



Research on the Identity of English Normal Students in the Western Region Under the “Double Reduction” Policy: A Case Study of S Normal University

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Abstract

The identity of English education students is a comprehensive reflection of their cognition, emotions, and behaviors towards the English language education field and the profession of English teaching. To comprehend and assess the level of identity among English education students in the western region of China, a survey was conducted among 275 undergraduates majoring in English language education at S Normal University. The results indicated that the overall level of identity among English education students at S Normal University was relatively high, but there was still room for improvement. Factors such as gender and academic year had a significant impact on the level of identity, while factors like hometown, choice of major, and family structure had less significant effects. Strategies to enhance the level of identity among English education students include improving identity recognition, enhancing active engagement, boosting learning motivation, and solidifying the intention to pursue a teaching career.

Keywords

“Double Reduction” Policy; English Normal Students; Identity; Influencing Factors

Normal universities are a vital force in the development of China's basic education. However, with the expansion of higher education institutions, the decline in the number of students in basic education has led to a reduced demand for teachers in primary and secondary schools. As a result, the employment issues faced by local undergraduate students in normal universities have become increasingly prominent, leading to a certain negative tendency among normal students in their self-identification. On July 24, 2021, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued Opinions on Further Easing the burden of excessive homework and off-campus tutoring for students undergoing compulsory education (hereinafter referred to as the “Double Reduction” policy). The “Double Reduction” policy has garnered extensive societal attention, and it has had a profound impact on the cultivation of talent at local normal universities, particularly affecting the employment prospects of normal students at regional higher education institutions in China. After entering university, English normal students may find themselves lacking a clear, stable, and positive identification with their status as future English educators. This can lead to a low level of identity with their major, an ambiguous understanding of their future teaching profession, reduced expectations for their future careers as English teachers, and manifestations such as a decrease in learning motivation and a general state of low academic engagement (He Shengzhong, 2017). In higher education, students' identification with their major is of great significance, as it determines their direction of effort and the intensity of their motivation (Lu Licheng, 2018). Only normal students with positive identities can fully devote themselves to the

process of teacher education, actively learning educational and teaching knowledge and skills, and thus become qualified and even excellent teachers in the future (Xiao Wei, 2022).

As a provincial-level normal university in the western region of China, S Normal University shoulders the important task of training English teachers for basic education in the area. The level of identity among its English normal students is crucial to the quality of talent cultivation at the university and the effectiveness of teacher training in the region. Based on this, this study selected students majoring in English language education at S Normal University as the survey subjects. Through a questionnaire survey, the study analyzes the overall level of their identity and examines the differences in their identity expression.

1. Theoretical Foundations

1.1 Connotation of Normal Students' Identity

Scholars like Lin Yigang have explored the concept of teacher identity among normal students in two dimensions: static and dynamic. The static dimension refers to the integration of cognition, emotion, and behavior of individual normal students towards the teacher's identity during their learning and practical experiences. The dynamic dimension refers to the continuous process of self-identification and construction that normal students undergo through interactions that balance the pursuit of group identity with the recognition of individual differences (Lin Yigang, 2013). Zhao Mingren posits that the identity of normal students is a process of constructing their professional selves. It is an intrinsic judgment and recognition by normal students of the learning process and future mission of becoming a teacher, as well as an emotional experience of its inherent value. This concept can be categorized into three types: ascribed identity, structural identity, and constructive identity (Zhao Mingren, 2013). He Shengzhong's research suggests that the identity of English normal students is a comprehensive reflection of individual students' cognition, experiences, and behavioral inclinations towards the English teaching profession they aspire to enter in the future (He Shengzhong, 2017). Xiao Wei analyzed the representation of normal students' identity from three structural dimensions: identity cognition, identity emotion, and identity behavior. Xiao suggests that "identity" for normal students primarily refers to the affirmation of both their membership in a group and their unique individuality. It encompasses the emotional experiences associated with cognition and the psychological process of integrating behavioral patterns (Xiao Wei, 2022). The identity of English normal students encompasses a holistic integration of their cognitive understanding, emotional connections, and behavioral inclinations towards the English education major and the career path of becoming an English teacher.

