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English Teachers' Professional Identity in the Age of AI: A Meta-Ethnographic Synthesis

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Abstract. Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly reshaping the instructional practices that guide teachers as facilitators of the teaching-learning processes in the classroom. This study explored the teachers' identity in the age of AI: how they have adapted to new professional roles, and how they have evolved as co-creators of AI-mediated pedagogy. Using qualitative meta-synthesis, eight peer-reviewed studies published from 2020 to 2025 were systematically identified through Scopus, ERIC, Google Scholar, and Publish or Perish, and appraised using the CASP qualitative checklist. Using Noblit and Hare's meta-ethnography, the findings were obtained through reciprocal translation and line-of-argument synthesis. The analysis revealed a dynamic process of identity reconstruction across three interconnected phases: disruption, adaptation, and evolution. The teachers experienced identity disruption in their expertise, pedagogical skills, and ethical views. This was followed by adaptation, in which teachers assumed professional roles ranging from instructors to AI-augmented mentors. Ultimately, teachers evolved as co-creators of AI-mediated pedagogy, exercising agency in integrating AI, while sustaining human-centered teaching practices. The study concludes that AI has shaped the English teachers' professional identity. It is recommended that teachers receive AI professional development to guide them.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence (AI); English teachers; teachers' identity; meta-ethnographic synthesis; qualitative approach

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1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) has continued to develop across all areas, including engineering, health, business, and education. In education, several AI tools have emerged to aid scholastic tasks, including grading, teaching, assessment, and learning. As AI is being introduced in the classroom, many practices have begun to shift from traditional to modern and AI-influenced practices (Abao et al., 2023; Copur-Gencturk et al., 2024; Mustafa et al., 2024; Tan et al., 2024) and toward teacher professional development worldwide (Tan et al., 2024). This development

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has also affected teachers, prompting them to question their expertise in both teaching and pedagogy as AI introduces new strategies and classroom breakthroughs. Teachers' perceptions and acceptance of AI have evolved over time, leaving them aware yet undecided about which path to follow. Studies show varied teacher responses to AI integration. Some teachers show optimism. While some embrace AI to enhance teaching, others resist due to concerns about reduced authority and pedagogical autonomy. These differences suggest that professional identity is negotiated differently across contexts.

In general, teachers' roles and identity have been challenged. Teacher professional identity is a dynamic and socially constructed concept shaped by beliefs, institutional contexts, and evolving pedagogical practices. In AI-mediated environments, teachers continuously renegotiate their roles, authority, and professional agency in response to emerging technologies (Almasri, 2024; Mustafa et al., 2024; Sadykova & Kayumova, 2024; Sumalinog, 2018; Alwaqdani, 2025).

In the Philippines, studies have revealed that the use of AI in the classroom has affected students' roles and identities, especially in basic education (Lacuna, 2025), where students have been observed using AI tools for selected tasks. In higher education, pre-service teachers have shown interest in and acceptance of AI use (Ulla et al., 2024), with high awareness of its advantages and disadvantages. Teachers expressed concerns about how AI is affecting their roles and lesson delivery as they try to adapt to students' needs and interests. At many higher education institutions, teachers have expressed fear that they may not be able to keep up with the rapid rise of AI.

Studies have revealed that AI presents both challenges to teachers' professional identities at work and opportunities for their teaching and learning. Some began transitioning from traditional teachers to AI-assisted educators, while others refused to do so due to limited familiarity with AI. Fundamentally, their sense of identity as teachers has changed (Sadykova & Kayumova, 2024; Alwaqdani, 2025; Goles et al., 2024). In the Philippine context, research on AI in education has focused mainly on readiness and attitudes, with limited attention to how teachers reconstruct their professional identity in AI-mediated environments.

Teachers are uncertain of their identity. According to Satvati et al. (2025), AI has significantly influenced teachers' identities across institutional and societal domains in their roles as educators. Teachers try to shift into new roles and identities, but learning institutions lack clear AI guidelines, leaving them confused about how to proceed. Schools show strong support for developing the new identities that teachers should embrace, but due to limited time to benchmark what other higher education institutions do, stagnation has resulted.

