



**UNDERSTANDING HOW AN ENGLISH LECTURER CONSTRUCTS
HER PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY**

THESIS

BY

NURAVIAH ALFIANA

NPM 22202073019



UNIVERSITY OF ISLAM MALANG

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ABSTRACT

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Keyword: *English Lecturer, Narrative Inquiry, Professional Identity Construction.*

Professional identity construction for English lecturers in language education is a complex and ongoing process crucial in educational settings. This journey involves continual reflection and refinement influenced by personal beliefs, teaching philosophy, and lived experiences (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000). Despite existing study on professional identity among educators, there remains a notable gap in understanding the specific context of English lecturers, particularly within narrative inquiry, by delving into their perceptions and strategies for negotiating professional roles and overcoming challenges.

Employing narrative inquiry as the methodological approach, this study provides a deep reflection on the stories of English lecturer. Through in-depth interviews with a single participant, the study seeks to unravel the processes through which individuals make meaning of their experiences, offering valuable insights into language teaching contexts. Further, the data for this study was analyzed by using the five key methodologies in interview data transcription by Widodo (2014).

This study reveals that an English lecturer constructs and perceives her professional identity and navigates the challenges through personal values, experience, education, and social interaction. The participant exemplifies how her great personal values and good social interaction influence her decision in studying abroad and make her having a valuable experience. Furthermore, it gives the participant with job satisfaction, commitment to the profession and continued career growth, which in line with professional identity theory by Norton (2006). Additionally, the participant overcomes the challenges by balancing various responsibilities, from administrative tasks to adapting teaching methods to meet the needs of diverse students.

ABSTRAK

Alfiana, Nuraviah. 2024. Memahami Bagaimana Dosen Bahasa Inggris Membangun Identitas Profesionalnya. Thesis. Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. Program Pascasarjana, Universitas Islam Malang. Pembimbing: (I) Dr. Dzul Fikri, S.S., M.Pd, (II) Dr. Muhammad Yunus, M.Pd.

Kata Kunci: *Dosen Bahasa Inggris, Naratif Inkuiri, Konstruksi Identitas Profesional.*

Konstruksi identitas profesional untuk dosen bahasa Inggris dalam pendidikan bahasa adalah proses yang kompleks dan berkelanjutan yang sangat penting dalam lingkungan pendidikan. Perjalanan ini melibatkan refleksi dan penyempurnaan terus-menerus yang dipengaruhi oleh keyakinan pribadi, filosofi pengajaran, dan pengalaman hidup (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000). Meskipun sudah ada penelitian tentang identitas profesional di kalangan pendidik, masih ada kesenjangan yang mencolok dalam memahami konteks spesifik dosen bahasa Inggris, terutama dalam inkuiri naratif, dengan menyelidiki persepsi dan strategi mereka untuk menegosiasikan peran profesional dan mengatasi tantangan.

Dengan menggunakan pendekatan metodologis naratif inkuiri, penelitian ini memberikan refleksi mendalam tentang kisah-kisah dosen bahasa Inggris. Melalui wawancara mendalam dengan satu partisipan, penelitian ini berusaha untuk mengungkap proses yang dilalui oleh individu untuk memaknai pengalaman mereka, menawarkan wawasan yang berharga ke dalam konteks pengajaran bahasa. Selanjutnya, data untuk penelitian ini dianalisis dengan menggunakan lima metodologi utama dalam transkripsi data wawancara oleh Widodo (2014).

Penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa seorang dosen bahasa Inggris membangun dan memahami identitas profesionalnya dan menavigasi tantangan melalui nilai-nilai pribadi, pengalaman, pendidikan, dan interaksi sosial. Partisipan mencontohkan bagaimana nilai-nilai pribadi yang baik dan interaksi sosial yang baik mempengaruhi keputusannya untuk belajar di luar negeri dan membuatnya memiliki pengalaman yang berharga. Selain itu, hal tersebut memberikan kepuasan kerja, komitmen terhadap profesi dan pertumbuhan karir yang berkelanjutan, yang sejalan dengan teori identitas profesional oleh Norton (2006). Selain itu, partisipan mengatasi tantangan dengan menyeimbangkan berbagai tanggung jawab, mulai dari tugas administratif hingga mengadaptasi metode pengajaran untuk memenuhi kebutuhan siswa yang beragam.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the research, research questions, research objective, significance of the research, and definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Research