1.2 Survey Scale for English Normal Students' Identity

The survey questionnaire on the status of teacher identity among normal students, designed by Lin Yigang and others, includes three psychological components: cognition, emotion, and behavioral tendency towards the teacher's identity (Lin Yigang, 2013). The questionnaire Survey on Identity and Resistance of English normal students in Local Colleges and Universities, developed by He Shengzhong, spans five key dimensions: the reasons for pursuing the English language education major, the depth of understanding of the major, the level of identification with the major, the learning attitude towards the major, and the aspirations for a future career as an English teacher (He Shengzhong, 2017). The questionnaire for Business English majors, developed by Lu Licheng and colleagues, encompasses four forms of identity: English language identity, business discipline identity, independent identity, and identity discrepancy. It addresses three dimensions of identity expression: cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects (Lu Licheng, 2018).

2. Research Design

2.1 Research Subjects

The research focuses on the English education major student at S Normal University in Sichuan Province, China. The study randomly selected undergraduates from each grade as the research subjects, distributing a total of 301 online questionnaires and receiving 275 valid responses, yielding a response rate of 91.4%. The participants included students from the 2023 to 2020 undergraduate classes. The demographic breakdown of the participants is as follows:

- Gender: 44 males (16.00%) and 231 females (84.00%),

- Grade distribution: 92 freshmen (34.18%), 72 sophomores (26.18%), 82 juniors (26.18%), and 27 seniors (9.82%),
- Family type: 131 from rural backgrounds (47.64%) and 144 from urban backgrounds (52.36%),
- Place of origin: 214 students from the western region (77.82%), and 61 students from other regions (22.18%),
- College entrance examination first choice: 193 students chose English language education as their first choice (70.18%), while 82 students did not (29.82%).

This diverse sample allows for an exploration of the identity levels among different groups of students based on these demographic variables.

2.2 Research Methods

This study utilized a questionnaire survey method, employing a self-compiled questionnaire as the research instrument. It drew upon established domestic research methodologies and findings, particularly referencing questionnaires developed by experts such as Lin Yigang, He Shengzhong, and Xiao Wei, and adapted these to suit the study's focus. The resulting Identity Scale for English normal students in the Western Region under the 'Double Reduction' Policy comprises 30 items, each scored using a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. A score of "1" indicates "strongly disagree," while a score of "5" signifies "strongly agree." The scale is designed such that the higher a subject's level of identity, the greater the cumulative score for the corresponding dimension.

The questionnaire consists of 35 questions, divided into two sections: 1-5 are demographic information items about the survey participants, covering details such as gender, grade level, place of origin, hometown, and first choice of major. 6-30 delve into the identity status of English normal students, categorized into three dimensions and eight indicators. The three dimensions are identity cognition (e.g., "I am aware of the requirements for learners' qualities in my major"), identity emotion (e.g., "I often feel very proud to be an English normal student"), and identity behavior (e.g., "I attentively listen to and understand the teacher's explanation of professional knowledge in class"). The eight indicators are major motivation, major understanding, learning identification, major affection, career affection, learning behavior, career planning, and direction of effort, each comprising 3-4 questions.

2.3 Reliability Testing

The survey data in this study was processed and analyzed using SPSS 27.0. A thorough analysis of the reliability and validity of the entire scale was conducted:

- Cronbach's α Coefficient: After standardization, the Cronbach's α coefficient for the entire scale was 0.918, demonstrating strong internal consistency. The Cronbach's α coefficients for the three dimensions were 0.810, 0.828, and 0.850, respectively, all meeting the statistical criteria for reliability, indicating that the questionnaire is highly reliable.
- KMO and Bartlett's Test: The KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) value was 0.891, and the P value of Bartlett's test was less than 0.001, which rejects the null hypothesis. This suggests that the questionnaire has excellent validity, as the differences among the factors are statistically significant.

These statistical analyses confirm that the questionnaire used in this study is both reliable and valid for measuring the identity of English normal students at S Normal University.