The Philippine government and educational institutions lack clear direction on the extent of AI use (Sumalinog et al., 2022; Lan, 2024; Zhou et al., 2024). Clear gaps are evident in the previously mentioned studies. Existing studies on AI and teacher identity remain fragmented and context specific. This study addresses the lack of interpretive synthesis and explains how English teachers reconstruct their

professional identity. Through qualitative meta-synthesis, this study explores teachers' professional identity in the age of AI by synthesizing qualitative evidence across contexts. The study explores identity disruption, adaptation, and evolution, and contributes to understanding teacher identity as fluid and technologically mediated, with implications for policy and professional development.

This study is conceptually anchored in the view that teacher professional identity is dynamic, socially constructed, and continuously shaped by technological and pedagogical change. Drawing from perspectives on identity transformation and technology-mediated pedagogy, the synthesis proposes that English teachers' professional identity in AI-mediated environments develops through interconnected processes of disruption, adaptation, and evolution. These processes serve as the conceptual lens for interpreting how teachers renegotiate their professional roles, expertise, agency, and ethical responsibilities in response to emerging AI technologies.

1.1 Domain of Inquiry

This study synthesized university English foreign language (EFL) teachers' professional identity in the age of AI based on secondary data from qualitative papers. It explored how teachers reconstruct their professional roles in response to AI. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do English teachers experience identity disruption amid the rise of AI technologies?
2. In what ways do English teachers adapt their professional roles in AI-mediated teaching contexts?
3. How do English teachers evolve as co-creators of AI-mediated pedagogy?

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study used a qualitative meta-ethnographic design (Noblit & Hare, 1988) to synthesize qualitative research on English teachers' professional identity in AI-mediated contexts. Meta-ethnography was selected because it enables the interpretive translation of findings across studies and the development of higher-order conceptual insights, rather than merely aggregating results.

2.2 Search Strategy and Data Sources

Relevant studies were located through a systematic search of major scholarly databases, namely, Scopus, ERIC, Google Scholar, and Publish or Perish. Database-specific Boolean search strings were combined through terms related to English teachers, professional identity, AI, and qualitative research designs to ensure comprehensive and targeted retrieval of relevant studies.

The search covered the period from 2020 to 2025 to capture the rise of AI applications in education, particularly in English language teaching. The search used combinations of the following keywords: "English teachers," "professional identity," "artificial intelligence," and "qualitative research," applied across databases using Boolean operators (AND, OR). The selection process was guided

by the preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA) 2020 framework (Page et al., 2021) to ensure transparency and replicability. Figure 1 shows the PRISMA 2020 search flow.

