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# Student teachers' experiences of using photos in teacher reflection

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## ABSTRACT

Teacher reflection is part of teacher education worldwide and often done through discussion or in writing. This study looks into student teachers' experiences of reflecting on the development of teacher identity through a photo reflection report instead of a traditional written report. The study examines student teachers' experiences of how a photo reflection report can help them consider their emerging teacher identity and developmental process as a teacher during their one year of pedagogical studies. The participants ( $n = 27$ ) compiled a photo report with at least seven photos with text descriptions according to selected guiding questions. Data of participant experiences were collected through an online questionnaire at the end of a subject teacher education programme in Finland. The questionnaire data were analysed with thematic analysis. The findings show that the student teachers found the photo reflection report a meaningful and enjoyable way to consider their development as teachers. The photos helped to structure reflection and analyse different aspects of teacherhood. The photo report allowed sufficient flexibility and freedom to make the reflection personal and about one's own story, which was considered valuable.

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## KEYWORDS

Photo reflection; professional development; teacherhood; teacher development; teacher identity; teacher reflection

## Introduction

This article explores student teachers' experiences of teacher reflection that is done through a photo reflection report instead of a traditional written report in initial subject teacher education. Teacher reflection is considered an essential component of teacher development in teacher education programmes worldwide. As student teachers are often burdened with numerous writing assignments, a photo reflection report was invented as an innovative pedagogical tool that would offer student teachers a new approach to process and describe their feelings and considerations of their teacherhood. The photo reflection report is inspired by the idea of Empowering Photography (Savolainen, 2009). During teaching practice, student teachers were asked to compile a report with photos that are meaningful and that make visible important issues or aspects of their emerging teacher identity and teacher development.

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## Literature review

When students come to teacher education, they are offered different kinds of models for teacher identity and a good teacher. These models are offered by teacher educators during theoretical courses and by mentors and other teachers in schools during teaching practice. Students are guided and encouraged to practice teacher reflection to analyse and develop their actions in teaching and learning and to develop their teacher identity (e.g., Beauchamp, 2015; Husu et al., 2008).

### *Teacher identity development*

During teacher education, student teachers adopt or reject information based on their visions and conceptions of good teaching and thus gradually develop their personal theories of teaching and teacher identity (Horn et al., 2008; Loughran, 2006). Student teachers' own school years and former teachers have already given a basis to the concepts, beliefs and assumptions of teaching and teaching profession that the student teachers hold. All these prior experiences influence the student teachers' perceptions of teaching and what it means to be a teacher (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). Teacher identity creates a framework for teachers to construct and adopt their own ideas of the teaching profession and its place in society, and it is therefore a way for professional development (Sachs, 2005).

In this article, teacher identity development is perceived as a manifold, ongoing process. It includes the integration of one's personal knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, norms, and values as well as the professional demands from teacher education and schools, such as generally accepted values and standards about teaching (Beijaard et al., 2004). Teacher identity is viewed from the postmodern perspective as a continuous process where individuals as active agents engage in continual reflection and interpretation between themselves and the surrounding social context (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Beijaard et al., 2004). Teacher identity is thus not solid or fixed. Instead, as continuous and changing, it is created and re-created through dialogue in various contexts and relationships (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Beijaard et al., 2004).

Teacher identity consists of multiple dimensions that can be experienced as independent or even incompatible. These dimensions include the actual identity that reflects who or what the teacher now is, the ideal identity that reflects the hopes and goals that the teacher would like to be, and the norm identity that prescribes what kind of teacher one should be (Beijaard et al., 2004). These different dimensions interact and overlap within an individual teacher (Friesen & Besley, 2013). Through the dialogical approach, the 'multiple, discontinuous and social' aspects of teacher identity are weaved together with the 'unitary, continuous and individual' aspects (Arvaja, 2016, p. 393). A teacher can simultaneously have multiple roles or positions as a teacher and these roles are not mutually exclusive. Teacher identity influences the decisions that teachers make in relation to teaching practices, content of teaching, teacher-student relationships, and professional development (e.g., Beijaard et al., 2004). Therefore, it is important that focussed attention is paid during teacher education to supporting the development of student teachers' emerging teacher identities (Beauchamp, 2015). This is often done through the practice of teacher reflection.

