs to the opportunities embedded within rural practicum contexts, highlighting how these experiences fostered autonomy, resilience, community engagement, and a clearer sense of professional purpose.

6.2 Opportunities

6.2.1 Authentic Teaching Experience and Autonomy

The rural teaching practicum provided PSETs with their first sustained exposure to the authentic demands of ELT in real classrooms. Unlike prior university-based training, which emphasized microteaching, lesson demonstrations, and simulated instruction, the practicum required PSETs to design and deliver English lessons independently to mixed-ability learners with limited supervision and scarce resources. This shift from controlled practice to authentic classroom engagement became a critical turning point in both the development of TSE and the construction of a more grounded and realistic TI.

A defining feature of this experience was the degree of instructional autonomy afforded to PSETs. In many rural schools, mentor teachers were frequently occupied with administrative duties or responsible for multiple classes, leaving PSETs to manage English lessons on their own. While this autonomy initially generated anxiety, particularly regarding classroom management and student engagement, it gradually enabled PSETs to experiment with ELT strategies and make pedagogical decisions based on immediate classroom realities. For example, Maysa described how she moved beyond textbook-driven instruction to adapt her English lessons according to students' responses. During vocabulary lessons, she incorporated games and visual activities to maintain learners' attention, noting that she could immediately observe which tasks encouraged participation and which did not. Reflecting on this experience, she stated:

"It was good, quite good actually. I got to try things I had never done before… It was a great experience for me."

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

This freedom to trial different ELT techniques allowed Maysa to evaluate her teaching effectiveness through classroom interaction rather than external validation, reinforcing her efficacy and strengthening her sense of herself as a capable English teacher.

Similarly, Kuzan's practicum experience illustrates how autonomy supported the development of instructional flexibility in ELT. At the beginning of the practicum, he relied heavily on detailed lesson plans and followed them rigidly. However, as he encountered classes with varying proficiency levels and fluctuating student attention, he learned to adjust his English explanations, simplify instructions, and modify activities mid-lesson. For instance, when students struggled to understand spoken English instructions, he began incorporating brief Thai explanations and more modeling, a strategy that improved comprehension and classroom flow. This ability to adapt his teaching in real time enhanced his efficacy in managing English classrooms. It reinforced his belief that effective teaching required responsiveness rather than strict adherence to pre-planned materials.

In addition to instructional decision-making, autonomy is extended to broader ELT-related responsibilities. PSETs were responsible for designing assessments, selecting English learning materials, managing classroom behavior during communicative activities, and participating in school events conducted partly in English. Although these responsibilities were demanding, successfully managing them helped PSETs reconceptualize themselves as legitimate teachers rather than temporary trainees. Their growing involvement in authentic ELT practices contributed to a stronger sense of professional belonging and responsibility within the school community.

The rural practicum also promoted creativity and problem-solving in ELT, particularly in response to limited resources and diverse learner needs. Maysa's work with students with special educational needs illustrates this clearly. Recognizing that

traditional English drills were ineffective, she designed activities that combined language exposure with coloring and hands-on tasks. She explained:

"Kids with special needs enjoy coloring… so I try to find activities where they can color."

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

Although these activities were simple, they represented purposeful pedagogical adaptations grounded in learners' needs. Such moments strengthened her sense of teaching efficacy and reinforced an identity aligned with inclusive and learner-centered ELT. Reflective practice further supported the development of TSE and TI. Kuzan described how he regularly reflected on his English pronunciation before lessons, consciously rehearsing problematic sounds and classroom explanations. This ongoing cycle of self-evaluation and adjustment enabled him to view professional growth as an active, ongoing process, positioning himself as a developing yet committed English teacher.

Finally, sustained engagement in real English classrooms fostered deeper emotional connections with students and the profession. Small successes, such as students responding to questions in English or showing increased participation, became powerful sources of affirmation. Maysa reflected on a noticeable shift in her thinking:

"Now, when I start thinking about a lesson, my mind immediately goes to what I should teach, what activities to prepare, and I search for games."

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

This change illustrates her transition from viewing teaching as a practicum requirement to embracing it as a professional responsibility. Her proactive lesson planning and concern for student engagement signaled the internalization of a TI grounded in care, agency, and pedagogical purpose. Overall, the authentic teaching experience and autonomy afforded during the rural practicum were crucial in transforming challenges into opportunities for growth. Through direct engagement in ELT, real-time decision-making, reflective practice, and creative adaptation, PSETs

strengthened their teaching self-efficacy and developed more coherent, confident, and meaningful teacher identities. The rural context, while demanding, functioned as a powerful site of professional becoming, enabling PSETs to see themselves not merely as learners of teaching but as English teachers in practice.

6.2.2 Strong Community and Student Engagement

One of the most empowering aspects of the rural practicum was the strong sense of community and student engagement among the PSETs in both the school and village contexts. Unlike the more fragmented and impersonal relationships associated with larger or urban schools, rural settings offered an immersive, relational teaching environment characterized by close interpersonal ties and shared responsibilities. These community-based relationships not only enhanced PSETs' efficacy by providing emotional reassurance and social support but also played a crucial role in shaping their TI as caring, committed, and culturally responsive educators.

In the rural schools where participants were placed, the boundaries between school and community were blurred. Schools functioned as extensions of village life, where teachers, students, and families interacted frequently beyond formal classroom settings. Such interactions created a strong sense of belonging that many PSETs had not anticipated. Maysa reflected positively on this supportive environment, noting:

"At the very least, we have support that makes us feel at ease. We still have friends. We can talk about things."

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

Her sense of comfort was not incidental but developed through sustained interactions with mentor teachers, peers, school staff, and students' families. These relationships operated as informal yet vital support systems that helped her manage stress and uncertainty during the practicum. As she explained, "I did not do it alone; I had my mentor teachers, the school, experienced teachers, and friends who helped me along the way." This collective support reinforced her belief in her teaching capabilities and strengthened her identity as a legitimate member of a professional and social community.

For other participants, everyday communal practices within the school further reinforced a relational sense of TI. Several PSETs described shared meals,

collaborative problem-solving, and mutual assistance with both teaching and non-teaching tasks as meaningful aspects of their practicum experience. Kuzan, for example, highlighted the respectful and supportive nature of student behavior, noting that students routinely greeted teachers, helped clean classrooms, and demonstrated a collective sense of responsibility. He also described the care shown by colleagues:

"The community here is supportive. The teachers and staff are friendly and always invite me to lunch. They even order food for me when I am too busy to go myself. They take care of me."

Kuzan (Interview 3, March 10, 2025)

These seemingly small acts of care contributed significantly to Kuzan's emotional security and professional efficacy. Feeling supported and valued enabled him to take pedagogical risks, reflect on his teaching, and view challenges as opportunities for growth rather than as personal failures. In this context, teaching was not experienced as an isolated activity but as a shared social practice embedded within a culture of mutual respect and collective responsibility.

Strong student engagement further reinforced this relational dimension of teaching. Contrary to some initial expectations, participants found that many rural students were eager to learn, respectful, and emotionally connected to their teachers. This positive engagement, even in classrooms with limited resources, provided PSETs with immediate feedback and affirmation, strengthening their sense of instructional effectiveness. Interactions with students extended beyond academic instruction, as PSETs became mentors, role models, and trusted adults within the school community.

Through these rich interpersonal experiences, PSETs began to reconceptualize their professional roles. Teaching was no longer viewed solely as the delivery of English content or as classroom management, but as a relational and ethical practice that requires empathy, cultural sensitivity, and responsiveness to students' lived realities. Engagement with the community thus played a central role in shaping TI, positioning PSETs as contributors to social well-being rather than mere transmitters of knowledge.

Strong community ties and student engagement functioned as powerful social sources of TSE and identity formation. These experiences illustrate that the

construction of TI is not only an internal cognitive process but also a socially situated and emotionally embedded one. Through sustained interaction with students, colleagues, and local communities, PSETs developed a more holistic and relational understanding of what it means to be a teacher in a rural context—an identity grounded in connection, care, and shared purpose.

6.2.3 Role Expansion and Responsibility

A defining feature of the rural teaching practicum was the expansion of PSETs' roles beyond conventional classroom instruction. In addition to teaching English, participants were frequently required to organize school events, manage extracurricular activities, supervise students outside class hours, assist with administrative tasks, and sometimes teach subjects outside their areas of specialization. This role expansion placed PSETs in dynamic and unpredictable situations that significantly shaped their TSE and contributed to a broader, more complex construction of TI. Rather than functioning solely as English instructors, PSETs increasingly came to see themselves as full members of the school community, responsible for both academic and non-academic aspects of student life.

Within ELT contexts, these expanded responsibilities were particularly evident. PSETs were expected to adapt English lessons for mixed-ability classes, integrate English into school-wide activities, or support students' language use beyond formal lessons. For example, Kuzan described being asked to lead English-related activities during school events, such as rehearsing short English performances for celebrations like Teacher's Day. Although this task was not part of his original teaching plan, preparing students to perform English dialogues and songs required him to simplify language, model pronunciation repeatedly, and build students' efficacy in speaking English publicly. Successfully guiding students through these activities strengthened his belief that he could make English meaningful and accessible in authentic contexts, reinforcing both his TSE and his emerging identity as a capable English teacher.

Similarly, Maysa experienced role expansion through her involvement in daily school routines that intersected with ELT. She was asked to help students practice basic English expressions outside the classroom, such as greetings, classroom language, and simple instructions during assemblies or homeroom activities. She explained:

"At a school like this, teaching interns have to do everything. We organize events, run activities, and clean up afterward."

Maysa (Interview 2, January 13, 2025)

While these tasks were not always labeled as "English teaching," they required her to consistently model English use in naturalistic settings. Over time, she began to view these moments as valuable opportunities for language exposure rather than as additional burdens. This shift reflects how expanded responsibilities enabled her to reconceptualize ELT as a continuous, context-embedded practice rather than a strictly classroom-bound activity.

From the perspective of self-efficacy, these experiences functioned as mastery experiences (Bandura, 1997), the most influential source of TSE. Successfully managing English lessons alongside broader school responsibilities provided PSETs with concrete evidence of their growing competence. For example, when PSETs were asked to cover classes for absent teachers, they had to improvise English lessons with limited preparation time. Although the conditions were initially stressful, several participants reported that maintaining student engagement and delivering meaningful English input under such conditions increased their teaching efficacy.

However, the expansion of roles was not without difficulty. The intensity and volume of responsibilities sometimes pushed PSETs to their emotional and physical limits. Kuzan noted that in some schools,

"PSETs might be assigned extra duties beyond teaching, such as covering for absent teachers, supervising students, or working weekends."

Kuzan (Interview 3, March 10, 2025)

These demands occasionally blurred the boundaries between learning to teach English and merely "helping the school function," leading to fatigue and frustration. However, even in these moments, participants reflected that persevering through demanding situations strengthened their resilience and sense of professional capability. Notably, these experiences occurred within supportive school communities, where mentor teachers and peers provided informal guidance and encouragement. Such

social support mitigated stress and reinforced participants' sense of belonging, further strengthening both TSE and TI.

In summary, role expansion in rural schools contributed to the development of a multifaceted TI. PSETs began to see themselves not only as English teachers responsible for language instruction, but also as educators who support student development, contribute to school life, and engage with the broader community. Their growing TSE emerged not solely from successful English lessons but from navigating the complex intersection of instructional, administrative, and relational responsibilities. Through these experiences, the teacher's role was reframed as one that demands adaptability, empathy, collaboration, and leadership alongside pedagogical skill. In this way, taking on multiple roles during the practicum became a powerful mechanism through which PSETs constructed a more grounded, resilient, and context-sensitive professional identity.