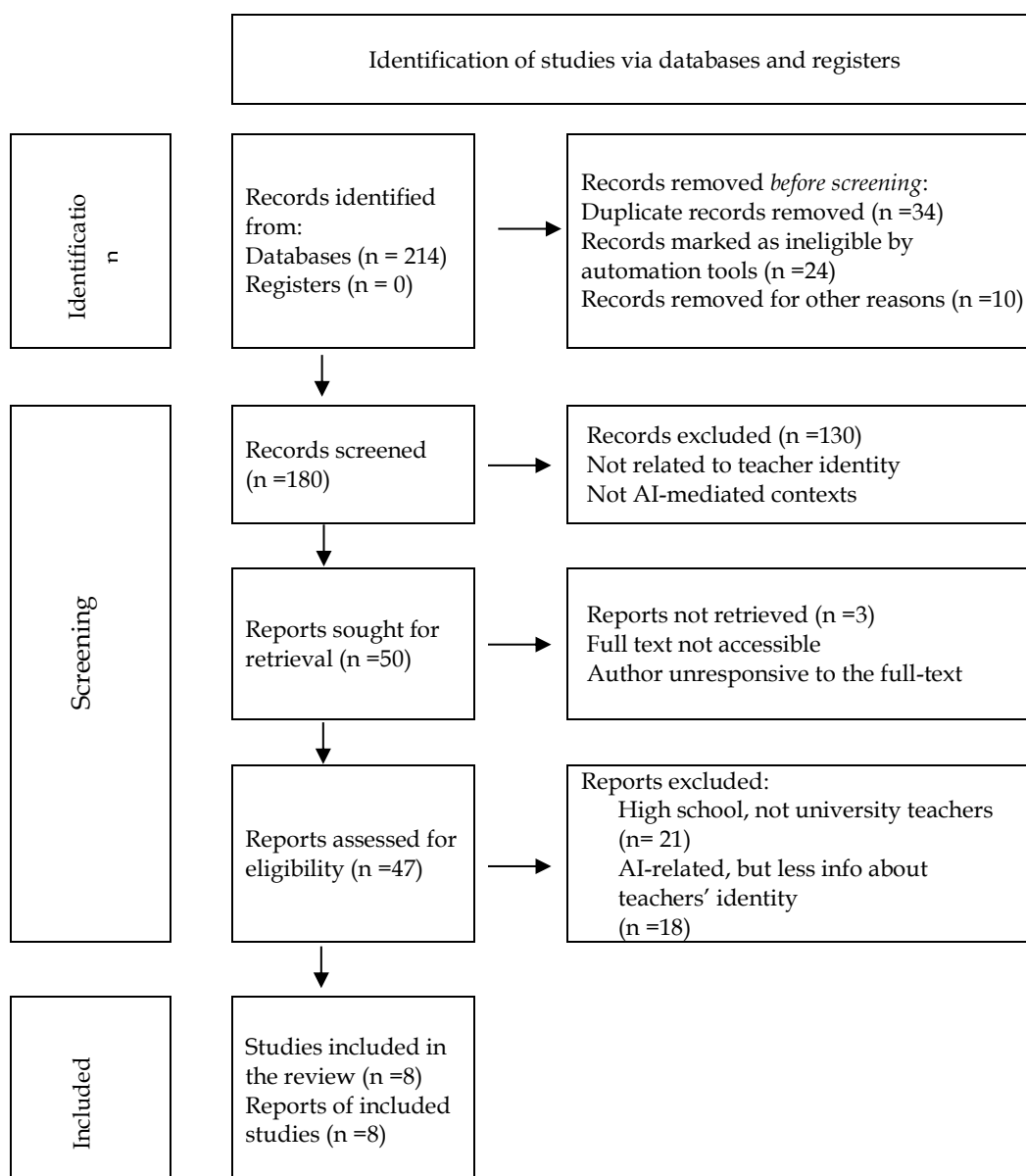


Figure 1: The PRISMA 2020 search flow

2.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The study employed clearly defined inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the relevance, rigor, and alignment of selected studies with the purpose of the meta-ethnographic synthesis. Included studies were: (1) peer-reviewed journal articles; (2) published between 2020 and 2025; (3) written in English; (4) focused on English language teachers or English language teaching (ELT) contexts; (5) examined teachers' professional identity, perceptions, roles, or experiences related to AI integration in education; and (6) utilized qualitative, mixed-methods, or interpretive research designs that provided rich narrative findings.

suitable for meta-ethnographic analysis. Studies were also required to contain sufficient methodological and thematic details to support reciprocal translation and thematic synthesis. Excluded from the review were: (1) conference abstracts, dissertations, editorials, opinion papers, and non-peer-reviewed publications; (2) studies focusing solely on students' perceptions of AI without discussing teacher identity or professional roles; (3) purely quantitative studies lacking qualitative insights; (4) studies unrelated to AI integration in educational settings; and (5) duplicate articles retrieved from multiple databases. Following the screening and eligibility process, eight studies were retained for final synthesis because they directly addressed the transformation of English teachers' professional identity in AI-mediated educational environments.

2.4 Selection and Appraisal of Studies

The identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion phases of the study were systematically organized using the PRISMA 2020 framework to ensure transparency and methodological rigor. Initially, 214 records were identified from Scopus, ERIC, Google Scholar, and Publish or Perish using predefined Boolean search terms related to English teachers, professional identity, AI, and qualitative research. Duplicate records, automatically flagged ineligible studies, and unrelated articles were removed prior to screening. The remaining studies underwent title and abstract screening to determine their relevance to English teachers' professional identity in AI-mediated educational contexts.

