

TEACHING EDUCATION PROGRAM AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE OF TWO EFL TEACHERS: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF ENGLISH TEACHERS' IDENTITY

Penyelidikan Naratif Pembentukan Identitas Guru Bahasa Inggris
Melalui Pendidikan Keguruan Dan Pengalaman Mengajar

Bernard Richard Nainggolan*

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia/ Lembaga Bahasa LIA Bandung

Abstract: A question arises on how the teachers' identity is formed during the teaching education program and how its shift remains to change in the context of teaching at school. The narratives inquiry of two participants were used as the data to answer the question. In conducting the research, the researcher and participant constructed knowledge of teacher identity. Then, the participants wrote the narratives based on significant moment of life. The narratives were then revisited and revised after interviews. The final narratives were then coded and major themes were generated to general concepts. The theories selected, used as the framework, were the 'Situating Learning' and the 'image-text teacher identity. Coding was done to narratives and fundamental concepts were generated. The fundamental concepts of the analyzed data are; teacher education program vs teaching experiences, the importance of senior guidance in the learning community, teacher relations as a weapon, and affects of a new identity. The findings also show what makes the teacher identity formation different both in the teacher education program and in teaching experience. This study also provides the recommendation for the next research and implications for teacher identity formation.

Keywords: Image-text, Situated learning, Teacher education program, Teacher experience, Teacher identity

Abstrak: Pembentukan identitas guru dan bagaimana perubahan identitas ini terjadi dalam konteks pengajaran di sekolah masih menjadi sebuah pertanyaan. Penyelidikan narasi dua partisipan digunakan sebagai data untuk menjawab pertanyaan tersebut. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti dan partisipan bersama-sama mengkonstruksi pengetahuan mereka tentang identitas guru. Kemudian, kedua partisipan menuliskan narasi mereka berdasarkan momen pengalaman hidup mereka. Narasi tersebut kemudian dikode dan tema-tema utama diturunkan menjadi konsep utama. Teori yang digunakan dalam studi ini adalah 'situated learning' dan teori 'image-text'. Kodifikasi dilakukan terhadap narasi-narasi dan kemudian konsep-konsep umum dimunculkan setelah kodifikasi. Konsep-konsep umum yang muncul setelah proses koding adalah, program pendidikan guru vs. pengalaman mengajar, urgensi peranan guru senior dalam sebuah komunitas belajar, relasi guru terhadap siswa sebagai sebuah kekuatan, dan pengaruh identitas baru. Temuan penelitian juga menunjukkan bahwa pembentukan identitas guru terjadi berbeda baik melalui proses pendidikan guru dan pengalaman guru. Studi ini juga merekomendasikan penelitian lanjutan tentang pembentukan identitas guru dan implikasi pembentukan identitas guru tersebut.

Kata kunci: *Image-text, Situated learning*, program pendidikan guru, pengalaman guru, identitas guru

INTRODUCTION

The increasing trend of students interested in enrolling in teacher education programs in Indonesian universities has showed a highly demanded perception of the teacher profession (Kompas, 2013). Students who join the teacher education program could have previous personal beliefs about teaching, impressions with excellent teachers, and images of self as teacher, and memories of themselves as students (Kagan, 1992). This is believed to contribute to the students' motivation in choosing the teacher education program while they have observed and experienced the good and poor teachings (Anspal et al., 2012). With a 4-year teacher education, candidates of teachers are expected to internalize the good teachings. However, teacher identity formation is also the results of practices of teaching, teaching experiences, and teacher program development in the institutions where the teachers work. With the progressive process of teacher identity formation, the possibility to shape the new identity is not only limited to teacher education program, but also to the institution or community where the teachers work. The purpose of this qualitative study is to investigate the

formation of teacher identity of two English teachers in Indonesia. The research to teacher identity formation is urgent as number of teacher candidates entering the program grow every year, while the formation to be a teacher or a professional is a progressive process. Thus, to seek how the teachers' formation both in university teacher program and in institution can help the institution improve their program and policy makers decide development program to support the professional teacher identity.