6.2.4 Professional Commitment and Purpose Clarification

For many PSETs, the rural teaching practicum functioned as more than a site for applying pedagogical knowledge; it became a critical space for examining their motivations, values, and long-term commitment to the teaching profession, particularly as English language teachers. Immersion in demanding rural contexts prompted participants to reflect not only on how they taught English, but also on why they wanted to teach, for whom, and under what conditions. These reflections played a central role in clarifying their sense of professional purpose and consolidating—or, in some cases, reshaping—their emerging teacher identities.

The unique conditions of rural schools, including limited resources, minimal supervision, and high student needs, compelled PSETs to rely heavily on their internal resources. Teaching English in these contexts required sustained effort, emotional investment, and continual adaptation, which in turn heightened participants' awareness of their professional capacities and limits. Through repeated engagement with these challenges, many PSETs developed a stronger sense of TSE and a clearer understanding of their suitability for the profession. Maysa reflected on this process with a sense of achievement:

"Looking back on the past semester, now that it is almost over, I think, 'Wow, I really did all that?' I believe that if I can handle teaching here, I can teach anywhere… I think I should take on the challenge."

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

Her reflection illustrates how sustained engagement with English teaching in a challenging rural context served as a formative mastery experience. Successfully managing English lessons, responding to students' needs, and maintaining commitment despite obstacles reinforced her efficacy and strengthened her professional identity as a capable and resilient teacher. Similar sentiments were expressed by Kuzan, who enjoyed teaching English despite classroom management difficulties and students' low proficiency. He remarked, "If I can handle students here, I believe I can manage students in other schools too." His positive teaching experiences increased his willingness to remain in the profession, as he explained:

"Right now, while I am here, I want to keep teaching because it is fun. I am happy and still enjoy teaching."

Kuzan (Interview 3, March 10, 2025)

Although Kuzan acknowledged uncertainty about formal career pathways, such as passing the teacher examination, his intention to continue teaching English as a contract teacher, if necessary, reflects a strong sense of professional commitment, grounded in intrinsic motivation and positive teaching experiences. A crucial factor in strengthening this commitment was participants' recognition of their impact on students, particularly in underserved rural contexts where English teachers are scarce. For Maysa, teaching English extended beyond instructional responsibilities to include emotional care and advocacy. She described monitoring her students' well-being through social media and intervening when concerns arose:

"I worry about the students, not just about their studies, but about their well-being... Once I leave, no one will really care anymore."

Maysa (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

This sense of responsibility reinforced a TI rooted in care, ethical commitment, and social responsibility. Teaching English was no longer viewed merely as content delivery, but as a relational practice tied to students' broader lives and futures. At the same time, the practicum also prompted moments of ambivalence and reassessment. For some participants, exposure to bureaucratic demands, limited institutional support, and uncertain career prospects weakened their initial idealism. Teaching, while meaningful, came to be seen as one of several possible career paths. This illustrates how professional commitment is not fixed but negotiated in response to contextual realities. Nevertheless, even these moments of doubt contributed to identity development by encouraging more realistic and informed decision-making.

Ariya's experience further demonstrates how the practicum facilitated purpose clarification. Her desire to pursue a teaching career was closely linked to family responsibilities and social contribution rather than personal passion alone. She stated:

"Yes, I still want to take the teacher exam. I want to become a government teacher so I can help my family."

Ariya (Interview 3, March 3, 2025)

Through teaching English in a rural school, Ariya came to recognize her own resilience, noting, "I have learned that I am stronger than I thought." This growing self-awareness strengthened her TSE and supported the development of a purpose-driven TI shaped by responsibility, perseverance, and social obligation.

Across participants, reflective practices also played a key role in consolidating professional commitment. Reflecting on pedagogical decisions, student progress in English, and everyday interactions helped PSETs articulate personal teaching values. Several embraced the belief that English teachers must model responsibility and consistency, as illustrated by the comment, "If I tell them to wear a bow, I should also wear mine properly." Such reflections highlight how moral responsibility and professional conduct became integral to their evolving identities.

In summary, the rural teaching practicum served as a powerful catalyst for professional commitment and purpose clarification. It pushed PSETs to confront the emotional, pedagogical, and structural realities of teaching English in rural Thailand and to align—or realign—their aspirations with these realities. For some, the experience

strengthened their commitment and rooted their TI in service, care, and resilience. For others, it prompted reevaluation and a redefinition of future career paths. Regardless of the outcome, all participants engaged in a meaningful process of self-discovery that contributed to the ongoing, context-sensitive construction of their professional identities.

In conclusion, I have highlighted the dual nature of rural teaching practicums as experiences that are both profoundly challenging and deeply formative for PSETs. On the one hand, participants encountered significant systemic constraints, including inadequate teaching resources, wide language and proficiency gaps, professional isolation, emotional strain, and conflicting expectations between university preparation and school realities. These challenges frequently destabilized their efficacy, tested their emotional resilience, and, at times, weakened their sense of professional purpose. On the other hand, the practicum provided powerful growth opportunities, including authentic teaching autonomy, meaningful engagement with students and local communities, expanded professional roles, and a clearer understanding of long-term professional goals. These experiences strengthened or reshaped participants' TSE and contributed to the development of more grounded, context-sensitive teacher identities.

Notably, the findings indicate that challenges did not simply obstruct professional development; instead, they catalyzed resilience, creativity, and critical reflection. Likewise, the opportunities embedded in rural contexts revealed the practicum's transformative potential to cultivate not only more confident teachers but also educators with a strong sense of care, social responsibility, and ethical commitment. The rural practicum thus emerges as a paradoxical yet powerful space for identity formation, where PSETs learn to negotiate professional growth at the intersection of scarcity and possibility.

Building on this analysis of challenges and opportunities, the next chapter moves beyond description to interpretation. Chapter 7 situates these findings within the broader literature on TSE, TI, and rural education, drawing out key theoretical and practical implications. It also considers how these insights can inform the rethinking of teacher education policies and practicum design, particularly in preparing future teachers for under-resourced and rural contexts. Through this discussion, the chapter aims to highlight pathways to strengthen teacher preparation, support sustainable professional growth, and maximize the transformative potential of rural practicum experiences.

CHAPTER 7

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter, I will synthesize the study's key findings, situating them within the broader body of research on TSE, TI, and rural teacher education. Drawing on the empirical findings presented in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I will move beyond description to interpret how PSETs experienced, negotiated, and made sense of their rural teaching practicums. In doing so, I will highlight how self-efficacy and identity developed in tandem and how contextual realities within Thai rural schools shaped these interrelated processes.

The discussion addresses the three research questions guiding this study:

1. How does PSETs' self-efficacy develop during their teaching practicums in Thai rural schools?
2. In what ways does teachers' self-efficacy contribute to the construction of TI among PSETs during their teaching practicums in rural schools?
3. What challenges and opportunities do PSETs encounter in developing TSE and TI during their teaching practicums in rural schools?

Rather than treating these questions in isolation, I adopt an integrated analytical perspective that emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between TSE and TI. The findings suggest that changes in PSETs' beliefs about their instructional capabilities were closely intertwined with how they came to see themselves as teachers, particularly within the complex and demanding contexts of rural ELT. Accordingly, the discussion is organized thematically, highlighting how efficacy beliefs, identity positioning, emotional experiences, and contextual affordances interact across the practicum.

The chapter begins by revisiting the development of TSE among PSETs, tracing a trajectory from initial uncertainty and fragility toward more stable, experience-based efficacy. This development is interpreted through Bandura's social cognitive framework, with particular attention to mastery experiences, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and emotional regulation. The discussion then examines

how emerging and fluctuating levels of TSE contributed to the construction of TI, aligning with sociocultural perspectives that conceptualize identity as dynamic, relational, and context-dependent. As PSETs engaged in classroom practice, received feedback, and navigated emotional challenges, their sense of who they were becoming as teachers evolved alongside their growing (or, in some cases, contested) sense of efficacy.

The chapter further explores the rural teaching practicum as a dual space of challenge and opportunity. Structural constraints such as limited resources, gaps in student proficiency, professional isolation, and misalignment between university preparation and school realities are discussed as factors that tested both TSE and TI. At the same time, opportunities for authentic teaching, increased autonomy, close relationships with students and communities, and expanded professional responsibilities are examined as powerful sources of learning, agency, and affirmation of identity. This duality underscores the importance of understanding rural practicums not merely as sites of deficit, but as complex learning environments with significant developmental potential.

Finally, the chapter considers the implications of these findings for theory, practice, and policy in teacher education, particularly for English language teacher preparation in rural contexts. The discussion highlights the need for more context-responsive practicum designs, stronger mentoring structures, and greater attention to the emotional and identity-related dimensions of learning to teach. By integrating insights across all three research questions, this chapter contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how TSE and identity are co-constructed through lived experience in rural educational settings.

7.1 How does Pre-Service English Teacher Self-Efficacy Develop?

This section discusses how the TSE of PSETs developed during their teaching practicum in Thai rural schools. The findings reveal a dynamic and non-linear developmental process in which pre-existing dispositions toward English learning and teaching, immediate ELT-related contextual demands, social relationships within

schools, and emotional responses interacted to shape PSETs' beliefs about their instructional capability. Across the experiences of Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa, three interconnected phases emerged: (1) divergent entry points marked by fragile or uneven efficacy foundations, (2) an abrupt confrontation with rural ELT realities, and (3) the gradual reconstruction of efficacy through lived teaching experiences aligned with Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy. While these patterns align with established models of teacher TSE development, they also reveal how features of Thai rural schooling, such as multi-grade English classrooms, examination-oriented curricula, limited instructional resources, heavy non-teaching workloads, and strong hierarchical school cultures, complicate conventional assumptions about practicum support and professional learning. In this discussion, I interpret these findings in relation to ELT-focused literature, clarify context-specific nuances, and consider implications for English teacher education in Thailand.

As shown in Figure 7.1, a key finding is the marked variation in PSETs' initial levels of English teaching self-efficacy, shaped by prior English learning experiences, motivations for entering the teaching profession, and sociocultural expectations surrounding teaching in Thailand. Ariya and Kuzan entered the practicum with relatively fragile TSE. Ariya's decision to become an English teacher was strongly influenced by external expectations rather than intrinsic interest, which limited her sense of ownership over the teaching role. Kuzan, who grew up under intense familial pressure to become an English teacher, had internalized high expectations for linguistic accuracy and teacher authority, leading to anxiety about making mistakes in front of students.

In contrast, Maysa began the practicum with comparatively strong TSE, grounded in positive English learning experiences and a clear commitment to student-centered ELT. These differences are consistent with research showing that PSETs' beliefs about language learning and teaching are profoundly shaped by prior schooling and personal histories (Pajares, 1996; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). This study extends that literature by illustrating how, in the Thai ELT context, family expectations, exam-oriented English education, and prior exposure to teacher-fronted instruction influenced not only cognitive readiness but also emotional dispositions toward risk-taking, classroom interaction, and communicative language use. These initial beliefs

functioned as interpretive filters through which subsequent practicum experiences were understood, reinforcing Bandura's (1997) claim that efficacy beliefs shape how individuals interpret success and failure.