3. Research Results

3.1 Overall Level of Identity Among English Normal Students at S Normal University

The study utilized the Likert five-point scale, with a score of 3 being the theoretical midpoint for moderate intensity. The results show that the overall mean score for identity among English education major student at S Normal University is 3.607 (as presented in Table 1), which is above the theoretical mean of 3. This indicates that the overall level of identity among the student teachers is relatively high, although there is still considerable room for improvement.

All the mean scores for the various dimensions of English normal students' identity are above 3, suggesting a level that is higher than the middle. The dimension of identity behavior has the highest mean score ($M = 3.732$), followed

by the dimension of identity cognition ($M = 3.642$), while the dimension of identity emotion has the lowest mean score ($M = 3.352$). The ranking of the dimensions from highest to lowest is identity behavior > identity cognition > identity emotion.

Furthermore, the study revealed that the score for the identity emotion dimension is lower than the overall mean. The scores for all eight indicators of English normal students' identity exceed the theoretical mean, but there are significant variations among the indicators: direction of effort ($M = 4.048$), understanding of the major ($M = 3.870$), and learning behavior ($M = 3.596$) have the highest scores, while professional affection ($M = 3.441$) and major affection ($M = 3.233$) under the identity emotion dimension have the lowest scores.

In conclusion, while the English normal students at S Normal University exhibit a high overall level of identity, there are notable differences in the levels of identity across different indicators, indicating areas where further development could enhance their professional identity.

The identity cognition dimension encompasses three indicators and twelve items. The mean scores for the items that address students' understanding of the professional curriculum and future career trends within the English language education major are relatively high, such as "I have a good understanding of the professional course setup of the English language education major" ($M = 3.97$), "I know the requirements for learners' qualities in my major" ($M = 3.90$), and "I understand the employment prospects and industry trends of the English language education major" ($M = 3.89$). Conversely, the mean scores for items like "I maintain a high enthusiasm for learning amidst busy academic schedules" ($M = 3.23$) and "I feel happy while learning English" ($M = 3.33$) are lower, indicating a lower level of identity recognition in these areas.

The identity emotion dimension encompasses two indicators and seven items. The mean scores for the items that reflect students' beliefs about the importance of the English teacher profession and their confidence in achieving personal life values through teaching are relatively high, such as "I believe that English teachers are one of the more important professions in social division" ($M = 4.01$) and "I believe that teaching is a career that can realize my life values" ($M = 3.77$). However, the item "I believe that the 'Double Reduction' policy will not affect the future prospects of the English teacher profession" ($M = 2.27$) has the lowest mean score among all the items on the scale and is the only one that falls below the theoretical mean of 3. This suggests a lower level of identity recognition in relation to the impact of the "Double Reduction" policy on the English teaching profession.

The identity behavior dimension encompasses three indicators and eleven items. Among these items, "I will strive to obtain the Teacher Qualification Certificate before graduation" ($M = 4.39$) and "I will strengthen my learning and understanding of relevant knowledge such as the new curriculum and textbooks for primary and secondary English education" ($M = 4.17$) are the two items with the highest scores in the scale, indicating strong engagement and commitment to the teaching profession. Conversely, "I will actively participate in teaching skill competitions, such as the 'Trial Lecture and Classroom Teaching Competition'" ($M = 3.27$) and "To become an outstanding English teacher, I will apply for a Master's degree in Subject Teaching (English)" ($M = 3.31$) are the items with lower scores within this dimension, suggesting a lower level of engagement in certain aspects of professional development.

Table 1. Overall Level of Identity Among English Normal Students by Dimension (N = 275)

Variables	Identity Cognition	Major Motivation	Major Understanding	Learning Identity	Identity Emotion	Major Affection	Career Affection	Identity Behavior	Learning Behavior	Career Planning	Direction of Effort	Identity Recognition
M	3.642	3.576	3.87	3.479	3.352	3.233	3.441	3.732	3.596	3.49	4.048	3.607
SD	0.525	0.727	0.612	0.744	0.671	0.793	0.712	0.561	0.663	0.804	0.631	0.498

3.2 Comparison of Identity Among English Normal Students at S Normal University by Demographic Variables

To assess whether there are disparities in the overall identity levels among English normal students at S Normal University and their sub-factors across different demographic variables, such as gender, family background, place of origin, and first choice of major, this study utilized independent sample t-tests. The findings of these analyses are presented in Tables 2-5.