The importance of teacher identity for the teachers is to be a guideline to construct their ideas of how 'to be', how 'to act', and how 'to understand' their work and their place in the society (Sachs, 2005). To this importance for students, it is believed that it is to be the image of the society that the students will get involved in and the contributions they can make to that society (Cummins, 2001). Having the importance of teacher identity, there are few studies of teacher identity in Indonesian EFL teachers. A current study by Usman et al. (2021) investigated that the formation of student-teachers identity under the pre-service program in Aceh was formed by the good images of schools visited courses of pedagogy learned, and the instructional approaches

of former teachers at school. Another study conducted by Astuti (2016) explored that challenges of novice teachers' identity formation were because of the unavailability of community practices, preferred-senior development programs, less mutual engagement, and the tension between institutional identity vs professional identity. This study is to fill in the gap that is investigation progressive formation of professional teacher's identity in teachers' experience at educational institutions. The investigation of identity formation was done by utilizing two Indonesian EFL teachers' narratives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Teacher identity and teacher program

The concept of professional identity in teaching and education is various. One concept of professional identity was related to teacher's concepts or images of self (Knowles, 1992; Nias, 1989). This is understood that the concepts or images will significantly affect the ways teachers develop and their attitudes towards educational changes (Beijaard et al., 2004). The professional identity is concerned with the teacher's roles (Goodson & Cole, 1994; Volkmann &

Anderson, 1998). This is meant that the identity is related to what teachers consider vital in their professional lives based on their practice experiences and personal backgrounds (Tickle, 2000).

The identity itself is not someone has, it is developed through the transaction with their surroundings during someone's whole life (Beijaard et al., 2004). For the teacher identity itself, this means that it remains shifting. The change of the teacher identity results from a negotiation between the experiences and the meaning-making of the experiences (Anspal et al., 2012). The identity shift is composed of the competing interactions between personal, professional, and situational factors (Day et al., 2007). In the education context, the situational factors are the schools and the classrooms.

In general, the teacher education program is designed for 8 semesters. During this program, the students will be facilitated by the subject skills, pedagogy courses, and teaching practices. As students who enter this program own personal beliefs about teachings, previous experiences with good and poor teachers, and images as self as a teacher and memories of themselves as students (Kagan, 1992), the teacher models have

been implanted prior teacher education program. This, therefore, triggers a question on how teacher identity is constructed during the teacher education program and how significant is this program to shape a teacher identity. Korthagen et al. (2006) remarked that experience of teaching will be significantly affecting the teacher education program. In the teaching program, students are encouraged to grow their professional identity and teach confidence (Bullough, 1997; Bullough & Gitlin, 2001). Knowing this importance, Anspal et al. (2012) proposed the identification of supports needed by the teacher education program to develop the students' professional development.

One concern of teacher education programs is the connection to the 'self' concept in which the students with this concept are being aware and optimistic about teaching (Kagan, 1992). Beijaard (1995) adds that the 'self' shaped is involved in a specific context, such as the school environment. Hence, experiences at schools are crucial for identity formation. Kelchtermans (1993) explains the 'self' concepts that contribute to understanding identity formation. The 'self-image' is explained by how someone describes himself as a teacher. This can

be manifested through statements of general principles that guide the teacher's professional behaviors. The second is the 'self-esteem' connected to valuing and evaluating oneself as a teacher. This leads to comparing with others and balancing both self-image and professional norms. Added to the 'self' concepts, Kelchtermans (1993) expands the aspect of 'self' image to understand identity formation. They are the job motivation entering and remaining to teach, understanding the tasks teacher's task perception, and expectations of future work development. Kagan (1992) further elaborates that focusing the students on 'teachers' image' of self as a teacher will influence the primary developmental tasks that is the facilitation of shifts in thinking about teaching. The developmental tasks of novice teachers are meant to (1) confirmation and validation of the image of self as teacher, (2) acquiring acknowledge of students and using it as a modification of the image of self as teacher, (3) experiencing cognitive dissonance and questioning the appropriateness of personal images and beliefs, and (4) acquiring instructional practices (Kagan, 1992). In conclusion, students' existing thinking will be challenged by teaching experiences.