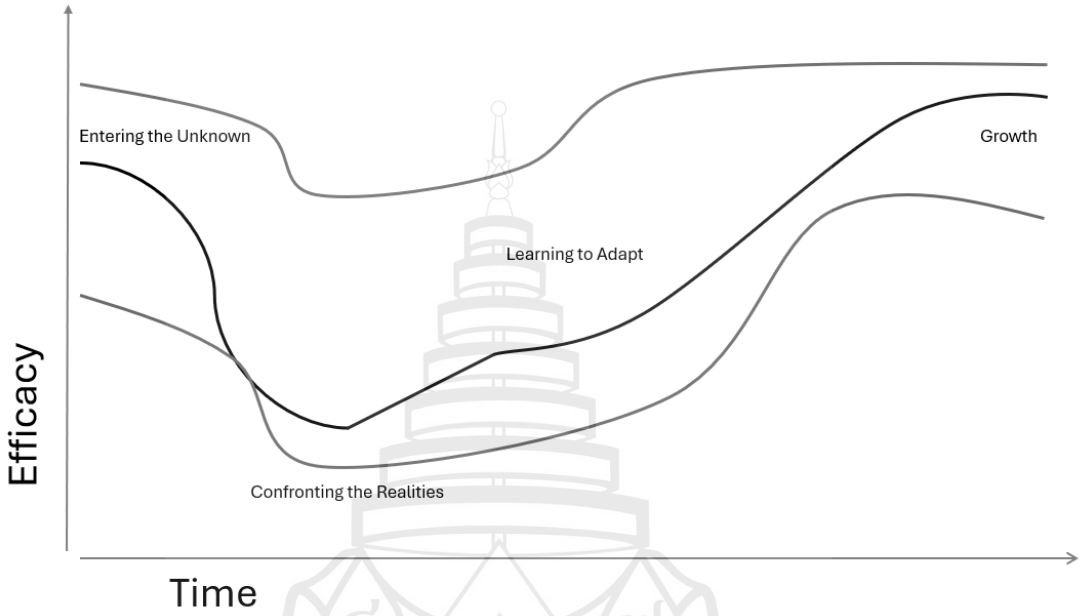


Figure 7.1 Stages of Teacher Self-Efficacy Development in This Study

For all three PSETs, the transition from university-based ELT coursework to rural school classrooms was characterized less by gradual adjustment than by an abrupt "reality shock." Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa encountered multi-grade English classes, wide disparities in students' English proficiency, limited access to textbooks and teaching materials, and expectations to perform administrative and extracurricular duties beyond language teaching. These challenges were intensified by features of the Thai rural context, including centralized curricula that prioritize examination preparation, limited professional mentoring for English teachers, and strong hierarchical relationships that constrained novice teachers' agency. Consistent with research on rural practicums (Mukeredzi, 2016; UNESCO, 2014), these conditions disrupted participants' expectations and challenged their mental models of effective English teaching. The findings confirm that this reality shock heightened anxiety and shifted attention away from communicative pedagogy toward classroom control, task completion, and compliance with institutional routines, echoing earlier work on practicum stress and survival-oriented teaching (Sach, 2005; Kim & Cho, 2014).

At the same time, the findings demonstrate that this reality shock was not uniformly detrimental. For Ariya, Kuzan, and especially Maysa, the demanding ELT conditions also generated opportunities for rapid, context-specific skill development. Ariya was compelled to teach independently when her mentor teacher was absent, forcing her to manage English lessons, student behavior, and lesson pacing on her own. Kuzan taught English across multiple grade levels, which required him to simplify explanations, adjust language input, and develop sensitivity to students' varying literacy levels. Maysa's deep involvement in school activities expanded her instructional repertoire and strengthened her ability to adapt communicative tasks to resource-limited settings. These experiences support research suggesting that rural placements, while challenging, can accelerate professional learning when PSETs interpret demanding experiences as opportunities for mastery rather than failures (Qin & Villarreal, 2018; Versland et al., 2020). In the Thai ELT context, the development of efficacy was closely tied to teachers' ability to improvise, localize content, and prioritize meaningful interaction over idealized methodological fidelity.

Bandura's (1997) four sources of self-efficacy provide the most robust framework for explaining how English teaching self-efficacy was rebuilt after the initial shock. Mastery experiences were particularly influential. Small but tangible successes, such as explaining vocabulary effectively, sustaining student engagement during a speaking activity, or managing a mixed-ability class, served as concrete evidence of instructional capability. Ariya's reflection that she "got to know the students better and learned how to teach effectively" captures how efficacy grew through iterative, trial-and-error ELT practice rather than through flawless lesson execution. In under-resourced Thai rural schools, mastery was achieved through pedagogical flexibility and pragmatic problem-solving, underscoring the need for teacher education programs to value incremental progress and adaptive competence.

Vicarious experiences also contributed to the development of efficacy, though their availability varied. Observing mentor teachers or peers manage English lessons, especially in mixed-ability classrooms, provided models that Kuzan and Maysa adapted to their own teaching. However, Ariya's limited access to consistent mentorship highlights a structural weakness in rural practicum placements. In such

contexts, alternative forms of modeling, such as peer collaboration or guided reflection on observed practices, may be necessary to compensate for inconsistent supervision.

Social persuasion, including encouragement and feedback, further reinforced efficacy beliefs. Praise from students, recognition from mentors, and positive responses from the school community helped participants reinterpret stressful teaching moments as manageable challenges. In Thai rural schools, where formal evaluation systems are limited, informal affirmation from students and parents became particularly meaningful, reinforcing teachers' sense of legitimacy as English educators.

Finally, physiological and emotional states played a critical role. Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa all reported emotional exhaustion, self-doubt, and moments of distress, reflecting the emotional labor inherent in teaching English in marginalized contexts. Over time, however, they developed coping strategies, such as peer support and reflective sense-making, that helped them regulate their emotions and sustain engagement. This finding aligns with research on teacher resilience and emotional labor (Beltman et al., 2015; Le Cornu, 2009) and suggests that emotional regulation should be explicitly addressed in ELT practicum design.

Several nuanced findings further complicate existing assumptions. First, Maysa's strong initial motivation and positive orientation toward English teaching did not shield her from periods of diminished efficacy when faced with student disengagement and institutional constraints, highlighting the limits of individual motivation in structurally challenging contexts. Second, the persistent mismatch between university-based ELT coursework perceived as theory-heavy and the immediate demands of rural English classrooms reinforced feelings of unpreparedness, particularly for Ariya and Kuzan. While reflective and applied models of SLTE emphasize the practicum as a site for theory–practice integration (Barahona, 2014; Farrell, 2018), the findings suggest that Thai PSETs would benefit from more context-responsive, practice-oriented preparation that directly addresses rural ELT realities.

7.2 How does Teacher Self-Efficacy Contribute to Teacher Identity?

This section examines how TSE contributes to the construction of TI among PSETs during their rural teaching practicum in Thailand. The findings reveal a complex, reciprocal relationship between English teaching self-efficacy and identity development, shaped by pedagogical demands, language-related challenges, and the sociocultural realities of Thai rural schools. Drawing on Bandura's (1997) conceptualization of TSE as teachers' beliefs in their capacity to plan and execute actions required to manage teaching situations, this study demonstrates that TSE operates not as a stable psychological attribute, but as a dynamic and context-sensitive force that both shapes and is reshaped by the process of becoming an English teacher (Ovens et al., 2016). Across the experiences of Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa, TSE functioned as a key developmental mechanism through which professional self-perceptions, emotional positioning, and future-oriented teacher identities were negotiated within the ELT practicum.

The transition from "student-teacher" to "English teacher" emerged as a central identity trajectory, with TSE serving as both a psychological resource and an interpretive lens through which practicum experiences were understood. Maysa, who entered the practicum with relatively strong English teaching efficacy and intrinsic motivation, was more prepared to assume professional responsibilities early on. She experimented with student-centered activities, negotiated curricular constraints, and positioned herself as an agentive English teacher despite limited resources. In contrast, Ariya and Kuzan began the practicum with low self-efficacy in teaching English. Their uncertainty about their own English proficiency, fear of making linguistic errors, and limited efficacy in managing English classrooms contributed to hesitation, reliance on scripted lessons, and heightened sensitivity to external evaluation. Consistent with previous research, teachers with stronger efficacy beliefs were more likely to view ELT challenges as manageable and meaningful (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Klassen & Chiu, 2010). This study extends these findings by showing that in Thai rural ELT contexts, characterized by low student proficiency, exam-oriented curricula, and limited instructional support, initial TSE plays an especially influential

role in shaping how quickly and confidently PSETs begin to see themselves as legitimate English teachers.

Mastery experiences emerged as the most potent contributor to identity development across all three cases. In line with Bandura's (1997) assertion that successful performance is the strongest source of efficacy, moments of successful English teaching served as identity-defining turning points. For Ariya, being required to teach independently during her mentor's absence forced her to move beyond reliance on prescribed materials and confront her self-doubt. Successfully managing lessons, adjusting explanations to students' limited English proficiency, and maintaining classroom engagement allowed her to re-evaluate her perceived inadequacy and begin to see herself as capable of teaching English in a real school setting. Similarly, Kuzan's efficacy improved after receiving positive feedback on grammar-focused lessons aligned with students' immediate needs and exam expectations, an important feature of Thai ELT classrooms. Maysa's repeated success in adapting communicative activities for resource-poor environments strengthened her sense of ownership of her teaching practice. It reinforced her identity as a flexible, student-centered English teacher. These findings suggest that in rural Thai contexts, mastery is achieved not through idealized CLT but through pedagogical improvisation, contextual sensitivity, and pragmatic decision-making.

Vicarious experiences also played a significant role in shaping English TI, although their impact depended on the availability and quality of role models. For Maysa and Kuzan, observing mentor teachers and peers managing mixed-ability English classes provided concrete instructional strategies and realistic images of English teaching within rural constraints. These observations helped them align their expectations with local practices and imagine themselves as competent members of the profession. In Ariya's case, inconsistent mentorship limited opportunities for sustained modeling; however, this absence prompted reflection on what kind of English teacher she wanted to become and which practices she wished to avoid. These findings support sociocultural perspectives that view TI as socially negotiated through participation in communities of practice (Wenger, 1998; Johnson & Golombek, 2016), while also illustrating that identity development can be stimulated not only by positive models but also by critical distancing from ineffective or unsupportive practices.

Social and verbal persuasion further reinforced identity construction by signaling professional recognition and legitimacy within the ELT context. Praise from students, particularly expressions of understanding or enjoyment in English lessons, carried significant weight in rural schools where formal evaluation mechanisms were limited. Kuzan's effectiveness improved noticeably after receiving specific praise for a grammar lesson that improved students' test performance, highlighting how targeted feedback aligned with local educational priorities can strengthen both TSE and TI. For Maysa, trust from school staff and being assigned additional responsibilities affirmed her status as a "real teacher," not merely a practicum student. At the same time, Ariya's experiences illustrate the complexity of social persuasion in Thai school cultures, where recognition may coexist with silence, ambiguity, or uneven support. Navigating these mixed messages required emotional regulation and professional judgment, underscoring the importance of preparing PSETs to interpret feedback within culturally and institutionally specific contexts.

Emotional and physiological states were deeply intertwined with both TSE and identity development, particularly given the relational nature of English teaching in Thai rural schools. Teaching English was not experienced as a purely instructional task but as emotionally demanding work that involved care, patience, and moral responsibility toward students with limited educational opportunities. Maysa's substantial emotional investment in her students' well-being reinforced her identity as a caring and committed English teacher and sustained her motivation despite fatigue. Ariya's emotional struggles, marked by anxiety, exhaustion, and moments of self-doubt, initially weakened her efficacy but later became sites of learning as she developed coping strategies and emotional resilience. Kuzan similarly learned to reinterpret stress and nervousness as part of professional growth. These findings align with research linking emotional regulation and resilience to durable teacher identities (Day & Gu, 2010; Beltman et al., 2015), and highlight affect as a central component of ELT identity construction rather than a peripheral outcome.