Professional identity refers to the individual's perception and recognition of themselves within their professional role. It encompasses a complex interplay of personal values, experiences, and societal expectations that shape one's understanding of their professional self (Beijaard et al., 2000). According to Norton (2006) professional identity draws on an individual's understanding of themselves as a professional in the context of their work. Norton emphasizes that the development of professional identity is a complex and ongoing process that is influenced by work experience, education, social interaction, and personal reflection. A strong professional identity can provide a solid foundation for job satisfaction, commitment to the profession, and continued career growth. This construct is vital in understanding how English lecturers define themselves.

Professional identity construction is a dynamic process that is of great importance. In the field of language teaching, English lecturers embark on a continuous journey of forming and refining their professional identity, which is influenced by personal beliefs, teaching philosophy, and experiences (Beijaard et al., 2000). While previous research has touched upon aspects of professional identity formation among educators, there is a glaring gap in the specific context of

English lecturers, and more critically, within the framework of narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry, as conceptualized by Connelly, Clandinin, and Clandinin (1990), is emerging as a powerful methodological approach that enables in-depth exploration of the subjective dimensions of the professional journey. This research seeks to uncover the narratives that shape how English lecturer constructs and perceives her professional identity and negotiate challenges.

English lecturers engage in active participation in their professional communities, which contributes to the process of negotiating their identities (Norton & Toohey, 2013). As the situational learning theories proposed by Wenger, Mcdermott, and Snyder (2002) provide valuable insights into identity construction. This theory highlights the role of social interaction and participation in communities of practice in shaping professional identity (Etienne Wenger et al., 2002). Similarly, enhancing language education practice is also very pivotal (Freeman, 2002). According to Wenger's (1998) research on communities of practice, this study aims to understand how language education practices contribute to the construction of English lecturers' professional identity.

Existing literature has explored various aspects of professional identity formation among educators, yet there remains a significant gap in understanding the specific experiences and challenges faced by English lecturers (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). This underscores the need for research dedicated to uncovering the narratives of English lecturers within a narrative inquiry framework, offering insights into their professional development journey in language education (Holland et al., 2001; Shulman, Daedalus, & Professions, 2005). Likewise, the lack

of narrative inquiry studies that address English lecturers' professional identity construction hinders a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon (Riessman, 2008; St. Pierre, 2013). Hence, this research seeks to uncover the narratives that shape how English lecturer constructs her professional identity and perceive her professional identity and navigate the challenges..

Insights gained from narrative inquiry can inform the design of effective professional development initiatives and instructional strategies tailored to the needs of English lecturers (Al-Hoorie & Hiver, 2020; Toohey, 2000). In addition, this method also promotes inclusivity and equity in the education system (Cummins, 2016). Using narrative inquiry, as advocated by Creswell (2016), this study aspires to weave the narratives of English language lecturers, enriching our understanding of the various dimensions that contribute to their professional identity construction. Motivated by the need to understand the complex process of professional identity construction, this study also aims to contribute practical insights to professional development initiatives and instructional practices in language education. Existing literature has explored various aspects of professional identity formation but has not touched on the context of English lecturers. This gap highlighted the need for research tailored to this (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; McKinley, 2019). To fill this gap, research is needed that focuses how English lecturer constructs her professional identity and perceive her professional identity and navigate the challenges within a narrative inquiry paradigm (Holland et al., 2001).

This research not only aims to advance theoretical understanding but also provides valuable practical implications, like what the factors that influence the professional identity construction. Moreover, it can enrich the literature that delves into the practical aspects of professional identity construction among English lecturers. While the theories of situational learning proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991) offer valuable insights into the identity construction.

1.2 Research Questions

The current research addresses the questions:

- a. How does English lecturer construct her professional identity?
- b. How does English lecturer perceive her professional identity and navigate the challenges?