Table 2 indicates that there is a notable difference in the major affection indicator within the identity emotion dimension between male and female students at S Normal University ($P < 0.05$). Males exhibit a higher level of identification with their future careers as teachers compared to females. In the identity behavior dimension, there is

no significant difference ($P > 0.05$), but the scores for learning behavior, career planning, and direction of effort are consistently higher for male students than for female students.

Additionally, the study revealed a significant difference in the major understanding indicator within the identity cognition dimension between male and female students ($P < 0.05$). On average, male students demonstrate a slightly higher level of major understanding compared to female students.

Table 2. Differences in Identity Dimensions of English Normal Students by Gender

Variables	Gender (M ± SD)		<i>t</i>	Sig.
	Male (n = 44)	Female (n = 231)		
Identity Cognition	3.73 ± 0.52	3.63 ± 0.53	1.179	0.239
Major Motivation	3.54 ± 0.65	3.58 ± 0.74	-0.364	0.716
Major Understanding	4.08 ± 0.69	3.83 ± 0.59	2.503	0.013*
Learning Identity	3.56 ± 0.73	3.46 ± 0.75	0.81	0.418
Identity Emotion	3.56 ± 0.67	3.31 ± 0.67	2.211	0.028*
Major Affection	3.40 ± 0.79	3.20 ± 0.79	1.544	0.124
Career Affection	3.67 ± 0.69	3.40 ± 0.71	2.353	0.019*
Identity Behavior	3.84 ± 0.52	3.71 ± 0.57	1.412	0.159
Learning Behavior	3.69 ± 0.64	3.58 ± 0.67	0.995	0.321
Career Planning	3.68 ± 0.79	3.45 ± 0.80	1.737	0.084
Direction of Effort	4.11 ± 0.52	4.04 ± 0.65	0.751	0.453

Note: * indicates $P < 0.05$.

As depicted in Table 3, there is a uniformity in the identity emotional and identity behavioral dimensions among English normal students at S Normal University based on family type, with no discernible differences ($P > 0.05$). However, a significant difference is observed in the major understanding indicator within the identity cognition dimension ($P < 0.05$), with students from urban families scoring slightly higher than those from rural families in terms of their understanding of the major.

Table 3. Differences in Identity Dimensions of English Normal Students by Family Type

Variables	Family Type (M ± SD)		<i>t</i>	Sig.
	Rural (n = 131)	Urban (n = 144)		
Identity Cognition	3.594 ± 0.540	3.686 ± 0.509	-1.459	0.146
Major Motivation	3.534 ± 0.680	3.615 ± 0.767	-0.914	0.361
Major Understanding	3.784 ± 0.659	3.948 ± 0.556	-2.230	0.027*
Learning Identity	3.462 ± 0.772	3.495 ± 0.720	-0.366	0.715
Identity Emotion	3.354 ± 0.691	3.349 ± 0.655	0.064	0.949
Major Affection	3.242 ± 0.793	3.225 ± 0.796	0.179	0.858
Career Affection	3.439 ± 0.727	3.443 ± 0.700	-0.044	0.965
Identity Behavior	3.792 ± 0.510	3.677 ± 0.601	1.716	0.087
Learning Behavior	3.616 ± 0.659	3.578 ± 0.668	0.478	0.633
Career Planning	3.585 ± 0.730	3.403 ± 0.858	1.889	0.060
Direction of Effort	4.122 ± 0.549	3.981 ± 0.692	1.864	0.063

Note: * indicates $P < 0.05$.

It is worth noting that, based on the mean scores, students from rural families outperform their urban counterparts in the identity behavior dimension, suggesting a stronger identification with their identity as English normal students in terms of their academic pursuits, practical experiences, and future planning. This indicates that, despite the overall consistency in identity expression across different family types, rural students may have a more profound connection with their role as future teachers.