Motivation and persistence emerged as both consequences and contributors to the efficacy–identity relationship. Maysa's sustained commitment to teaching English, including her willingness to envision a future in rural schools, reflects a reinforcing cycle in which strong TSE supports identity consolidation and long-term career

motivation. Kuzan's growing efficacy similarly fostered renewed commitment, even as he remained aware of systemic challenges. In contrast, Ariya's fluctuating efficacy led to moments of survival-oriented disengagement, illustrating how fragile TSE can undermine both persistence and identity stability. These trajectories support existing findings that high TSE enhances resilience and career commitment, while low TSE increases vulnerability to burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Notably, the data show that TSE actively shapes identity by influencing how English teaching challenges are interpreted, as threats to be avoided or as opportunities for growth.

Figure 7.1 illustrates the dynamic, reciprocal relationship among person, behavior, and environment in shaping PSETs' self-efficacy and TI during rural teaching practicums. Grounded in Bandura's (1997) concept of triadic reciprocal determinism, the model conceptualizes teacher development as an interactive process in which personal beliefs, enacted teaching practices, and contextual conditions continuously influence one another. Positioned at the center of the model, TSE and TI are depicted as mutually reinforcing constructs that evolve through sustained engagement in practice and reflection, rather than as fixed or linear outcomes (Canrinus et al., 2012; Van der Want et al., 2019).

Within the ELT practicum, behavioral elements, such as classroom management, lesson delivery and adaptation, student engagement, and mastery experiences, serve as the most immediate sites where PSETs enact and test their emerging professional selves.

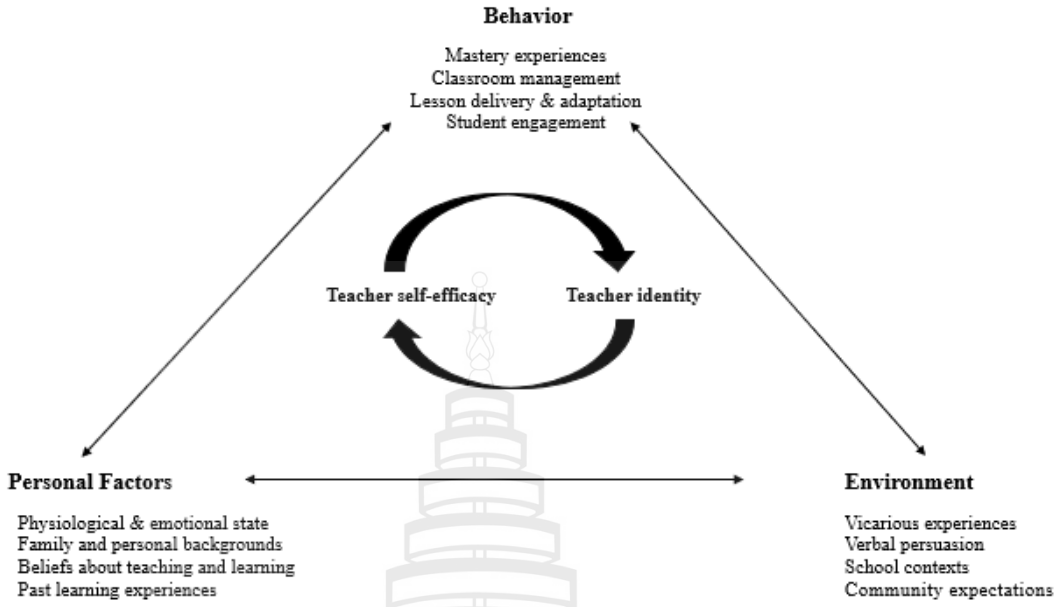


Figure 7.2 A Framework of Teacher Self-Efficacy in Constructing Teacher Identity

Successful English teaching performances, including adapting lessons for mixed-ability learners or sustaining student participation in low-resource classrooms, strengthen efficacy beliefs, which in turn support the internalization of an identity as a capable and legitimate English teacher (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Conversely, identity clarification, such as recognizing oneself as a caring, adaptive, or resilient English teacher, encourages greater pedagogical risk-taking, experimentation with ELT strategies, and sustained engagement in instructional tasks (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Farrell, 2018). The diagram also highlights how personal and environmental factors shape this reciprocal process in rural school contexts. Personal dimensions, including emotional and physiological states, beliefs about English teaching and learning, prior educational experiences, and family or sociocultural backgrounds, influence how PSETs interpret their teaching experiences and respond to challenges (Pajares, 1996; Day & Gu, 2010). For example, anxiety related to English proficiency or classroom control may initially weaken self-efficacy, while growing emotional resilience and reflective capacity support identity consolidation over time, particularly in demanding practicum settings (Beltman et al., 2015).

At the same time, environmental influences, such as vicarious experiences with mentor teachers, verbal persuasion from students and colleagues, school cultures, and community expectations, mediate how PSETs position themselves within the profession (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Johnson & Golombek, 2016). In Thai rural schools, where material resources are limited, English exposure outside the classroom is minimal, and professional support structures may be uneven, these contextual factors play a particularly significant role in shaping both efficacy beliefs and identity trajectories (Mukeredzi, 2016; UNESCO, 2014). Taken together, the model underscores that the development of TSE and TI among PSETs is not linear or individualistic, but situated, relational, and deeply embedded in the lived realities of ELT during the rural practicum.

In conclusion, the reciprocal relationship between TSE and TI was evident across the three cases. As Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa gained English teaching efficacy through mastery experiences, social affirmation, and emotional regulation, they increasingly perceived themselves as legitimate English teachers. This emerging identity, in turn, strengthened their willingness to experiment with pedagogical strategies, take responsibility for student learning, and persist through difficulties. Conversely, moments of identity clarification, such as recognizing personal teaching values or rejecting ineffective practices, contributed to more stable and resilient efficacy beliefs. These findings support theoretical models that conceptualize TSE and TI as interconnected and mutually reinforcing constructs (Canrinus et al., 2012; Van der Want et al., 2019). In the Thai rural ELT context, the practicum functioned not merely as a training requirement but as a high-stakes developmental space in which English teacher efficacy and identity were continuously tested, negotiated, and reshaped.

7.3 What are the Challenges and Opportunities Encountered?

The findings of this study provide a nuanced understanding of the intertwined challenges and opportunities that PSETs encounter in developing TSE and TI during rural teaching practicums in Thailand. These experiences are embedded in the specific

socio-cultural, linguistic, and institutional conditions of Thai rural schools, where English is taught as a foreign language with limited exposure beyond the classroom. Within this context, structural constraints, local expectations, and school-level practices shape not only daily English teaching but also how PSETs understand themselves as English teachers and envision their future in the profession. The practicum thus functioned as both a constraining and enabling space, underscoring that TSE and TI are dynamic, context-dependent constructs negotiated between idealized images of ELT promoted by universities and the lived realities of rural Thai classrooms.

The challenges identified, e.g., limited teaching resources and infrastructure, wide gaps in students' English proficiency, linguistic and communicative barriers, professional isolation, emotional strain, and misalignment between university expectations and school practices, reflect patterns documented in rural education and ELT research (Azano & Stewart, 2015; Cross & Andrews, 2009). For Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa, these challenges tested not only their pedagogical skills but also their efficacy in using English as a medium of instruction and their emerging sense of legitimacy as English teachers. In Thai rural schools, where English is perceived as a complex subject with low immediate relevance to students' daily lives, these pressures were intensified by limited instructional time, exam-oriented curricula, and uneven institutional support. As noted by Halsey (2018) and Monk (2007), rural teachers frequently face role overload and systemic neglect; for English teachers, these conditions are compounded by the need to motivate learners with minimal exposure to authentic English use.

Resource scarcity emerged as a particularly significant challenge, exacerbated in some schools by flood damage that disrupted facilities and access to materials. For PSETs trained in communicative, student-centered, and technology-enhanced ELT approaches, the lack of basic resources constrained their ability to implement these methods. Kuzan's experience illustrates this tension: while he possessed solid linguistic knowledge, the lack of appropriate materials and technological support limited his capacity to design engaging English lessons, leading to early frustration and self-doubt. Ariya similarly struggled to reconcile her university training with classrooms where rote learning and textbook dependence dominated. Although

Bandura (1997) emphasizes mastery experiences as the strongest source of TSE, when "success" is narrowly defined as surviving lessons under constrained conditions, efficacy may develop unevenly and remain fragile, particularly in relation to instructional efficacy in English.

Student proficiency gaps and language-related challenges further complicated teaching and identity development. All three participants encountered classrooms where students' English levels were significantly below curriculum expectations, requiring constant code-switching into Thai and extensive simplification of content. For Ariya, these difficulties heightened her anxiety about her own teaching competence, as slow or minimal student progress made it difficult to gauge instructional success. Kuzan initially hesitated to speak extensively in English, fearing mistakes and negative judgment, a concern magnified in a context where teachers are traditionally expected to be authoritative knowledge holders. These experiences align with ELT literature, indicating that linguistic insecurity and limited student responsiveness can undermine PSETs' efficacy and professional self-concept (Richards, 2011; Farrell, 2016). Over time, however, redefining success in terms of incremental gains, such as increased student participation or willingness to attempt simple English expressions, enabled some adaptive recalibration of expectations.

Professional isolation and limited mentorship further intensified these challenges. In several placements, mentor teachers were overburdened or minimally involved, leaving PSETs to navigate English teaching independently. From a sociocultural perspective (Vygotsky, 1978; Wenger, 1998), such limited participation in professional communities restricts opportunities for guided learning and identity negotiation. Ariya's sense of detachment from the school community, coupled with minimal feedback on her English teaching, weakened her sense of belonging and professional affirmation. Kuzan, while gaining independence, lacked reassurance that his instructional decisions were appropriate. In contrast, Maysa experienced comparatively stronger informal support, which helped buffer the emotional demands of teaching English in challenging conditions. These differences illustrate how relational contexts in Thai schools significantly mediate the development of TSE and TI.

Emotional and psychological pressures ran parallel to these structural challenges. Teaching English in rural Thai classrooms required sustained emotional labor, as PSETs managed student disengagement, discipline issues, and their own doubts about effectiveness. Ariya's declining motivation reflected the cumulative impact of these pressures, while Kuzan's early fear of making language errors revealed how emotional vulnerability can suppress participation and experimentation. Maysa, however, demonstrated growing emotional regulation, reframing difficulties as part of professional learning. Consistent with Day and Gu (2010) and Beltman et al. (2011), these cases show that emotional resilience is central to sustaining both efficacy and identity, particularly in demanding ELT contexts.

Conflicting expectations between university coursework and school realities further complicated identity formation. While teacher education programs emphasized CLT and reflective practice, rural schools prioritized exam preparation and classroom order. Navigating these competing logics required PSETs to critically evaluate their beliefs about "good" English teaching. Maysa used this tension productively, selectively adapting communicative activities to fit local constraints, thereby strengthening her sense of agency. Ariya, by contrast, experienced this misalignment as disorienting, contributing to uncertainty about her role as an English teacher. These patterns echo findings on "reality shock" among novice teachers (Veenman, 1984; Flores & Day, 2006)

Despite these significant obstacles, the practicum also offered valuable growth opportunities that positively influenced the development of both TSE and identity. Authentic teaching experiences and autonomy enabled participants to apply their skills in real classrooms, make independent pedagogical decisions, and experience the outcomes of those choices. This aligns with Britzman's (2003) and Gan's (2013) perspectives, which suggest that learning to teach is most effective through situated practice in which responsibility and decision-making are gradually increased. For participants, such as Maysa, autonomy fostered agency and innovation, helping to solidify their TI with a strong sense of ownership over their teaching.