## **Teacher reflection in teacher education**

Teacher reflection can be used as an instrument for change and for developing one's teacher identity (Avalos, 2011). It can thus be a crucial component of teacher development. It is not, however, a direct route to a good teacher. It requires the individual's willingness to critically and openly examine her/his own interpretations of teaching and of being a teacher (Sachs, 2005). Research suggests that teacher education may be unsuccessful in helping student teachers recognize and challenge their beliefs of teaching and of being a teacher (l'Anson et al., 2003; Löffström & Poom-Valickis, 2013). It is therefore essential that student teachers are guided to reflect on their understanding of learning and teaching. They also need to be supported in challenging their conceptions about various pedagogical practices and theories (Loughran, 2006).

There are different kinds and levels of teacher reflection produced during teacher education, both through writing and discussion. During guided teaching practices, student teachers generally have multiple reflective discussions with their mentors and peers about planning and implementing teaching and assessing their learners' progress. This type of reflection is often very much bound to practical applications and as such important for developing student teachers' practical theories of teaching that they will draw upon in teaching (Husu et al., 2008; Loughran, 2006). Student teachers also participate in various group work and complete numerous individual assignments throughout teacher education where they are guided to reflect critically – rather than produce descriptive summaries of experiences – on different aspects and perspectives to teaching (McGarr & McCormack, 2014). Writing reflective portfolios or journals is a common way for doing reflection and for considering the development of one's teacherhood (Cohen-Sayag & Fischl, 2012). However, writing is also criticized for not producing what it claims to produce: the level of reflection is often shallow and it may be done just for the sake of completing the credits (Cohen-Sayag & Fischl, 2012; McGarr & McCormack, 2014).

In her examination of current literature on reflection in teacher education, Beauchamp (2015) draws on prior studies (e.g., Ramsey, 2010) and reveals that by giving student teachers more control over the focus of reflection and the process of reflection, they may produce deeper and more critical reflection and 'less perfunctory and contrived reflections' (Beauchamp, 2015, p. 134). Reflection is a tool for teacher identity development only if it produces effective results in a professional context. It can be learned and it needs to be taught to student teachers explicitly (Beauchamp, 2015; Husu et al., 2008). There have been calls by researchers for more effective ways of teacher reflection (e.g., Beauchamp, 2015; Marcos et al., 2011) that would provide (student) teachers with purposeful means for reflective practice in order to give a strong basis for professional development.

## **Photo reflection as a tool for teacher development**

After having listened to students' fatigue of writing yet another reflective report, and in order to answer to the calls to create more effective and meaningful ways for teacher reflection (e.g., Beauchamp, 2015; Marcos et al., 2011), I invented a photo reflection report. Its purpose is to give a novel approach to describe students' feelings and considerations about teacher development. The idea for using photos in teacher reflection originated from a course on Empowering Photography that was organised for teacher educators in

my faculty and that I attended. The course was taught by Savolainen (2009) who had developed a therapeutically aligned pedagogic method using photos when working with mistreated young children in child protection. According to Savolainen, photos are 'an intentional device in analysing and building one's different roles, feelings and features and accepting oneself.' (<http://www.voimauttavavalokuva.net/english/menetelma.htm>). Empowering photography is based on the concept of empowerment. With the help of the method, photography can be used as the creator of an empowering process for an individual and for different groups of people such as families or work communities. Savolainen (2009) and others have applied the method in various contexts in education, care work, therapy, and work communities in Finland. I developed the photo reflection method by taking ideas from Empowering Photography and freely adapting and applying them for use in teacher education. Thus, the purpose of the photo reflection report is not to be a therapy method but to be a tool for reflecting on one's teacher identity during teacher education. In oral and written reflection, only words are used when expressing one's thoughts and feelings. Using photos adds another dimension to considering one's development.

Being or becoming empowered is a development process that starts from within an individual him/herself (Savolainen, 2009). In photo reflection, the students are encouraged to take and choose such photos that somehow define their teacher identity or support features they consider meaningful in their teaching. The type of photos that the students are asked to produce range from photos that are set-ups without the student him/herself in the photo to actual photos of an authentic teaching situation. In photo reflection, the students are asked to reinforce and make visible such aspects of their teacherhood that they consider valuable.

The instructions for the photo reflection reports after the first and second practice are the following:

During and at the end of the practice, compile a photo reflection report that illustrates and describes the development of your teacherhood and teacher identity. Include at least seven (7) photos with descriptions (text can be shorter or longer depending on your own consideration and need). Make a presentation of your photos and descriptions in, for example, a Power Point or similar format.