Full-text screening was subsequently conducted to assess methodological appropriateness, contextual relevance, participant characteristics, and alignment with the inclusion criteria. Studies that focused solely on technological efficiency, used purely quantitative designs, or lacked sufficient discussion on teacher identity were excluded. To ensure credibility and quality, all eligible studies were appraised using the Critical Appraisal Skills Program (CASP) qualitative checklist. A structured data extraction matrix was likewise used to systematically organize study characteristics and key findings. After the screening and appraisal procedures, eight studies that satisfied all inclusion and quality criteria were retained for the final meta-ethnographic synthesis.

2.5 Data Extraction

Key information from each included study was systematically extracted using a structured data extraction matrix. Extracted data included: author(s), year of publication, country or setting, research context, participant characteristics, methodological approach, data collection methods, analytic procedures, and the major findings related to English teachers' professional identity in AI-mediated contexts. Extracting these elements ensured uniform documentation of study characteristics and enabled meaningful comparison across studies. This process also facilitated the synthesis of cross-case patterns and the integration of themes pertaining to how English teachers construct, negotiate, and experience their professional identity in AI-enhanced educational environments. Table 1 presents the selected studies on English teachers' professional identity in the age of AI.

Table 1: Selected studies on English teachers' professional identity in the age of AI

Authors and Year	Country	Participants	Educational Setting	Methodology	Focus	Key Findings
Zaman et al. (2024)	Pakistan	16 English language university teachers	Higher education ELT programs	Qualitative interviews (phenomenological)	General AI tools in ELT	Teachers negotiate professional identity amid AI integration; tensions around authority, authenticity, and technological pressure.
Satvati et al. (2025)	Iran	16 university EFL teachers	Language institutes & universities	Qualitative ecological case study	AI in language education	AI reshapes teachers' identity through ecological tensions: loss of autonomy, shifts in expertise, and need for adaptive professionalism.
Ghiasvand & Seyri (2025)	Iran	15 in-service EFL teachers	Adult and higher education	Collaborative reflection, phenomenological	AI use in reflective teaching	Teachers reconstruct identity through collaborative reflection, moving from anxiety and skepticism toward empowerment and hybrid AI-supported identities.
Almashour et al. (2025)	Jordan	University EFL teachers (students' perceptions)	University English departments	Qualitative interviews & focus groups	AI-enhanced classrooms	Students observe teachers balancing human warmth and AI facilitation; teacher identity positioned between "caring expert" and "AI-augmented instructor."
Lan (2024)	China	In-service teachers in higher education training	AI-enhanced teacher training program	Mixed-methods (with strong qualitative strand)	AI in teacher training	Identity tensions (groupness-individuality; continuity-openness; humanity-technology) shape teachers' motivations to adopt AI.
Sun & Sun (2025)	China	34 university EFL teachers	Higher education, professional development	Qualitative interviews	AI tools for PD	AI tools spark renewed professional identity as self-directed, reflective, autonomous teachers; enhance sense of competence and agency.

Zhou et al. (2024)	China	16 tertiary EFL teachers	University-level EFL programs	Qualitative multiple-case study	AI-enhanced instruction (automated feedback, adaptive tools)	Teachers reposition themselves as orchestrators of AI feedback; identity shifts include concerns over de-professionalization and renewed responsibility for human connection.
Teng & Yip (2025)	China	EFL university teachers	University English programs	Conceptual & qualitative illustrations	GenAI in EFL teaching	AI trigger's new identity roles (curator, mediator, ethical gatekeeper); teacher agency becomes central to sustaining identity stability in GenAI contexts.

2.6 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Noblit and Hare's (1988) meta-ethnography. First-order constructs (participants' perspectives) and second-order constructs (authors' interpretations) were identified from each study. These were then translated across studies through reciprocal comparison to determine similarities and differences in how teacher identity was constructed in AI-mediated contexts. Through this process, key concepts were synthesized into third-order constructs that represent higher-level interpretations of English teachers' professional identity.