Strong community and student engagement proved to be a powerful counterbalance to feelings of isolation. The warmth of rural communities and the appreciation shown by students reinforced participants' sense of purpose and

belonging, thereby enhancing the relational dimension of TI, as described by Kelchtermans (2009). Even in situations of low academic achievement, the social affirmation from students' respect or community inclusion strengthened participants' belief that they were making a meaningful contribution. These interactions provided the emotional foundation for resilience and persistence. Role expansion and increased responsibilities further enhanced participants' professional growth. The necessity of assuming multiple roles, from event organizer to translator to sports coach, widened their understanding of teaching as a comprehensive profession rooted in community life. Such experiences align with the rural education literature (Blanks et al., 2013; Azano & Stewart, 2015), which emphasizes the multifaceted nature of rural teaching roles. Although these additional responsibilities sometimes caused stress, they also provided mastery experiences that strengthened TSE by demonstrating competence across diverse areas and reinforcing a versatile, context-responsive TI.

Finally, the practicum provided a platform for clarifying one's professional commitment and purpose. The intensity of the rural experience prompted deep reflection on career goals. Some participants reaffirmed their dedication to teaching in similar settings, while others reevaluated whether they were a good fit for the profession. This supports Hong's (2010) findings, which observed that TI development involves both confirmation and disconfirmation processes, in which difficult experiences can lead to either a more substantial commitment or a deliberate career change. Importantly, even those who decided to reconsider teaching as a long-term career framed their decisions as based on a clearer understanding of their values and professional preferences. While less celebrated, this outcome is essential for sustainable careers in education (Canrinus et al., 2012).

Several unexpected findings further illuminate the complexity of TSE and TI development in rural ELT practicums. First, the same contextual conditions produced divergent effects. Ariya experienced administrative overload and limited support as demotivating, while Maysa reframed similar constraints as opportunities for creativity. This divergence underscores the interpretive nature of efficacy and identity development, shaped by prior experiences and coping strategies (Menon, 2020). Second, early adverse experiences appeared particularly influential. Kuzan's initial fear of speaking English persisted despite later successes, suggesting that early

practicum encounters may disproportionately shape long-term self-perceptions (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Finally, the findings reaffirm the tightly coupled relationship between TSE and TI. Gains in instructional efficacy supported stronger professional identification, while setbacks reverberated across both domains. In Thai rural ELT contexts, where challenges are intense and support is uneven, this reciprocal relationship can accelerate either growth or withdrawal, underscoring the need for carefully structured, context-sensitive practicum support.

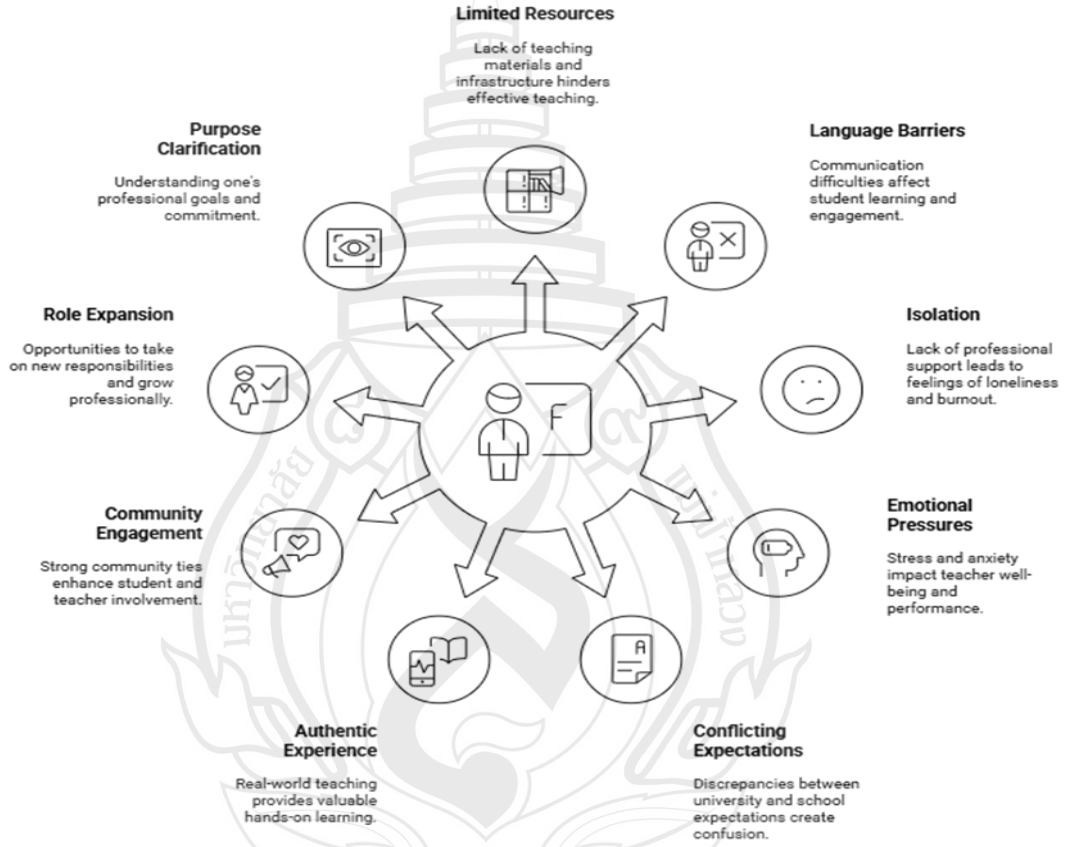


Figure 7.3 The Challenges and Opportunities Encountered in Rural Schools

7.4 Implications for English Teacher Education: Pedagogizing Teacher Self-Efficacy and Teacher Identity

The findings of this study indicate that the development of TSE and TI among PSETs should not be regarded as incidental outcomes of practicum experience, but rather as pedagogical goals that require deliberate design, scaffolding, and sustained reflection within English language teacher education programs. Drawing on the practicum experiences of Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa, this study demonstrates that both TSE and TI are highly sensitive to contextual conditions, particularly within Thai rural schools where English is taught as a foreign language and institutional resources are limited. These findings support recent calls in applied linguistics and teacher education to pedagogize teacher identity, that is, to treat identity formation as a central and teachable component of professional learning rather than assuming that it will naturally emerge through classroom experience alone (Johnson & Golombek, 2016; Trent, 2016).

First, English teacher education programs should explicitly conceptualize TSE as a developmental learning outcome, rather than an assumed personal trait. The practicum trajectories of Ariya and Kuzan illustrate how low initial efficacy in English teaching, whether related to perceived language proficiency, classroom management, or fear of making mistakes, can delay professional engagement and destabilize early TI. In contrast, Maysa's relatively strong initial sense of efficacy enabled her to approach pedagogical challenges as opportunities for learning, even under demanding rural conditions. These patterns align with Bandura's (1997) assertion that efficacy beliefs shape how individuals interpret and respond to challenging experiences, as well as with Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (2001) argument that teachers with stronger efficacy beliefs are more resilient and adaptive in the face of difficulty.

In practical terms, these findings suggest the need to design structured mastery experiences that are explicitly grounded in the realities of ELT in Thai schools, particularly in rural areas. Rather than relying solely on full practicum placements to generate efficacy, English teacher education programs should scaffold mastery through progressive, context-sensitive tasks. These may include microteaching sessions

focused on teaching English to low-proficiency learners, simulations of large or multi-grade classrooms, and guided lesson adaptation activities using limited resources. The findings indicate that Ariya's TSE began to strengthen only after repeated small successes, such as managing lessons independently and building relationships with students. This supports previous research identifying mastery experiences as the most powerful source of TSE (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Importantly, in rural Thai ELT contexts, mastery took the form of practical improvisation rather than idealized communicative lessons, echoing Farrell's (2016) argument that effective language teaching expertise develops through situated problem-solving rather than technical perfection.

Second, the findings highlight the importance of pedagogizing TI through guided reflection and narrative practices within English teacher education. Consistent with sociocultural perspectives on teacher learning, the identity trajectories of Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa were shaped not only by their classroom practices but also by how they interpreted these experiences and positioned themselves as English teachers within their school communities (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Wenger, 1998). Ariya's difficulty seeing herself as a "real teacher" was closely tied to her limited emotional ownership of the profession. In contrast, Kuzan's identity developed gradually as he overcame fears about English proficiency and received recognition for his teaching. Maysa, by contrast, articulated a strong sense of herself as a caring and adaptive English teacher, even when confronted with systemic constraints.

These findings suggest that English teacher education programs should embed systematic identity-focused reflection across coursework and practicum components. Reflective journals, guided autobiographical narratives, and dialogic seminars can support PSETs in articulating who they are becoming as English teachers, what values they prioritize, and how they negotiate tensions between pedagogical ideals and contextual realities (Farrell, 2018; Johnson & Golombek, 2016). Crucially, such reflection should be explicitly framed within the ELT domain, prompting PSETs to examine the role of English in Thai society, expectations for English teachers in rural communities, and the emotional labor involved in teaching English as a foreign language to under-resourced learners. In doing so, teacher educators can help PSETs

develop context-responsive English teacher identities rather than deficit-oriented self-perceptions.

Third, the findings underscore the need to strengthen vicarious learning and mentoring structures in English teacher preparation, particularly for rural practicum placements. Kuzan's development illustrates the importance of observing effective teaching and receiving targeted feedback, while Ariya's difficulties were exacerbated by inconsistent mentor support. These findings align with research emphasizing the role of modeling and guided participation in teacher learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Arshavskaya, 2016). Mentor teachers who make their pedagogical reasoning visible and provide constructive, task-specific feedback can help PSETs connect practice with professional identity, reinforcing both efficacy and legitimacy as English teachers.

Where on-site mentoring is limited, a common condition in Thai rural schools, teacher education institutions should consider alternative forms of vicarious learning, such as video-based lesson analysis, peer mentoring groups, or online professional communities. These strategies can mitigate the isolation experienced by rural PSETs and prevent early teaching experiences from being interpreted in purely individualistic or deficit terms. Notably, such support should emphasize locally relevant ELT practices rather than idealized native-speaker models, which research has shown can undermine efficacy and identity among non-native English-speaking teachers (Richards, 2011).

Finally, the findings indicate that emotional resilience and motivation should be explicitly addressed as core components of English TI formation. The emotional struggles experienced by Ariya and Kuzan, ranging from exhaustion to self-doubt, highlight the affective demands of rural ELT, where teachers assume multiple roles and form close relationships with students and communities. This aligns with research linking emotional resilience to TI sustainability and commitment (Day & Gu, 2010; Beltman et al., 2015). English teacher education programs should therefore incorporate structured opportunities for PSETs to discuss emotional challenges, develop coping strategies, and reflect on the moral and relational dimensions of teaching English in disadvantaged contexts. Such support is significant for sustaining motivation and preventing early attrition, as illustrated by the contrasting trajectories of Ariya and Maysa.

In summary, this study suggests that improving the preparation of English teachers in Thailand requires a shift from viewing self-efficacy and identity as personal by-products of practicum experience to recognizing them as pedagogical outcomes that can be intentionally cultivated. By pedagogizing both TSE and TI, through structured mastery experiences, identity-focused reflection, strengthened mentoring, and emotional support, English teacher education programs can better equip PSETs to navigate the complexities of rural ELT and to develop resilient, contextually grounded professional identities.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter presents a comprehensive summary of how PSETs developed their TSE and constructed their TI during their rural teaching practicum, and identifies the challenges and opportunities that influenced these processes. The chapter is organized into three sections. The first section presents the study's main conclusions, emphasizing key insights into the dynamic relationship between TSE and TI. The second section discusses the study's limitations, including methodological constraints such as the sample size, context-specific focus, and reliance on self-reported data, which may restrict the broader applicability of the findings. The final section provides recommendations for teacher education programs, policymakers, and future researchers.