You can aim at selecting one issue from each lesson that you teach or each practice week that you want to include in this report. You can either take the photos on your own or ask someone to help you take them. They do not need to be taken during a lesson. They can be set-ups in a classroom or another place that you see appropriate. The photos can show your different roles and skills as a teacher or, for example, the different values that you personally as a teacher want to relay to the students. Or, the photos may show the qualities that you are still working on building and developing as a teacher.

In addition, the photo reflection report after the last (second) practice guides the students to address the following questions in their report with photos and text:

Do you feel like a teacher? How do you know it?

How would you describe yourself as a teacher?

What is important to you in your professional identity?

What are your strengths and weaknesses as a teacher?

The purpose of this study is to examine how photo reflection can help aspiring student teachers to consider their teacher identity, developmental process, and essential aspects of being a teacher. The research questions are:

- (1) How do student teachers consider the use of photos in reflecting on teacher development?
- (2) In which ways does the use of photos help student teachers to reflect on their teacher identity?

## Context and method

The context of this study is a one-year subject teacher education programme in Finland. The participants are student teachers studying to become foreign language teachers with qualifications for all school levels. In the programme, reflection is connected to two subject didactics courses and two teaching practices (one of each in the fall term and the spring term). The students are guided to reflect on their activities and development as subject teachers. According to the syllabus, the objective of the reflection course (1 ECTS, equal to 27 hours of student work) is to understand the significance of reflection in teachers' work and in the integration of theory and practice. The course consists of two 2-hour teaching sessions, an initial task before the practice period, a small group meeting during teaching practice, and a final report after practice is completed. The teaching sessions in the fall term typically include short lectures of reflection theory and suitable individual and small group tasks that guide students in considering their strengths and developmental aspects as a teacher (e.g., Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005). In the spring term, the short theoretical lectures or workshops in the two teaching sessions aim at encouraging students to deepen their skills in reflection and to set developmental goals for the last practice (e.g., Husu et al., 2008). The initial task is often a short write-up of students' expectations of the upcoming practice. The small group meeting provides an opportunity to discuss and reflect orally on students' experiences of the practice and on their development as teachers. The final task has often been another reflective essay or, in some teachers' courses, for example, filling out an EPOSTL. According to the website, (<https://www.ecml.at/Resources/ECMLresources/tabid/277/ID/51/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>), the European Portfolio for Student Teachers of Languages (EPOSTL):

is a tool for reflection and self-assessment of the didactic knowledge and skills necessary to teach languages. It builds on insights from the *Common European Framework of Reference and the European Language Portfolio* as well as the *European Profile for Language Teacher Education*.

The portfolio is a 92-page document that contains specific questions and prompts for the students to answer. It includes sections that, for example, ask the students to give evidence of the lessons they have implemented or evidence of the lessons they have observed.

Instead of completing a written report or an EPOSTL, the participants of this study (n = 27, 24 female, 3 male) compiled a photo reflection report after one or both of the practices depending on what teacher's course they were on. I collected the participants' experiences through a voluntary online questionnaire after the final practice at

the end of the pedagogical studies. The questionnaire included two Likert-type questions, two multiple-choice questions and several open-ended questions. The open-ended questions probed the students' experiences of completing the photo reflection report, how it was to take photos and contemplate the texts to them, how the photos helped to analyse their considerations in relation to their teacherhood, and how photos helped to structure the reflection report. Another open-ended question asked what added value the photos had brought to considering one's teacherhood and practice experiences, and whether the student had faced any challenges. The participants were also asked to relay any additional thoughts they had about the photo report or reflection in general.

I analysed the questionnaire data with thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) using the Atlas.ti programme. I read the data throughout several times and coded with recurring themes that I raised from the data. Further rounds of analysis enabled to reduce and refine the themes to extract the final themes from the data. The findings are presented in the following section with typical quotes from the data to increase trustworthiness.

## Findings

The participants had compiled a photo reflection report either after their first practice in the fall or the second practice in the spring, or after both. Out of the 27 student teachers, 12 had completed the photo report both in the fall and in the spring, eight had completed it only in the fall, and seven had completed it only in the spring. All the participants had viewed the task favourably, which may lead to think that only those students who had enjoyed the task responded to the questionnaire. However, the aim of this study was not only to find out whether the photo reflection report was meaningful and whether the students considered it suitable for the reflection of one's teacher development, but *how* it was meaningful and *how it helped* the student teacher to consider her/his emerging teacher identity.