A line-of-argument synthesis was then developed to explain how identity transformation occurs across studies, resulting in the conceptual model of disruption, adaptation, and evolution. The synthesis followed meta-ethnographic principles by identifying and comparing recurring concepts across studies through reciprocal translation. Related findings were grouped and interpreted to generate higher-order themes on the disruption, adaptation, and evolution of English teachers' professional identity in AI-mediated contexts.

3. Results and Findings

3.1 Teachers' Identity in the Age of AI

This section presents the interpretive synthesis of findings across the eight studies. Through meta-ethnographic analysis, three interconnected themes emerged: (1) identity disruption, (2) adaptation to new professional roles, and (3) evolution in AI-mediated pedagogy. These themes represent a dynamic process of professional identity reconstruction across contexts.

3.2 Theme 1: Identity Disruption

Across the included studies, the findings converge on the suggestion that AI introduces significant disruptions to teachers' professional identity. Teachers reported tensions in their sense of expertise, pedagogical authority, and ethical positioning as AI systems begin to perform tasks traditionally associated with human instruction. However, these disruptions are not uniform; rather, they vary

across contexts, reflecting differences in technological exposure, institutional support, and teacher readiness.

3.2.1 Subtheme 1: Disruption in Their Expertise

The teachers were regarded by their students and stakeholders as sages whose expertise was unquestionable. Students called them the “go-to people” for academic queries and rigor (Teng & Yip, 2025; Almashour et al., 2024; Zaman et al., 2024). However, when AI came onto the scene, teachers began to doubt their own capabilities and wondered whether AI might prove more accurate in grammar correction, essay scoring, information generation, and synthesis. Their new experiences affected their confidence and self-esteem, leading them to question whether their expertise was still needed in the classroom, as AI could perform their tasks more quickly. These findings suggest a perceived shift in professional authority, in which teachers are renegotiating their role as knowledge providers in relation to AI-generated outputs.

3.2.2 Subtheme 2: Disruption in Their Pedagogical Skills

Traditionally, classroom pedagogies were learned only by teachers through training and seminars provided by their institutions of learning. In most cases, during conferences focused on enhancing pedagogical practices, teachers were required to demonstrate their time-tested methods to an audience. However, when AI and its innovations became prevalent, students readily welcomed it, making it their new learning partner. Students then shifted to a new learning modality, online learning, leaving their teachers in the traditional teaching era.

As learning took a new form, teachers’ pedagogical skills became less needed and obsolete (Li, 2023; Sun & Sun, 2025; Zhou et al., 2024; Satvati et al., 2025). These shifts suggest that traditional pedagogical practices are being re-evaluated, prompting teachers to reconsider how their instructional approaches align with AI-supported learning environments. As a result, teachers felt that students are better prepared to face what is to come than those who are afraid to step forward and cope with the passage of time. In reality, some teachers tried to cope, but the present time is just not suited to their skills.

3.2.3 Subtheme 3: Disruption in Their Ethical Views

Across studies, ethical uncertainty emerged as a key dimension of identity disruption. Teachers reported limited preparedness in addressing issues such as AI-generated content, academic integrity, and responsible use of technology. This lack of clear ethical frameworks contributed to uncertainty in their professional roles, underscoring the need for institutional guidance to navigate AI-related ethical challenges. Students would confidently receive feedback from teachers (Albiladi & Alghamdi, 2022). Regarding conferences, Lavigne et al. (2023) noted that behavioral change and professional growth resulted from effective post-observation conferences (Lavigne et al., 2023; Ekizer, 2025). The participants’ experiences aligned with those reported in previous studies. This implies that coaching must include components that make it more effective for both students and teachers. Consequently, proper coaching is transformative.

3.3 Theme 2: Adaptation to New Professional Roles

This theme captures how teachers adapt to emerging professional demands by redefining their roles in response to AI integration. It highlights how teachers respond to AI integration by adjusting their instructional practices, acquiring new technological skills, and gradually adapting to emerging professional demands.