8.1 Conclusion

This study set out to understand how PSETs developed TSE and constructed TI during their teaching practicum in rural Thai schools. Rather than treating the practicum as a neutral training phase, this study's findings position it as a formative and consequential space in which beliefs about English teaching, professional competence, and personal commitment were actively tested, reshaped, and, in some cases, fundamentally redefined. Through the lived experiences of Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa, this study demonstrates that learning to teach English in rural Thailand is not simply a matter of applying pedagogical knowledge, but a process of negotiating uncertainty, scarcity, emotional labour, and sociocultural expectations that profoundly shape who PSETs become as English teachers.

A central conclusion of the study is that the development of TSE among PSETs is neither linear nor uniform, particularly in ELT contexts characterized by limited resources, multi-grade classrooms, and uneven institutional support. While prior studies conceptualize TSE as gradually strengthening through experience, this study

shows that, for English teachers in rural Thai schools, efficacy frequently fluctuates in response to immediate classroom realities, language-related challenges, and emotional demands. The initial "reality shock" experienced by participants—especially when communicative English teaching ideals collided with low student proficiency, scarce materials, and heavy non-teaching duties- temporarily destabilized their efficacy and sense of preparedness. However, the findings also reveal that TSE can be rebuilt through contextually meaningful mastery experiences, such as adapting English lessons with minimal resources, managing mixed-ability classes, and sustaining student engagement despite linguistic barriers. These experiences suggest that efficacy in rural ELT settings is less about delivering idealized lessons and more about developing adaptive, improvisational competence grounded in local realities.

The study further concludes that TSE plays a critical role in shaping how PSETs perceive themselves as English teachers. Rather than functioning as a background psychological trait, self-efficacy emerged as an interpretive lens through which participants understood their successes, failures, and professional worth. As Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa gradually gained proficiency in managing English classrooms, adjusting instruction, and connecting with students, they began to reposition themselves from tentative student teachers to legitimate members of the teaching profession. Importantly, this identity shift was not solely driven by technical competence but by recognition from students, mentors, and communities that affirmed their role as English teachers. In Thai rural schools, where teachers are prominent figures and deeply embedded in community life, such relational validation proved especially powerful in consolidating professional identity.

At the same time, the findings underscore that TI is not a guaranteed outcome of increased self-efficacy. While Maysa's growing efficacy strengthened her commitment to English teaching and reinforced a student-centered professional identity, Ariya's fragile efficacy, compounded by emotional exhaustion and institutional neglect, led to ambivalence and withdrawal. Kuzan's case illustrates a more gradual trajectory, in which overcoming fear of linguistic inadequacy and receiving affirmation for his English instruction enabled him to reconstruct a more resilient sense of self as a teacher. These contrasting pathways highlight that TSE and

TI are mutually reinforcing yet vulnerable to disruption, particularly when emotional strain and contextual constraints are not adequately addressed.

Another important conclusion concerns the distinctive role of the Thai rural context in shaping both efficacy and identity development. The practicum environment intensified challenges commonly associated with ELT, including students' limited exposure to English, examination-oriented curricula, and tensions between communicative teaching ideals and local expectations. However, these same conditions also created powerful opportunities for professional growth. The necessity of teaching across grade levels, assuming multiple school roles, and engaging closely with local communities encouraged participants to reconceptualize English teaching as relational, context-responsive, and morally grounded work. In this sense, rural practicum experiences did not merely prepare PSETs to teach English content; they compelled them to confront what it means to be an English teacher in contexts marked by inequality, constraint, and social responsibility.

The contributions of this study lie in its implications for English teacher education rather than in abstract theoretical advancement alone. First, it extends existing models of TSE by demonstrating how Bandura's four sources operate simultaneously and interactively within rural ELT contexts. Mastery experiences, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and emotional regulation were deeply entangled, shaped by school conditions, language demands, and interpersonal relationships. Second, the study offers empirical support for viewing TSE and TI as inseparable dimensions of professional development, particularly in practicum settings where high levels of responsibility and emotional exposure accelerate identity work. Third, it highlights the need to reconceptualize rural practicum not as a peripheral or deficit placement, but as a high-impact site for cultivating adaptive expertise, resilience, and ethical commitment among future English teachers.

Finally, this study argues that preparing English teachers for rural contexts requires more than equipping them with methodological knowledge or linguistic skills. It requires teacher education programs to intentionally design practicum experiences that support efficacy-building, identity reflection, and emotional resilience in contextually realistic ways. When PSETs are guided to interpret challenges as opportunities for growth, supported through meaningful mentorship, and encouraged

to reflect on their emerging professional selves, rural practicums can become transformative experiences rather than discouraging trials. In conclusion, this study affirms that the development of confident, committed English teachers in Thailand depends not only on what they are taught but also on how they are supported to become teachers within the lived realities of their classrooms and communities.

8.2 Limitations

Although this study provides meaningful insights into the development of TSE and TI among PSETs, several limitations must be acknowledged. These limitations relate to the study's scope, the methodological approach, and the contextual specificity of ELT in rural Thailand.

First, the findings should be interpreted within the research context. This study was conducted with PSETs from a single teacher education institution in Thailand and focused specifically on English teaching practicums in rural schools. As such, the experiences documented in this study are shaped by the institutional culture of the teacher education program, the practicum structure, and the sociocultural and economic characteristics of Thai rural schools. In ELT contexts, factors such as students' limited exposure to English outside the classroom, examination-oriented curricula, and uneven access to instructional resources are particularly significant. While the qualitative design allowed for in-depth exploration of how PSETs negotiated these language-specific challenges, the findings are not intended to be statistically generalizable. Instead, the study offers analytically transferable insights that may resonate with similar ELT contexts, especially in under-resourced or rural settings in Southeast Asia and other EFL environments. Variations in regional policies, school leadership, English proficiency levels, and community attitudes toward English suggest that PSETs' experiences may differ substantially across institutions and placements.

Second, data collection was confined to a single semester of the teaching practicum, which limits the ability to capture long-term trajectories of TSE and TI development among English teachers. Although the study identified notable shifts in

participants' efficacy, emotional positioning, and professional self-concept during the practicum, it did not examine how these changes were sustained, transformed, or challenged once participants entered full-time English teaching positions. In ELT, early-career teachers face new pressures, such as demands for standardized testing, curriculum accountability, and expectations of native-like proficiency, which may further affect their efficacy and identity. A longitudinal design following PSETs into their induction years would allow for a deeper understanding of how practicum experiences shape long-term professional development and retention in the English teaching profession.

Third, the study relied primarily on self-reported data, including semi-structured interviews and reflective journals. While these methods are well-suited to exploring beliefs, emotions, and identity-related processes, they depend on participants' willingness and ability to articulate their experiences. In the Thai educational context, cultural norms related to respect, hierarchy, and face-saving may influence how openly PSETs discuss difficulties, particularly regarding perceived inadequacies in English proficiency or classroom management. Although classroom observations were used to triangulate participants' accounts, the findings remain interpretive and do not include objective measures of English teaching effectiveness or student language outcomes. Consequently, the study prioritizes teachers' perceptions of efficacy and identity rather than externally validated indicators of instructional success.

Finally, the study did not incorporate the perspectives of mentor teachers, school administrators, or students, all of whom play influential roles in shaping PSETs' experiences during the ELT practicum. Mentor teachers' beliefs about English teaching, administrators' expectations regarding curriculum coverage and examination performance, and students' attitudes toward English could have provided valuable contextual insight into how PSETs' efforts were supported, constrained, or evaluated. Including these voices would have enabled a more holistic understanding of the social and institutional dynamics shaping the development of TSE and TI, particularly in rural Thai schools, where professional relationships and community expectations are closely intertwined.

Despite these limitations, the study offers a detailed and contextually grounded account of how PSETs navigate the emotional, pedagogical, and identity-related challenges of rural practicums. Acknowledging these constraints clarifies the scope of the findings and points the way toward future research that can further strengthen understanding of teacher development in ELT contexts.

8.3 Recommendations for Future Research

In light of the limitations identified in this study, several directions for future research are recommended to extend understanding of TSE and TI development among PSETs, particularly within ELT contexts in Thailand.

First, given the time-bound nature of the data collection, future research should adopt longitudinal designs that follow PSETs beyond the practicum into their early years as in-service English teachers. While this study captured important developmental shifts in efficacy and identity during a single rural placement, it could not examine whether these changes were sustained once participants entered the profession. Longitudinal research would allow scholars to investigate how early practicum experiences in English teaching influence longer-term trajectories of instructional efficacy, identity stability, and career commitment. Such studies are critical in the Thai EFL context, where novice English teachers face intensified pressures from examination-oriented curricula, language proficiency expectations, and heavy workloads during their induction years. Tracking these teachers over time would provide insight into how practicum-based efficacy and identity are renegotiated under evolving professional demands.

Second, because the findings of this study are context-specific, future research could conduct comparative investigations across different ELT practicum settings. Studies comparing rural and urban English teaching placements within Thailand would help clarify which challenges and affordances are unique to rural contexts, such as limited exposure to English outside the classroom, multi-grade teaching, and resource scarcity, and which are shared across under-resourced ELT environments more broadly. Such comparisons would strengthen the analytical transferability of

findings and contribute to a more differentiated understanding of how environmental conditions shape English teachers' efficacy beliefs and professional identities.

Third, addressing the reliance on self-reported data, future research could incorporate additional data sources to capture English teaching practices more comprehensively. Classroom discourse analysis, lesson artifact analysis, or assessments of instructional decision-making in ELT contexts could complement interviews and reflections, offering a richer picture of how TSE and TI are enacted in practice. While this study focused on participants' perceptions of competence and identity, future studies might examine how these beliefs are reflected in observable aspects of English teaching, such as language use, feedback strategies, task design, and classroom interaction patterns.

Fourth, building on the absence of multiple stakeholder perspectives in this study, future research should include the voices of mentor teachers, university supervisors, school administrators, and students within ELT practicums. In Thai rural schools, where hierarchical relationships, cultural norms of respect, and community expectations strongly influence professional interactions, these perspectives are especially relevant. Examining how others interpret and evaluate PSETs' English teaching efforts would deepen understanding of how TSE and TI are socially constructed and negotiated. Such research could also shed light on alignment or mismatch between university-based ELT ideals and school-based expectations, an issue repeatedly highlighted in this study.

Finally, future research could explore ELT-focused practicum experiences across different cultural and national contexts to determine which aspects of TSE and TI development are context-specific and which are more universal. Comparative studies in other low- and middle-income countries with EFL contexts would be particularly valuable, as many face challenges similar to those of Thai rural schools, including limited instructional resources, uneven student proficiency, and shortages of qualified English teachers. Cross-contextual research could contribute to a more globally informed understanding of how English teachers develop efficacy and identity in challenging environments and support international dialogue on sustainable ELT teacher preparation.

Together, these directions address the limitations of the present study and offer pathways to advance research on English teacher development. By extending the scope, duration, and methodological breadth of inquiry, future studies can deepen understanding of how PSETs build the efficacy, competence, and professional identities needed to thrive in diverse and demanding ELT contexts.

8.4 My Final Reflection

Completing this study has brought me back to the foundational questions that first inspired my interest in English language teacher education. Long before undertaking this research, I had come to believe that teaching, particularly ELT in EFL contexts, is not defined solely by methodological competence or linguistic knowledge, but by the beliefs, values, and sense of professional purpose that teachers bring into the classroom. This conviction was shaped by my early experiences as an English teacher, in which uncertainty about my language ability, classroom authority, and professional legitimacy overshadowed my sense of TSE. It was only through sustained guidance, reflective practice, and gradual identity development that I began to understand the transformative relationship between TSE and TI.

