

A NARRATIVE INQUIRY ABOUT TEACHER IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION:
PRESERVICE TEACHERS SHARE THEIR STORIES

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ABSTRACT

This yearlong study considers how five elementary education preservice teachers were constructing their teacher identities during the time of the study. Data collection began at the end of the participants' junior year of college and continued throughout their On Site Senior Year Program [OSSYP], which included a semester of student teaching. The researcher examined the narratives told by the preservice teachers during six interviews. The analysis of the stories revealed the influences that were impacting how the participants were constructing their teacher identities.

A narrative inquiry paradigm framed this study and a thematic analysis was applied to the stories of each participant. The themes identified in the stories provide insights into how the preservice teachers were constructing their teaching identities. The study indicates the crucial role of the university's OSSYP program in supporting identity construction by providing opportunities for the discourses and learning and teaching experiences that facilitate teacher identity work. One insight revealed from the study is the crucial importance of teacher identity discussions in teacher education programs.