### *Meaningful task*

All the participants found the compilation of the photo reflection report meaningful, with the majority of them ( $n = 17$ ) stating it was very meaningful and the rest ( $n = 9$ ) quite meaningful (out of a 5-point Likert scale of very meaningful, quite meaningful, not good or bad, not very meaningful, not meaningful at all). Out of the participants, 20 considered the compilation of the photo reflection report very suitable for the consideration of their teacherhood while seven considered it quite suitable. When asked if they had rather done another report as the final task for the reflection course (other options given were an essay-type writing, EPOSTL report, or another task they could name), everyone answered that they found the photo reflection report the right choice. A few students brought up their experiences of having filled out the EPOSTL after one of their practices, and all of them had found it too tedious to fill out with small details, and too stiff to serve as a personal portfolio. The students stated that they found the photo reflection report a positive and rewarding experience of reflection that had allowed their own personality to shine and creativity to flourish.

I found taking photos and selecting photos a very meaningful and suitable way to process and analyse my own teacherhood and my thoughts about it. The photo report enabled in a unique way to contemplate and interpret the development of one's own teacherhood. The compilation of the photo report was not mechanical writing but it raised real feelings, memories and experiences of the period of reflection, which made working on the report a remarkably meaningful and beneficial experience. (22)<sup>1</sup>

The majority of the students said they enjoyed taking photos during the practice and they were happy to not be restricted to only classroom and in-school photos but there were able to plan and take symbolic photos as well. Many students mentioned that writing merely a reflective essay would not have been as meaningful as photos brought new dimensions to considering one's teacherhood. The photo reflection report had 'brought a pleasant change to the otherwise stressful pedagogical studies' (3). The photos enabled to make the report more personal and less mechanical, which was valuable.

### ***Structure and analysis through photos***

Using photos helped to give a framework for the reflection report and enabled to show one's developmental curve. Having to select the final photos to be included in the report helped in analysing and structuring one's considerations of own teacherhood. The photos also helped to concretize thoughts and observations. The students were able to take photos that ranged from set-ups without the student him/herself in the photo to actual photos in an authentic teaching situation. Although for some it was slightly challenging to select the final photos to be included in the report out of the many photos taken, the challenge was positive as it forced to analyse more in-depth of what the most important aspects of one's own teacherhood were. Seven photos were considered enough to tell a thorough story.

The photo report evoked different kinds of considerations about one's own teacherhood. Sometimes the text/theme arose first and I contemplated what photo would tell about it. Sometimes the photo was first and text was developed from it. Planning and taking the photos was very meaningful. Thanks to the photos, it was possible to structure the report through seven most important themes or thoughts. It is just the right number of photos. Usually the photo and text included deeper reflection and many important thoughts and realizations. The photo sort of worked as a wide headline but its content is wider in scope. (6)

Sometimes it was the photos that came first and guided the text. Sometimes it was the theme or topic that was on the student's mind first, and an appropriate photo would need to be taken to go along with it. The students explained that the photos that they selected for the report helped and inspired them to write descriptions about the development of their teacherhood and relevant aspects of their teacher identity.

Sometimes the photos inspired to write and also structure the text. Plain text is visually so boring that when looking at it, it is easy to lose your focus if you are not in an intensive flow feeling. I used selected symbolic photos to ponder over the metaphor of "How I am as a teacher". It seemed to work well. (26)

The students found that photos made reflection more multifaceted as they brought new dimensions to it. As 'a picture is worth a thousand words', the students felt they could describe their feelings and perspectives about teaching better with photos than with just

writing. The photos also brought a certain distance to considering one's teacher identity as the photos were something concrete to look at and deal with.

Although most participants had not experienced any challenges in working on the photo reflection report, some mentioned that it was sometimes difficult to connect the right photo with one's teacher development. Not all the photos they had taken during their practice ended up in the report and sometimes one had to think deeper of why they had taken a photo that now seemed somewhat meaningless. However, this forced to deepen one's reflection and thus worked for the benefit of the student teacher.