In many ways, the experiences of Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa mirrored this journey. Like many PSETs in Thailand, they entered rural classrooms where English was a foreign language not only for students but also for the wider community. They were required to teach English in contexts marked by limited resources, uneven student proficiency, exam-oriented expectations, and minimal exposure to English beyond the classroom. The practicum placed them in situations where each lesson tested not only their instructional skills but also their effectiveness in using English, their ability to adapt their pedagogy, and their belief in their role as an English teacher. Their narratives reaffirm a critical insight: when communicative activities fail, textbooks are insufficient, and institutional support is limited, what sustains English teachers is not the “perfect” method, but a belief in their capacity to make English learning meaningful under real constraints.

This study has reinforced my belief that English language teacher education must go beyond the transmission of techniques, lesson structures, or theoretical frameworks. It must deliberately cultivate TSE and identity as central outcomes of preparation. For PSETs, particularly those placed in rural Thai schools, efficacy in using English, managing multilingual classrooms, and negotiating cultural expectations is not optional—it is foundational. The practicum, as shown through the experiences of Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa, can become a powerful site for identity construction and efficacy development, but only when PSETs are supported in interpreting challenges as opportunities for growth rather than as evidence of personal inadequacy.

At the same time, this reflection calls for action. First, English teacher education programs must intentionally embed structured opportunities for reflective practice, identity exploration, and efficacy-building throughout the curriculum. These elements should not be left to chance during the practicum; they should be explicitly pedagogized through guided reflection, narrative inquiry, and dialogic supervision that help PSETs make sense of their English teaching experiences. Second, stronger and more equitable partnerships between universities and practicum schools are urgently needed. In rural ELT contexts, mentor teachers and supervisors play a decisive role in shaping how PSETs interpret linguistic challenges, classroom struggles, and student responses. Their role should be formally recognized, supported, and aligned with the goals of English teacher preparation. Third, policymakers and educational leaders must acknowledge that rural English teaching requires targeted preparation and sustained professional support. Without such investment, the burden of adaptation, emotional labor, and professional survival is placed disproportionately on novice English teachers at the most vulnerable stage of their development.

Looking back, I now realize that my original concern—why so many PSETs feel unprepared—was never meant to yield a single, definitive answer. This study demonstrates that preparedness is not a fixed state achieved at the end of a program, but an ongoing, relational process shaped by experience, context, and meaning-making. The stories of Ariya, Kuzan, and Maysa have deepened my conviction that when English teacher education prioritizes identity, belief, and professional purpose

alongside linguistic and pedagogical skills, it produces teachers who are not only competent users of English but also resilient, reflective, and committed educators.

Finally, this journey—both scholarly and personal—strengthens my hope for the future of English language teacher education in Thailand's rural schools. It affirms that even in contexts of scarcity, when teachers are grounded in a strong sense of self and professional purpose, they can foster meaningful English learning, support student growth, and transform lives. In this way, this dissertation stands as both an academic contribution and a personal tribute: to the English teachers who shaped my own path, to the PSETs whose voices (Bloomfield, 2010) and lived experiences animate this study, and to the enduring truth that effective English teaching begins not with methods alone, but with the heart, mind, and identity of the teacher.

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APPENDIX A

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL FROM THE ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Mae Fah Luang University Ethics Committee on Human Research
333 Moo 1, Thasud, Muang, ChiangRai 57100
Tel: (053) 917-170 to 71 Fax: (053) 917-170 E-mail: rec.human@mfu.ac.th

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

COA: 183/2024 **Protocol No: EC 24150-10**

Title: A study of pre-service English teachers' self-efficacy and identity construction during teaching practicum in rural schools

Principal investigator: Mr. Sumit Choephatruedi

School: Liberal Arts

Funding support: Research Grant

Approval:

1) Research protocol — Version 2 Date September 23, 2024
2) Information sheet and informed consent documents — Version 2 Date September 23, 2024
3) Interview question — Version 1 Date September 5, 2024
4) Record form and Questionnaire — Version 2 Date September 23, 2024
5) Research participant recruitment information — Version 1 Date September 23, 2024
6) Principal investigator and Co-investigators
   - Mr. Sumit Choephatruedi - Lecturer Bhornsawan Inpin, Ph.D.

The aforementioned documents have been reviewed and approved by the Mae Fah Luang University Ethics Committee on Human Research in compliance with international guidelines such as Declaration of Helsinki, the Belmont Report, CIOMS Guidelines and the International Conference on Harmonization of Technical Requirements for Registration of Pharmaceuticals for Human Use - Good Clinical Practice (ICH - GCP)

Date of Approval: September 28, 2024
Date of Expiration: September 27, 2025
Frequency of Continuing Review: 1 year

.....

(Lecturer Jullapong Achalapong, M.D.)
Chairperson of the Mae Fah Luang Ethics Committee on Human Research

The Mae Fah Luang University Ethics Committee on Human Research
333 Moo 1, Thasud, Muang, ChiangRai 57100
Tel: (053) 917-170 to 71 Fax: (053) 917-170 E-mail: rec.human@mfu.ac.th

For research protocol approved by the Mae Fah Luang University Ethics Committee on Human Research (MFU EC), the investigators must comply with the followings:

1. Strictly conduct the research as required by the protocol.
2. Use only the information sheet, consent form, questionnaire, case record form and advertisement bearing the MFU EC stamp of approval.
3. Submit a progress report (AP 05/2024) for continuing review and for renewing the approval within 30 days before expiration date.
4. When there are changes of the protocol, the investigator must submit an amendment report (AP 06/2024) with amended protocol for MFU EC approval before implementing any changes in the research (unless those changes are required urgently for the safety of the research subjects).
5. When there is any unanticipated problem or serious adverse event, the investigator must submit a safety report (AP 07/2024) as set forth in the ICH-GCP.
6. When there is any deviation or non-compliance with the approved protocol, the investigator must submit a protocol deviation/non-compliance report (AP 08/2024).
7. When the research is complete or terminated, the investigator must submit a closing report (AP 09/2024).

Please go to https://ethic.mfu.ac.th **to download MFU EC forms for reporting.**

I, as an investigator, agree to comply with the above obligation.

.....

(Mr. Sumit Choephatruedi)

Date 15/10/67

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM FOR THE PARTICIPANTS

Version.....2..... Date ....23/9/2024..... AP 03_1/2024

หนังสือแสดงความยินยอมเข้าร่วมการวิจัย

ข้าพเจ้า _____ ตัดสินใจเข้าร่วมการวิจัยเรื่อง การศึกษาการรับรู้ความสามารถของตนเองและการสร้างอัตลักษณ์ของนักศึกษาฝึกประสบการณ์วิชาชีพครูภาษาอังกฤษระหว่างการฝึกปฏิบัติการสอนในโรงเรียนชนบท ซึ่งข้าพเจ้าได้รับข้อมูลและคำอธิบายเกี่ยวกับการวิจัยนี้แล้ว และได้มีโอกาสซักถามและได้รับคำตอบเป็นที่พอใจแล้ว ข้าพเจ้ามีเวลาเพียงพอในการอ่านและทำความเข้าใจข้อมูลในเอกสารให้ข้อมูลสำหรับผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัยอย่างถี่ถ้วน และได้รับเวลาเพียงพอในการตัดสินใจว่าจะเข้าร่วมการวิจัยนี้

ข้าพเจ้ารับทราบว่าข้าพเจ้าสามารถปฏิเสธการเข้าร่วมการวิจัยนี้ได้โดยอิสระ และระหว่างการเข้าร่วมการวิจัย ข้าพเจ้ายังสามารถถอนตัวออกจากการวิจัยได้ทุกเมื่อ โดยไม่ส่งผลกระทบต่อการดูแลรักษา หรือสิทธิที่ข้าพเจ้าพึงมี

โดยการลงนามนี้ ข้าพเจ้าไม่ได้สละสิทธิใด ๆ ที่ข้าพเจ้าพึงมีตามกฎหมาย และหลังจากลงนามแล้ว ข้าพเจ้าจะได้รับเอกสารข้อมูลและขอความยินยอมไว้จำนวน 1 ชุด

ลายมือชื่อผู้เข้าร่วมการวิจัย _____ วัน-เดือน-ปี _____

(_____)

APPENDIX C

ADVERTISEMENT TO RECRUIT PARTICIPANTS

APPENDIX D

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Phase	Main Topics	Guiding Questions / Prompts
Phase 1: Before the Teaching Practicum	1. Background and Expectations	- Can you tell me a bit about your background and why you chose to become an English teacher? • What attracted you to teaching? • Do you have any memories from your childhood that motivated you to teach? • How do you think an English teacher should be? • Did you have any teaching experience before? If yes, can you tell me about it? - What are your expectations for the teaching practicum in a rural school? • In terms of student demographics (age, grade level, learning styles)? • Regarding available resources and classroom facilities? • Concerning the level of support you anticipate from the school community? - Do you have any specific concerns or anxieties about teaching in a rural setting? • Related to language barriers or cultural differences? • Regarding classroom management strategies in a potentially limited-resource environment? • Concerning your ability to adapt your teaching methods to meet diverse learners' needs?

	2. Initial Self-Efficacy	- On a scale of 1 (not confident) to 5 (very confident), how confident are you in your ability to: • Design engaging and effective English lessons for students with varying skill levels? • Incorporate differentiated instruction strategies? • Manage classroom environment and student behavior in a rural school setting? • Apply classroom management techniques suited for rural contexts? • Adapt teaching methods to meet students' specific needs? • Assess student needs and adapt instruction accordingly? • Build rapport and positive relationships with diverse students? • Promote cultural understanding to enhance engagement? • Integrate technology effectively into English lessons? • Use technology for lesson planning, delivery, and assessment? - Briefly explain your reasoning behind each confidence rating.
Phase 2: During the Teaching Practicum	1. Experiences and Challenges	- Can you describe a recent teaching experience (one successful and one challenging)? • What contributed to the success? • What made the challenge difficult? - What specific challenges have you encountered in a rural school? • Unforeseen obstacles related to environment, resources, or student needs? • Cultural or communication barriers? - How have you been overcoming these challenges? • Specific strategies or support systems? • Adaptations to teaching plans or approaches?

	2. Evolving Self-Efficacy	- How have your initial confidence levels changed since the practicum began? • Examples demonstrating this change? - How have your experiences impacted your self-efficacy? • Moments of success or capability? • Situations that challenged self-efficacy and how you overcame them?
	3. Professional Identity Development	- How are practicum experiences shaping your professional identity as an English teacher? • Which values or beliefs were reinforced or challenged? • Any moments of self-discovery or growth? - Have you questioned or refined your views on what makes a good English teacher? • Observed practices or philosophies that resonated with or challenged you? • How do you see your role evolving as an English teacher in rural contexts?
Phase 3: After the Teaching Practicum	1. Overall Experience and Reflections	- Looking back, what are your biggest takeaways? • What surprised you most, positively or negatively? - What surprised you about teaching in a rural school? • Did expectations align with reality? • Unexpected challenges or rewards? - How did challenges and opportunities impact your teacher development? • Skills or strategies developed in response?
	2. Self-Efficacy and Identity Revisited	- How has your overall self-efficacy changed compared to before the practicum? • Areas of increased or decreased confidence? - How did the four sources of self-efficacy influence your development?

		• Mastery experiences: Examples of successful lessons or interactions? • Vicarious experiences: Observed mentors/peers influencing your teaching? • Social persuasion: Feedback or encouragement received? • Physiological states: How did stress or emotions affect your efficacy? - How will you use practicum learnings in your future career? • Strategies or approaches to incorporate? • How will you draw on challenges and successes for future teaching?