1.3 Research Objectives

In this study, researcher aims to:

- a. Examine how English lecturer construct her professional identity.
- b. Delve into how English lecturer perceive her professional identity and navigate the challenges.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The research presented here delves into the intricate process of professional identity construction for an English lecturer. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of her professional identity and navigates the challenges within this field. Furthermore, the insights gained from this research not only provides an

understanding of how an English lecturer constructs her professional identity, but also provides insights that can be used to design professional development programs that are appropriate to the needs and challenges faced.

1.5 Definition of the Key Terms

a. Professional Identity

Professional Identity refers to the individual's perception and recognition of themselves within their professional or work. It encompasses a complex interplay of personal values, experiences, education, and social interaction, that shape one's understanding of their professional self.

b. Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry is a qualitative research method focused on exploring and understanding individuals' experiences through the collection and analysis of personal stories or narratives. It emphasizes the significance of personal accounts in constructing meaning and illuminating the complexities of human experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). In the context of the study, narrative inquiry serves as the methodological lens through which the professional identity construction of English lecturers is investigated.

c. English Lecturer

An English lecturer is an educator specializing in the teaching of the English language, literature, and related subjects. They play a crucial role in language education, guiding students in language acquisition, literature appreciation, and

critical communication skills. The definition acknowledges the specific responsibilities and expertise associated with the role of an English lecturer within an academic setting (Pilcher et al., 2024).

d. Professional Identity Construction

In the context of professional identity construction refers to the ongoing process through which individuals actively shape and develop their professional selves. It involves the integration of personal beliefs, experiences, and external influences into a coherent and evolving professional identity (Alsup, 2005). Where when someone has a personal value, it will encourage them to understand personal beliefs. By experience and other external factors such as education and social interaction underscores the nature of professional identity construction.

e. Challenges

The construction of a professional identity often requires a complex and stormy journey for individuals as they navigate various challenges that influence how they perceive and interpret their professional role. One of the main challenges that can affect this process is the demands and expectations of the organizations they work for. Such conflicts can create internal tensions and hinder the formation of a consistent professional identity. Therefore, it is essential for individuals to actively respond to this as part of their efforts to build a professional identity.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter presents the conclusion and provides suggestions of the research.

1. 6.1 Conclusion

The conclusion of this research is that personal values, experiences, education and social interaction significantly shape the professional identity of an English lecturer. The participant exemplifies how her great personal values and good social interaction influence her decision in studying abroad and make her having a valuable experience. She views her professional identity as a lecturer with job satisfaction, commitment to the profession and continued career growth. Her ability to adapt to technology while maintaining a human connection underscores the importance of balancing innovation with interpersonal relationships in education. Teacher, lecturer, and educators should integrate technology effectively while preserving personal connections with students. Her initiatives, she makes the Manhattan English Project on Instagram and her participation in mentoring programs, reflect her dedication to improving educational access and engagement. Additionally, she could overcome the challenges by balancing various responsibilities, from administrative tasks to adapting teaching methods to meet the needs of diverse students.

2. 6.2 Suggestions

Based on the conclusion stated above, some suggestions can be made for:

1. Future Research

This study raises challenges for future research for expanding contexts and comparative studies. Future research should explore the professional identity construction of English lecturers in different cultural and institutional contexts. Comparative studies between lecturers in various countries could provide deeper insights into the factors influence professional identity.

2. Students

Students should seek out diverse learning opportunities, both inside and outside the classroom. Engaging in extracurricular activities, exchange programs, and online courses can significantly enhance their academic and personal growth. Also utilize technology for learning. Utilizing digital resources and platforms can greatly enhance learning. But, it must be noted for students should actively seek out reputable online resources.

3. Institutions

Institution can collaborate with partners to develop innovative educational resources and platforms that integrate technology while prioritizing human connections and individualized learning experiences. Fostering Collaborative Learning Communities to create opportunities for English lecturers to engage in collaborative learning communities where they can share best practices, exchange ideas, and support each other's professional growth.

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