3.3.1 Subtheme 2.1: Adaptation as AI-enhanced Pedagogies

When AI first surfaced and was introduced to the world, many instructors refused to adapt to its new way of operating. Despite initial resistance, findings across studies indicate that teachers gradually adapt to AI by redefining their professional roles. This adaptation reflects teachers' efforts to gradually integrate AI into instruction while adjusting their pedagogical practices to meet changing learning demands. As AI began to assert its dominance, instructors gradually used it as a springboard for deeper instructional understanding (Almashour et al., 2024; Sun & Sun, 2025; Zhou et al., 2024). This shift prompted instructors to improvise ways to use AI to match students' learning styles that are AI-era-patterned (Teng & Yip, 2025; Zaman et al., 2024). They replaced their traditional instructional delivery with technology- and AI-driven pedagogies, in which devices and computer-assisted learning became prevalent.

3.3.2 Subtheme 2.2: Adaptation as AI-ethics Gatekeepers

Teachers also adapted by guiding students toward responsible AI use and addressing concerns related to dependency and academic integrity. In this way, they would know how to regulate their students' dependence on AI (Zaman et al., 2024; Ghiasvand & Seyri, 2025). These findings indicate that AI is not merely adopted as a tool but becomes integrated into pedagogical decision-making processes, shaping how instruction is designed and delivered. Teachers' adaptation as AI-ethics gatekeepers was further reflected in their deliberate efforts to establish boundaries for appropriate AI use in academic tasks.

They continuously monitored and guided students' interactions with AI, ensuring that learning remained authentic and aligned with educational objectives. In doing so, teachers adjusted their instructional practices to incorporate ethical discussions, promote digital responsibility, and reinforce critical evaluation of AI-generated outputs. This ongoing regulation highlights how teachers actively responded to emerging ethical challenges, positioning themselves as key agents in maintaining academic integrity within AI-mediated learning environments.

3.3.3 Subtheme 2.3: Adaptation as Professional AI Learners

College English instructors have finally shifted to become learners of AI's developments and capabilities. They accepted that, to be retained by the learning institutions where they were employed, they needed to deliver the skills that the present time required (Sun & Sun, 2025; Ghiasvand & Seyri, 2025; Satvati et al., 2025). This suggests that professional identity adaptation involves continuous learning, in which teachers reposition themselves as active participants in technological change. Teacher training programs may include AI literacy and ethical AI workshops to strengthen teachers' confidence and professional agency. Institutions may also establish clear policies on responsible AI use, academic integrity, and continuous support for educators as they adapt to AI-mediated

instruction. This adaptive shift is further demonstrated in teachers' continuous engagement with AI tools through self-directed learning and professional development. They actively explore emerging technologies, experiment with AI applications in their teaching, and refine their skills to remain relevant in evolving educational contexts. In doing so, teachers adjust their professional practices to align with technological demands while maintaining pedagogical goals. This ongoing process underscores that adaptation is not a one-time adjustment but a sustained effort, in which teachers continuously update their competencies and reposition themselves within AI-integrated learning environments.

3.4 Theme 3: Evolution in AI-mediated Pedagogy

This theme highlights the deeper transformation of teachers' professional identity as they move beyond adaptation toward more advanced roles in AI-mediated pedagogy. It reflects how teachers evolve into co-creators, decision-makers, and collaborative designers, actively shaping and integrating AI within human-centered teaching practices.

3.4.1 Subtheme 3.1: Evolution as Pedagogical Decision-Makers

As adaptation progresses, the findings suggested a further transformation of teacher identity toward more collaborative and integrative roles. Teachers evolve as co-creators of AI-mediated pedagogy, exercising agency to shape how AI is used in instructional contexts. They have learned when to use and when to reject AI. They could weigh instances and circumstances that involved AI (Teng & Yip, 2025; Huang et al., 2024; Zhou et al., 2024; Satvati et al., 2025). They have become AI-literate, and their attitudes and practices have become their weapon for using AI. This reflects a shift toward professional autonomy, in which teachers critically evaluate AI rather than passively adopt it.