When working on the actual report, it was sometimes difficult to connect in your mind the concrete photo and what the photo represented, i.e. with how own teacherhood was developing. In other words, to find the connection between the concrete and abstract. It was only after the practice that I concentrated on reflecting and using time for compiling the reflection report. The photos force you to return to the moment of the photo and reflect on its relation to the development of your own teacherhood. (3)

As photos were taken throughout the practice, it allowed or forced the reflection to continue at some level throughout practice. Only one participant said that although he had enjoyed taking photos and writing the text, he did not believe that it helped him to analyse his considerations. However, he felt that photos gave the added benefit of 'forcing to select a certain perspective and vision of one's own teacherhood' (8). Thus, the photos helped direct his thinking and made it more concrete.

### ***Memories of experiences and incidents***

The students reported that photos had brought back memories of particular experiences. 'The photos were concrete reminders of specific incidents in the practice' (3). Furthermore, the photos helped raise feelings of those certain incidents and brought up new ideas. The photos sometimes brought back other reflective discussions the students had had with peers or mentors. Thus, they were better able to relive important moments and consider situations that had been challenging, successful, or otherwise meaningful. The photos therefore helped to direct their focus to the essential aspects of their practice and development of teacherhood.

The photos prompted to reflect on challenging situations and successes. It was maybe easier to concentrate on the core of the matter than if one had had to write an essay. The photos also made one deal with the feelings evoked by the situations, not only how one should have acted. (15)

The students reported that with the photo reflection they were better able to reflect on their teacherhood in a more holistic way. Some mentioned that had it been a written report, the reflection would have been done only after the practice and not throughout like now. Furthermore, they felt the photos made reflecting more personal and practical.

At least for myself, the taking and selecting of photos was important as it made you realise what things during the journey you had considered important. When only writing, the experience can be more distant and you cannot tell everything with just text. (9)

A couple of the students mentioned that they had sometimes forgotten to take a photo of a specific lesson or moment and it had bothered them. However, being able to also use

other than actual teaching photos enabled the use of other meaningful photos instead. The students had also helped each other by taking photos of fellow students when observing their lessons. Some mentioned specifically that it was nice to have a photo of oneself as a teacher in the beginning of one's teacherhood:

It was also beneficial to see yourself in the photos and in the midst of the hectic times to strengthen your own position in the chaos. (23)

Thus seeing oneself in the photo at the centre of attention can help reinforce one's position as a teacher and help define one's teacher identity.

### ***One's own story of teacher development***

The instructions for the photo reflection report helped the students to get started with the task. However, there was enough freedom in the task to make the report about one's own story.

It is just good to keep in mind that the purpose of the instructions was to help consider your own teacherhood and its development and not what were the best pieces or the worst cases in the practice. However, the practice experiences do have some (smaller or bigger) influence on how you see yourself as a teacher and what should be developed. (12)

The students considered it very important that the report was personal and it told about one's own teacher development through such photos that they had selected and not through a structure that was too limiting.

The freedom to tell by pictures was wonderful! With seven photos it was possible to tell a small story of my journey of becoming a teacher. (10)

The flexibility of the instructions allowed for creativity and space for depicting one's own story with one's own voice. Even a couple of the students, who lamented for being bad photographers, thought it was helpful that 'the photos could be anything as long as they were part of the story' (20). The photos gave a possibility for visualisation that many considered personally valuable:

Photos tell a lot. I am very visual and I believe that if I return to look at these photos later, the memories will come back alive. The year was tough, and maybe there would not have been much energy left for producing text, at least not of quality. Discussion is, however, part of reflection and it is also meaningful. Through photos, you can bring out your own personality. (16)

Being able to decide how much text to write along with the photos was considered beneficial, as writing was more important for some than for others.

### ***A showcase of one's teacherhood***

The photo reflection report will stay as a concrete memory of one's teaching practice and it can be returned to in later years. As teacher identity is not stable and teachers should be open and willing for further development (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011), the photo reflection report can be used for comparing one's change and development later, or it can be modified and added to later on. Some students found the report useful when preparing to apply for teaching positions. Some explained that they had completed the photo report

with the thought in mind that they can use the photos and text when preparing job applications or when confirming some aspects of their teacherhood or practice experiences.

My husband said my photo reflection report turned out so well that it could be used as a job application. On the other hand, it is good that the report is personal and it includes one's own considerations, in particular reflection about practice, and it is an assignment that promotes your own teacherhood. (26)

Some students had shown their report to fellow students during practice and some wished that there would have been a possibility to see others' photo reflections. This was not possible due to the timing and the way the reflection course was structured but this is something to keep in mind for the future.