Table 4 reveals that among English normal students at S Normal University, there is consistency in the identity cognitive and identity emotional dimensions regardless of their place of origin, with no significant differences observed ($P > 0.05$). However, there is a significant difference in the career planning and direction of effort indicators within the identity behavior dimension ($P < 0.05$).

The mean scores indicate that students from the western region exhibit a higher level of identification with career planning compared to their non-western counterparts. Conversely, students from non-western regions demonstrate a higher level of identification with the direction of effort.

Across the three identity dimensions, students from non-western regions consistently outscore their counterparts from the western region. This suggests that students from non-western regions may have a stronger sense of direction and purpose in their academic and professional endeavors, while students from the western region may be more focused on long-term career planning.

Table 4. Differences in Identity Dimensions of English Normal Students by Place of Origin

Variables	Place of Origin: (M ± SD)		<i>t</i>	Sig.
	Western Region (n = 214)	Non-Western Region (n = 61)		
Identity Cognition	3.624 ± 0.557	3.704 ± 0.389	-1.266	0.208
Professional Motivation	3.586 ± 0.740	3.541 ± 0.683	0.430	0.667
Identity Cognition	3.847 ± 0.617	3.951 ± 0.591	-1.170	0.243
Major Motivation	3.439 ± 0.776	3.619 ± 0.605	-1.668	0.097
Major Understanding	3.351 ± 0.696	3.354 ± 0.578	-0.026	0.980
Learning Identity	3.224 ± 0.828	3.262 ± 0.661	-0.329	0.742
Identity Emotion	3.446 ± 0.732	3.422 ± 0.640	0.233	0.816
Major Affection	3.719 ± 0.577	3.775 ± 0.505	-0.684	0.495
Career Affection	3.563 ± 0.676	3.713 ± 0.605	-1.563	0.119
Identity Behavior	3.551 ± 0.801	3.273 ± 0.781	2.406	0.017*
Learning Behavior	4.001 ± 0.624	4.213 ± 0.629	-2.335	0.020*

Note: * indicates $P < 0.05$.

As shown in Table 5, there is a significant difference in the major motivation indicator within the identity cognition dimension for English normal students at S Normal University based on their first choice of major ($P = 0.000$). The mean scores indicate that students whose first choice of major was English language education have a significantly higher level of identification with their major motivation compared to those whose first choice was not English language education.

No significant differences were observed in the other tested dimensions ($P > 0.05$), suggesting that the choice of major does not significantly influence identity in those areas.

The table presents these findings, offering a comprehensive view of how identity is perceived and expressed differently based on the first choice of major among student teachers at S Normal University.

This study employed one-way ANOVA to examine the impact of grade level on the identity of English normal students at S Normal University. Table 6 illustrates that there were notable disparities in identity dimensions across varying grade levels ($P < 0.05$). Subsequent multiple comparisons led to the following observations:

- 1) ****Grade 2****: The identity level in the identity cognition dimension was lower than that of freshmen and juniors, with the learning identity score being the lowest ($M = 3.177$).

- 2) ****Grade 1****: Exhibited the highest emotional attachment to their identity ($M = 3.527$), surpassing both second-year and fourth-year students. Freshmen expressed the strongest affection for their major, outpacing their senior counterparts. It is interesting to note that the affection for the major was least pronounced among sophomores ($M = 2.963$), falling below the theoretical average.
- 3) ****Grade 1****: Showed the greatest commitment to identity-related behaviors ($M = 3.878$), exceeding the other three grades. Freshmen displayed the most active learning behaviors and the most advanced career planning, outperforming their counterparts in the second and fourth years.