3.4.2 Subtheme 3.2: Evolution as Collaborative Designers

Instructors' attitudes towards AI were not always favorable, especially from the start, when learning AI required acceptance and adjustments. However, time has changed these attitudes. Instructors have become collaborative designers with AI. Their pedagogical practices have evolved into collaborative and AI-supported approaches that combine human expertise with technological capabilities (Teng & Yip, 2025; Goles et al., 2024; Zhou et al., 2024; Satvati et al., 2025). Their learning materials have been developed with AI, ensuring they are up to date and relevant to students. These findings suggest a reconfiguration of teaching as a collaborative process between human expertise and AI.

3.4.3 Subtheme 3.3: Evolution as Hybrid Professionals

Beyond adaptation, teachers developed hybrid professional identities that combined technological competence with human-centered pedagogy. When class interruptions due to natural calamities occur, instructors shift to a full online or hybrid learning modality. Such instances required AI applications and expertise (Teng & Yip, 2025; Almashour et al., 2024; Zaman et al., 2024). This indicates the emergence of hybrid professional identities that integrate technological competence with human-centered pedagogy.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight that English teachers' professional identity in the age of AI is not diminished but reconfigured. The disruption–adaptation–evolution process reflects a dynamic and continuous negotiation of identity in response to technological change.

When AI emerged in 2020, it caused a *disruption* that destabilized teachers' identity. The findings revealed that the emergence of AI disrupted teachers' traditional professional identity by challenging their expertise, pedagogical authority, and ethical readiness. Instructors questioned their expertise when they felt AI could be more accurate and faster at answering queries (Zaman et al., 2024; Satvati et al., 2025). They also doubted their pedagogical skills, since AI could offer more advanced pedagogies and could scan sources worldwide in a matter of seconds. Teachers even questioned their ethical views because they lacked awareness from the start of how to navigate AI ethics (Wei et al., 2025). According to Ali et al. (2024), from their usual roles, AI has led to overreliance on technology, erosion of roles, ethical and privacy concerns, inequality and access issues, and a lack of readiness and training. Teachers were caught unaware of the challenges they would face when AI was widely used.

According to Zhang and Cao (2025), AI has led to a lack of preparedness and training; pedagogical and institutional changes; technological limitations and reliability issues; ethical concerns; academic integrity issues; a decline in critical thinking and skills; and mental health and psychological impacts. Furthermore, the rise of AI has disrupted teachers' mindsets, including the need for continuous upskilling, confusion and loss of direction, loss of confidence, fear of replacement by AI, diminished autonomy, technological stress and pressure, disruption of professional authority and expertise, and identity tension and conflict (Gu, 2024; Haghi et al., 2026).

There were role adaptation difficulties, classroom management challenges, heavy workload and stress, emotional and psychological stress, identity instability, difficulty in social interaction, dependence on support system, and pressure to meet professional expectations. Additionally, AI has disrupted both the emotional and psychological aspects of teachers, leading them to doubt the success of the teaching and learning process mediated by AI (Guo & Wang, 2024; Haleem & Javaid, 2022). These facts demonstrate that AI has had a significant impact on teachers' traditional roles and how they interact with learners.

Despite the challenges, teachers have undergone an *adaptation* in their roles, moving from instructors to AI-augmented mentors. The findings further showed that teachers responded to these disruptions through adaptive practices, gradually repositioning themselves from traditional instructors to AI-augmented mentors. AI has become a tool for enhancing pedagogies (Ghiasvand & Seyri, 2025; Almashour et al., 2025; dos Santos et al., 2022), thereby strengthening their foundations for further development. Teachers have also become enthusiastic about ethics-related issues in the classroom. They engaged as professional AI learners, embracing everything AI has to offer. Teachers have started integrating

AI into existing classroom tools and platforms, redesigning teaching strategies to include AI-supported instruction, shifting from content delivery to facilitation and guidance, guiding students in the responsible and ethical use of AI, and adjusting assessment methods to reduce AI misuse and promote authentic learning (Tan, 2025; Chen, 2022). During the adaptation process, teachers use AI as an instructional support tool to modify teaching strategies, facilitate student-AI interaction, integrate AI into classroom activities, and adapt to new classroom dynamics.