APPENDIX E

IOC EVALUATION RESULTS

Item No.	Interview Question	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	IOC Value	Comment
1	Can you tell me a bit about your background and why you chose to become an English teacher?	0	0	+1	0.33	ควรสอบถามว่า ผู้ให้ข้อมูลสะดวกที่จะแบ่งปันประวัติส่วนตัวหรือไม่ และควรระบุว่าเป็นประวัติด้านใด เพราะอาจทำให้เขาอึดอัดในการตอบรับ บางคนอาจไม่ต้องการเล่าประวัติบางเรื่อง ควรใช้คำถามที่ระบุตรง เช่น ชื่ออะไร อายุเท่าไร
2	What attracted you to teaching?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	
3	Do you have any memories from your childhood that motivated you to teach?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	ค่อนข้างคล้ายกับคำถามก่อนหน้า อาจแยกให้ชัดเจน เช่น ความทรงจำในวัยเด็กต่อวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ และแรงบันดาลใจที่ทำให้อยากเป็นครูสอนภาษาอังกฤษ
4	How do you think an English teacher should be?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	

5	Did you have any teaching experience before? If yes, can you tell me about it?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	
7	What are your expectations for the teaching practicum in a rural school? • In terms of student demographics (age, grade level, learning styles)? • Regarding available resources and classroom facilities? • Concerning the level of support you anticipate from the school community?	0	+1	+1	0.66	Revise wording
8	Do you have any specific concerns or anxieties about teaching in a rural setting? • Related to language barriers or cultural differences? • Regarding classroom management strategies in a potentially limited resource environment?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	

	• Concerning your ability to adapt your teaching methods to meet the needs of diverse learners?					
9	On a scale of 1 (not confident) to 5 (very confident), how confident are you in your ability to:	+1	+1	+1	1.00	
10	Design engaging and effective English lessons for students with varying skill levels? • How comfortable are you with incorporating differentiated instruction strategies?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	
11	Manage a classroom environment and student behavior in a rural school setting? • Have you had any experience with classroom management techniques suited explicitly for rural contexts?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	Revise wording
12	Adapt your teaching methods to meet the specific needs of your students?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	Revise wording

	• Can you describe your experience in assessing student needs and altering instruction accordingly?					
13	Build rapport and positive relationships with students from diverse backgrounds? • Do you feel prepared to leverage cultural understanding to enhance student engagement?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	Revise wording
14	Integrate technology effectively into your English lessons (if applicable)? • What is your comfort level using technology for lesson planning, delivery, and assessment?	+1	0	+1	0.66	Revise wording อาจแบ่งคำถามออกเป็นประเด็นต่างๆ เช่น 1. คิดว่าการใช้เทคโนโลยีช่วยเพิ่มประสิทธิภาพไหม 2. มีทักษะในการใช้เทคโนโลยีในระดับใด
15	Briefly explain your reasoning behind each confidence rating.	+1	+1	+1	1.00	Revise wording
16	Can you describe a recent teaching experience in the practicum, both a successful one and a challenging one? • What specific strategies or approaches contributed to the	+1	+1	+1	1.00	Revise wording

	success of the positive experience? • What factors or situations made the challenging experience difficult?					
17	What specific challenges have you encountered while teaching in a rural school? • Have there been any unforeseen obstacles related to the school environment, resources, or student needs? • Have you faced any cultural or communication barriers that impacted your teaching?	+1	+1	0	0.66	Revise wording
18	How have you been overcoming these challenges? • Can you describe any specific strategies or support systems that have helped you navigate these difficulties?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	

	• Have you had to adapt your teaching plans or approaches in response to these challenges? How?					
19	Thinking back to our previous conversation, how have your initial confidence levels changed (refer back to specific skills mentioned before)? • Can you provide specific examples from your teaching experiences that demonstrate this change?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	
20	Can you share specific examples of how your teaching experiences have impacted your self-efficacy? • Have there been moments when you felt particularly successful or capable as a teacher? • Conversely, have some situations challenged your self-efficacy? How did you overcome these	+1	+1	+1	1.00	

	moments?					
21	How do you feel your experiences in the practicum are shaping your professional identity as an English teacher? • Are there any specific values or beliefs about teaching that have been reinforced or challenged through your experiences? • Can you describe any moments of self-discovery or professional growth you have experienced during the practicum?	+1	+1	0	0.66	Revise wording
22	Have you encountered any situations that have caused you to question or refine your views on what it means to be a good English teacher? • Have you observed any teaching practices or philosophies that resonated with you or challenged your initial perspectives?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	

	• How do you see your role as an English teacher evolving based on your experiences in the rural school setting?					
23	Looking back on the entire practicum experience, what were your biggest takeaways? • What aspects of the experience surprised you the most, positively or negatively?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	
24	What surprised you the most about teaching in a rural school? • Did your expectations about the school environment, resources, or student needs align with reality? • Were there any unexpected challenges or rewards specific to the rural context?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	
25	In what ways did the challenges and opportunities you faced impact your development as a teacher?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	

	• Can you describe specific skills or strategies you developed in response to these challenges or opportunities?					
26	Compared to before the practicum, how has your overall self-efficacy as an English teacher changed? • Can you elaborate on specific skills or areas where you feel more confident now? • Are there any areas where your confidence may have decreased? How will you address this moving forward?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	
27	Can you describe how the four sources of self-efficacy (mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological states) played a role in shaping your self-efficacy and professional identity during the practicum?	+1	+1	0	0.66	Revise wording

	• Mastery experiences: Can you share specific examples of successful lessons or positive student interactions that boosted your confidence? • Vicarious experiences: Did you observe any teaching practices from mentors, peers, or experienced rural teachers that influenced your own approach? • Social persuasion: Did you receive any feedback or encouragement from supervisors, mentors, or peers that impacted your self-efficacy? • Physiological states: How did your emotional well-being and stress levels during the practicum affect your self-efficacy and overall teaching experience?					

28	How do you envision yourself using the skills and knowledge you gained from this experience in your future teaching career? • Can you describe specific strategies or approaches you will incorporate based on your learnings in the rural school setting? • How will you leverage the challenges and successes you faced to navigate future teaching experiences?	+1	+1	+1	1.00	

Written feedback (Expert 3)

The Item-Objective Congruence Form for Experts is an instrument designed to assess the alignment between the items in the research instruments and the research objectives. Below is an analysis of its strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

1. Structured Evaluation Process:

The form provides a clear and systematic approach to evaluating the appropriateness of each item in the research instruments (interview questions, classroom observations, and self-reflection questions). This structured process helps ensure that the items are relevant and aligned with the study's objectives.

2. Expert Feedback

By soliciting expert evaluations, the form leverages the knowledge and experience of professionals who can provide valuable insights into the congruence of the items with the research objectives. This increases the validity of the research instruments.

3. Quantifiable Results

The use of a numeric scale (+1, 0, -1) allows for the quantification of expert opinions, which can be used to objectively assess the overall congruence of the items with the research objectives. This facilitates the identification of items that may need revision.

4. Detailed Criteria

The form encourages detailed feedback by providing specific criteria for evaluation, such as congruence, ambiguity, and incongruence. This level of detail helps experts focus on the key aspects of each item, leading to more precise feedback.

5. Alignment with Research Objectives

The form's structure, which aligns with the research phases (Before, During, and After the Practicum), ensures that the evaluation process is closely tied to the study's objectives, facilitating the identification of items that directly contribute to the research goals.

Weaknesses

1. Potential for Subjectivity

While the form provides a numeric scale, the evaluation process is still subjective, as different experts may interpret the criteria differently. This could lead to variability in the results, depending on the experts' perspectives.

2. Limited Scope of Feedback

The numeric scale (+1, 0, -1) provides a basic measure of congruence but does not capture the nuances of expert feedback. Experts may find it challenging to convey their full thoughts using just this scale, potentially limiting the depth of feedback provided.

3. Focus on Congruence Only

The form primarily focuses on the congruence of items with research objectives. Still, it does not explicitly address other essential aspects such as clarity, relevance to participants, or potential bias in the items. This could result in a narrow evaluation that overlooks other critical factors.

4. Lack of Specificity in Expert Roles

The form does not specify the expertise required for the evaluation. The effectiveness of the feedback depends on the selection of appropriate experts with relevant knowledge of the research context, such as those familiar with rural education or TSE.

5. Limited Feedback Mechanism

While the form includes a space for additional comments and suggestions, it may not provide enough room for detailed qualitative feedback. Experts may need more space or additional prompts to provide comprehensive feedback on each item.

APPENDIX F

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SHEET

Section	Observation Focus / Prompts	Notes / Comments
Observer Information	- Observer: - Date: - Location: - Participant(s):	
Pre-Practicum Observations (Focus: PSETs' Orientation)	School Environment - Describe the overall atmosphere and physical layout of the school. - Note unique characteristics or challenges specific to the rural context.	
	Interactions with School Personnel - Observe PSETs' interactions with: • School administrators (principal, vice-principal) • Cooperating teachers/mentors • Other staff (counselors, librarians) - How comfortable/confident do PSETs seem? - Areas where PSETs may need support or information?	
	Interactions with Local Community (if applicable) - Were there opportunities for PSETs to interact with parents, leaders, or community members? (Yes/No) - If yes, describe the nature of these interactions.	
During Practicum Observations	General Classroom Information - Subject: - Lesson Topic:	

(Focus: PSETs' Teaching Practice)	- Number of Students:	
	Teaching Strategies - Specific methods and activities used. - How engaging/effective for student learning?	
	Classroom Management - How does the PSET establish/maintain rules and expectations? - How are disruptions or off-task behaviors handled?	
	Overall Classroom Atmosphere - Describe the climate and energy of the classroom. - Is the environment conducive to learning and participation?	
Specific Observations of Self-Efficacy	- Instances of confidence and competence (e.g., effective lesson delivery, positive student interactions). - Situations of challenges/uncertainties (e.g., management issues, adapting lesson plans).	
Additional Notes	- Any relevant observations not covered above. - Unexpected occurrences/events significant to the study.	

APPENDIX G

GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR SELF-REFLECTION

Guiding Questions – During Practicum (Focus on Ongoing Learning)

1. Which specific lesson, activity, or interaction stands out from today's practicum experience?
2. What thoughts and emotions did you experience during this moment (e.g., excitement, nervousness, frustration)?
3. What challenges did you face (e.g., classroom management, adapting lesson plans)? How did you address or attempt to resolve them?
4. What successes did you achieve (e.g., student engagement, learning outcomes)? What factors contributed to these successes?
5. In what ways did this experience influence your confidence and sense of self-efficacy as a teacher?
6. How did the rural school environment (e.g., resources, community, student needs) shape your teaching practices?
7. What would you do differently if faced with a similar situation in the future?

Guiding Questions – Post-Practicum (Focus on Overall Impact)

1. Looking back, how has the practicum experience shaped your overall teaching philosophy (e.g., student-centered learning, community collaboration)?
2. How have your self-efficacy beliefs changed since the practicum (e.g., confidence in lesson planning, classroom management, student engagement)?
3. Which aspects of your professional identity as a teacher have been reinforced, reshaped, or newly developed (e.g., valuing cultural diversity, commitment to rural education)?
4. What are your biggest takeaways from the practicum, both challenges and rewards?
5. How do you see yourself applying the knowledge, skills, and strategies you gained to future teaching contexts?

6. In what areas do you still feel you need growth or support as a developing teacher?

7. How has this practicum experience influenced your long-term career goals as an English teacher?

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