Table 5. Differences in Identity Dimensions of English Normal Students by First Choice of Major

Variables	First Choice of Major: (M ± SD)		<i>t</i>	Sig.
	English Language Education Major (n = 193)	Non-English Language Education Major (n = 82)		
Identity Cognition	3.668 ± 0.534	3.579 ± 0.501	1.290	0.198
Major Motivation	3.683 ± 0.706	3.326 ± 0.718	3.812	0.000*
Major Understanding	3.867 ± 0.613	3.878 ± 0.611	-0.142	0.887
Learning Identity	3.456 ± 0.779	3.534 ± 0.657	-0.790	0.430
Identity Emotion	3.370 ± 0.685	3.308 ± 0.637	0.697	0.486
Major Affection	3.237 ± 0.815	3.224 ± 0.745	0.124	0.901
Career Affection	3.470 ± 0.726	3.372 ± 0.676	1.047	0.296
Identity Behavior	3.732 ± 0.563	3.731 ± 0.562	0.019	0.985
Learning Behavior	3.570 ± 0.684	3.659 ± 0.609	-1.014	0.312
Career Planning	3.484 ± 0.792	3.504 ± 0.835	-0.193	0.847
Direction of Effort	4.080 ± 0.627	3.973 ± 0.637	-0.193	0.847

Note: * indicates $P < 0.05$.

Table 6. Differences in Identity Dimensions of English Normal Students by Grade Level

Variables	Grade Level (M ± SD)				F	Sig.	Multiple Comparisons
	Freshmen (n = 94)	Sophomores (n = 72)	Juniors (n = 82)	Seniors (n = 27)			
Identity Cognition	3.712 ± 0.551	3.494 ± 0.494	3.677 ± 0.492	3.685 ± 0.559	2.689	0.047*	1>2,3>2
Major Motivation	3.604 ± 0.680	3.566 ± 0.661	3.549 ± 0.798	3.593 ± 0.852	0.092	0.964	/
Major Understanding	3.851 ± 0.695	3.740 ± 0.634	3.951 ± 0.491	4.037 ± 0.518	2.306	0.077	/
Learning Identity	3.681 ± 0.689	3.177 ± 0.739	3.530 ± 0.733	3.426 ± 0.749	6.840	0.000*	1>2,3>2
Identity Emotion	3.527 ± 0.622	3.183 ± 0.648	3.362 ± 0.608	3.159 ± 0.912	4.599	0.004*	1>2,1>4
Major Affection	3.525 ± 0.702	2.963 ± 0.718	3.211 ± 0.794	3.000 ± 0.965	8.456	0.000*	1>2,1>3, 1>4 3>2
Career Affection	3.529 ± 0.665	3.347 ± 0.737	3.476 ± 0.622	3.278 ± 0.994	1.443	0.231	/
Identity Behavior	3.878 ± 0.488	3.674 ± 0.553	3.667 ± 0.560	3.569 ± 0.730	3.597	0.014*	1>2,1>3, 1>4
Learning Behavior	3.769 ± 0.586	3.472 ± 0.656	3.585 ± 0.628	3.361 ± 0.892	4.242	0.006*	1>2,1>4
Career Planning	3.702 ± 0.704	3.468 ± 0.798	3.382 ± 0.832	3.136 ± 0.898	4.619	0.004*	1>3,1>4
Direction of Effort	4.120 ± 0.551	4.031 ± 0.657	3.963 ± 0.649	4.102 ± 0.754	0.979	0.403	/

Note: 1 represents freshmen, 2 represents sophomores, 3 represents juniors, and 4 represents seniors.

Note: * indicates $P < 0.05$.

These findings suggest that the identity development of English normal students at S Normal University varies significantly across different grade levels, with freshmen generally showing higher levels of identity in most dimensions compared to sophomores, juniors, and seniors.

4. Research Conclusions and Recommendations

Upon analyzing the identity of English normal students at S Normal University, the study yielded several key findings: First, the overall level of identity among these students is relatively high, although there is potential for further growth. The score for the identity emotion dimension is notably lower than the overall mean. Second, the identity behavior dimension boasts the highest level of identification, with a particularly strong positive inclination towards the direction of effort. The identity cognition dimension follows while the identity emotion dimension is underperforming. Third, gender and grade level significantly influence the identity levels of English normal students, whereas factors such as place of origin, first choice of major, and family type have a less pronounced impact.