They use AI to learn how to use AI tools, balance AI use with teaching goals, and maintain teacher presence (Ji et al., 2024; Karatas et al., 2024; Gašević et al., 2023). These studies supported the idea that teachers have truly adapted to the new realities demanded by the present time. These practices indicate that teachers did not merely adopt AI but continuously adjusted and redefined their approaches to respond effectively to evolving technological demands. They have adapted enough so that the learning and teaching process is not hampered.

Towards the end, the instructors showed complete evolution as co-creators of AI-mediated pedagogy (Lan, 2024; Engeness & Gamlem, 2025; Ismail & Ibrahim, 2025; Sun & Sun, 2025). As adaptation progressed, the findings indicated an evolution of teachers' professional identity toward becoming co-creators of AI-mediated pedagogy. This time, they worked harmoniously with AI, professing that AI is here to stay and that adapting to it is the best choice. They further evolved into wise decision-makers (Zhou et al., 2024; Teng & Yip, 2025), demonstrating the ability to know when to integrate. Furthermore, from resisting the use of AI, they have become collaborative designers and hybrid professionals. Teachers began reframing their roles from teachers to facilitators and mentors, becoming decision-makers on when and how AI should be used, and positioning themselves as co-creators of AI learning experiences, actively shaping AI-related classroom policies and practices.

Teng and Yip (2025) and Ghafouri et al. (2024) noted that teachers were transitioning toward AI-enhanced, data-driven teaching models, becoming designers of personalized learning experiences, shifting from content delivery to learning facilitation, and exercising agency in selecting and shaping the use of AI in education. Teachers have become designers of AI-enhanced learning environments, human-AI collaboration as a new professional norm, reconfiguration of teacher identity, transformation into AI-integrated professionals, and the shift toward data-driven and intelligent teaching (Kitcharoen et al., 2024; Kemelbekova et al., 2024; Kusuma et al., 2024). These studies have shown that teachers have evolved beyond their usual roles and embraced the new realities AI has brought to the field of teaching.

Overall, the findings suggest that identity transformation in AI-mediated contexts is cyclical rather than linear. This means that if AI is to develop further and enter new frontiers, new shifts must be undertaken, and only time will tell when it stops. As the shifts progress, evolutions follow, for every change must be met with processes that can resolve problems. This cycle may not stop, even with the arrival

of a new trend or any non-AI-related developments. This transformation aligns with sociocultural perspectives on identity, which hold that professional identity is shaped by interactions with changing environments. AI acts as both a disruptive and enabling force, challenging traditional roles while creating opportunities for new forms of professional agency. Fundamentally, the findings suggest that identity transformation is not linear but cyclical, as teachers continuously respond to emerging technological developments. This reinforces the view that professional identity in AI-mediated contexts remains fluid, adaptive, and context-dependent.

5. Conclusion

This meta-ethnographic synthesis reveals that English teachers' professional identity in the age of AI is not diminished but continuously reconfigured through processes of disruption, adaptation, and evolution. The findings demonstrate that teachers constantly renegotiate their expertise, pedagogical roles, and ethical responsibilities as they engage with AI-mediated teaching environments. The study contributes to a broader understanding of teacher identity as dynamic, context-dependent, and technologically mediated. It further emphasizes that identity transformation is not a linear progression but a cyclical, evolving process shaped by ongoing interaction with emerging technologies and evolving educational demands.

Practically, the findings underscore the importance of structured professional development programs, institutional support, and clear ethical guidelines to help teachers effectively navigate AI integration in educational settings. These mechanisms can empower educators to maintain pedagogical authenticity while adapting to technological innovation. Moreover, the study highlights the need for collaborative learning environments that encourage teachers to share experiences and best practices in AI-assisted instruction. Despite these contributions, the synthesis is limited by the small number of included studies and the concentration of research within specific educational and cultural contexts. Future research may explore longitudinal, cross-cultural, and discipline-specific variations in teacher identity transformation as AI technologies continue to evolve across diverse educational settings.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest in the conduct of this study.

6. Acknowledgments

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