## Discussion and conclusion

This study examined student teachers' experiences of using a photo reflection report for teacher reflection. The first research question asked, 'How do student teachers consider the use of photos in reflecting on teacher development.' The findings show that photo reflection was welcomed as an inspiring, interesting and novel way of working. The student teachers found their personal perspectives to describe their teacher development and teacher identity with the help of photos. They were happy to complete a task where their personality showed and it was not a forced, mechanical task that was completed just for the credits (cf. Hobbs, 2007). As reflection is done in some ways throughout the pedagogical studies and especially during practices in the planning and feedback discussions with mentors, the photos gave flexibility that allowed for a new channel of reflection instead of repeating old reflective discussions. The student teachers took ownership of the reflection report and completed it for themselves and for their own development.

The second research question probed into more detail and asked, 'In which ways does the use of photos help student teachers to reflect on their teacher identity.' The findings show that photos enabled students to express themselves in new ways that are not restricted to words. Photos empowered them to be creative and compile a reflection report that was personal and that showed the aspects they found important to themselves as teachers. The photos helped students to analyse their considerations about teacher development and to become more aware of the essential aspects of their teacher identity. The participants felt that the photos were useful in bringing back specific memories and incidents from the teaching practice. Furthermore, the photos gave a framework for the report and helped to structure one's thoughts during the process. Thus, the photos provided the students with more meaningful and appropriate ways – beyond words – to express their development as teachers. The use of photos made reflecting more interesting and engaging for student teachers. This is crucial as reflection for teacher development needs the person's own willingness to examine her/his own interpretations of teaching and being a teacher (Sachs, 2005).

Prior studies have shown that by giving students more control over the focus and process of reflection may produce more critical reflection and students may be more positive and more engaged in their reflections (Beauchamp, 2015; Ramsey, 2010). This is indeed how the photo reflection engaged the students. The instructions for the photo

reflection report allowed sufficient freedom and flexibility for the students to have control over the focus of reflection (they selected the photos themselves and photos were not restricted to actual teaching situations) and the process of reflection (photos could be taken throughout practice but compilation and writing of accompanying text could be interspersed as the students saw fit). The participants were able to choose their own ways and times for working on the report but once doing so, they were forced to stop and reflect as active agents on what they considered important in teaching and how their own teacher identity had developed during the studies. This prompted them to interpret meaning between themselves and the various aspects related to teaching and the surrounding context (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011).

Another beneficial aspect of the photo report was that the workload was considered suitable. As became apparent in the participants' answers, teaching practice and pedagogical studies in general are often considered quite stressful. Thus, assignments should be selected carefully and students should be given such purposeful tasks that help in developing one's teacherhood but do not add unnecessary workload or pressure. This is a factor that requires further research so that the combination of studies and assignments in a teacher education programme is comprehensive but allows sufficient space for students to construct their own practical theories of teaching (Loughran, 2006).

The limitations of this small study include, for example, the small number of participants. Furthermore, the scope of this article did not allow the examination of the content and level of the photo reflections, nor show samples of the photos (they will be reported in another article). Further research about the use of photos in teacher reflection is recommended to find out more specific information about the level and type of reflection produced. It would also be important to study how different combinations of reflection tasks through photos, writing or discussion (or other ways of using multimedia) can best help a future teacher in her/his development in different stages of teacher education (Hahl & Mikulec, 2018) so that they engage in deep and critical reflection (e.g., Maaranen & Stenberg, 2017).

The findings of this study are promising and suggest that reflecting with the use of photos offers a meaningful and enjoyable tool for students to consider their emerging teacher identity. Thus, this study answers to the call of creating more effective ways of teacher reflection (Beauchamp, 2015; Marcos et al., 2011). The photo reflection report provides an alternative, more creative and personal way for students to describe their development as teachers, how they feel as teachers, and what they consider essential as teachers. The compilation of the photo report that includes taking the photos, selecting photos, and writing accompanying text is a development process that can help students in becoming empowered as teachers (Savolainen, 2009). If student teachers are introduced to attractive and effective reflection tools, they may be more likely to continue their use for further development even after teacher education.

## Note

1. All quotes have been translated from Finnish to English by the author.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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