Given these findings, the following recommendations and strategies are proposed:

4.1 Implement Grade-Spanning Identity Enhancement Activities

Universities should integrate the cultivation of student teachers' identity into the entire educational process of college, and develop a top-level design for targeted activities aimed at enhancing the identity of English normal students (He Shengzhong, 2017). Normal universities should actively create an atmosphere for nurturing normal students and strengthen students' understanding and emotional connection to their identity as normal students and the teaching profession. The schools should guide first-year students in comprehending the shift from high school to normal student status, providing comprehensive orientation and a thorough introduction to their chosen major. By leveraging the experiences and accomplishments of exemplary teachers and frontline educators, the school can help students navigate the complexities of values and foster a genuine recognition and aspiration for the teaching profession. New students' orientation and career education can be utilized to ignite English normal students' understanding of their identity. The identity recognition among sophomore English normal students is relatively weaker compared to freshmen and juniors, which may be primarily attributed to the overwhelming nature of professional studies and poor adaptation in the first year of college. These factors can lead to a weakening of self-identity when students transition to their second year, resulting in a certain degree of emotional exhaustion and a tendency towards negativity. During the training phase of normal students, the lack of instruction on the knowledge related to new teachers' entry into the workforce and ongoing professional development for teachers leads to a weakening of their professional identity (Zhang Jiwei, 2021). Normal universities should further refine their course offerings and make effective use of extracurricular activities to organize a range of distinctive events. They should also closely monitor and proactively address the identity crisis that sophomore students may encounter.

For senior students, normal universities should provide comprehensive policy explanations to help English normal students grasp the challenges and opportunities presented by the "Double Reduction" policy. They should actively guide students through their teacher training internships, offering timely assistance to resolve any difficulties encountered during the internship and alleviate psychological stress. Furthermore, the universities should establish robust external support systems at both the school and college levels to strengthen the identity recognition of English normal students during their internships and help them effectively respond to identity crises. Additionally, universities should provide guidance for English normal students on job hunting, ensuring that graduates enter the job market with a positive mindset and confident in their job-seeking abilities, actively participating in the recruitment process for English teachers in primary and secondary schools.

4.2 Strengthening the Dynamic Attention to the Emotional Identity of English Normal Students

Students undergo a series of dynamic and complex identity transformations upon entering and throughout their time at a normal university. These transformations pose challenges and impacts on various aspects of their lives, including their values, emotional attitudes, and behavioral patterns, potentially leading them to experience an identity crisis (Lin Yigang, 2011). The study found that the English normal students at S Normal University have a lower level of identity in the emotional dimension. Universities should establish dynamic evaluation files for the emotional identity of English normal students (Chen Shiqi, 2019), and focus on identifying and addressing the critical factors that may diminish the emotional identity level of these students. Practical engagement in self-understanding and reflection is

a vital pathway for identity formation among teacher-education students. Universities should actively guide students to showcase and share their professional learning outcomes in the second classroom, enhancing their cognitive abilities and recognizing areas for improvement through specific teaching practices and achievements. For instance, the School of Foreign Languages, Sichuan Normal University, hosts the “Foreign Language Professional Skills Competition,” which includes activities like trial lectures, calligraphy, English dubbing, and mock job interviews. Students from all four years of study can participate, and the event has garnered a wide response among the participating students and the audience.

4.3 Stimulating Learning Motivation and Commitment to Teaching Among English Normal Students

Universities should provide informative feedback to normal students, helping them understand their work outcomes. This allows individuals to experience a sense of competence in the activities they are engaged in, or to learn how to better perform those activities, thereby promoting reflection and growth (Ding Gang, 2014). The English language education major differs significantly from regular English majors in terms of curriculum. When developing training programs, normal universities should fully consider the characteristics of teacher education, thereby stimulating students’ learning motivation in both the “English” and “teaching” dimensions. This approach helps students to strengthen their sense of pride in being a normal student while honing their teaching skills, thereby enhancing their willingness to become teachers. Local normal universities should enhance the development of teacher education programs, courses, and related resource support, and establish a system for monitoring and warning about learning quality. Many normal students do not fully appreciate the professional nature of the teaching profession, or they may have an inadequate understanding of its professional aspects. The significance of teachers’ professional capabilities and broad knowledge base has not been widely recognized (Ju Yucui, 2014). S Normal University should specifically strengthen students’ understanding of the professional characteristics of English teachers, emphasizing its teacher education characteristics.

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