Therefore, teaching experiences in teacher education programs will provide chances for teacher identity formation.

During the practices and the teaching, the teacher's identity will change and it is shaped and re-shaped. This formation is influenced by the transitions and tensions emerging in conflicts, challenges, and dilemmas (Barkhuizen, 2021).

2. 'Situated Learning' and 'Image Text' theory

The theoretical frameworks that is used to investigate the teacher identity formation are the 'situated learning' theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and the image-text (Simon, 1995).

The 'situated learning' (SL) theory views that the ways of identity formation are through participation in the community and access (Lave & Wenger, 1991). During participation in the learning community, teachers will learn about their environments, besides learning about classroom skills (Darling-Hammond, 1990). Community of practice will also provide teachers with active and effective learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Thus, multiple identities and levels of participation emerged from the community of practice will be presented. In the community of practice, learning itself is considered as a process

of 'coming to be' that later on creates new identities in the real world (Lave, 1992). Another important part of SL is the access to resources and support in becoming members of the teaching community. Varghese et al. (2005) define access as the interaction between teachers and learners in the different socio-political-economic structures, and the activity. When the access is declined, knowledge can become abstract and learners (in the community) will make meaningless visible more difficult. The declined access will lead to a marginalization of the learners in the community.

The second theory used to investigate the teacher identity formation is the image-text (Simon, 1995). This theory presents that the 'teacher identity becomes a classroom resource and the image-text has emerged from the tools of the daily practice and the teacher-relationships during the practices of schooling (Simon, 1995). Morgan (2004) manifested this theory in his study when he used his image-text by telling his students' stories that made them understand the issues of culture, gender, and family relations. Morgan (2004) adds that an image-text is co-created in which it is constructed by teacher and students, hence identity is created contingently and

relationally. This Varghese to Varghese et al. (2005) stating that the 'image' produced in the class could be manifested in teacher's life stories, gestures, and clothing connected to the students' prior experiences. Cummins (2000) argues adding the formation of the image-text is composed of students' attitudes towards teachers and teachers' expectations from their students.

METHOD

This study emerged from my narratives and Puji's. In conducting the study, the researcher adopted a qualitative approach to research, drawing specifically on narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) due to its methodological tool.

Table 1. Participants' information

	Participant 1	Participant 2
Name:	Bernard	Puji
Sex:	Male	Female
Age:	30	35
Teaching carrier (years):	<10	>10
Marital status:	Unmarried	Married
Educational institution:	A language center, Private primary and secondary schools	Private primary school, Islamic Secondary School
Origin:	North Sumatera	West Java

From table 1, justification of choosing the participants is due to the potential contribution to richer data, as

participants are different in terms of gender, origin, context of teaching, length of teaching, and teaching experience. The first participant is Bernard, the researcher too. He has been teaching English since 2014, after his graduation. His informal teaching started when he was still in his senior high school, becoming an English teacher in an English course in his hometown. His parents were teachers too. In 2014-2018, after graduating from English education program, he became an English teacher for junior high school and senior high school under one educational foundation. In 2016, he became a part-time teacher in a language center in Medan teaching English for teens, children, conversation programs, and TOEFL preparation class. In 2018, he moved to Bandung and started teaching in the same language center, and in 2019 he taught in primary school. In this private primary school, he taught several lessons, such as bilingual subjects and English.

The second participant is Puji (pseudonym) She was married with four children and has been teaching more than 10 years, a year in a primary school with an IB curriculum and 10 years in one madrasah in Cimahi until now. She has been joining some pieces of training and seminars held by the foundation where

she is teaching now, local government, or some private institutions. She will join teacher professional development (PPG) in 2021.

This study thus seeks to answer the following research question: “How have the teachers’ education and teaching experience contributed to form two English teachers' new identities?”. The stages of collecting data are showed in Figure 1.

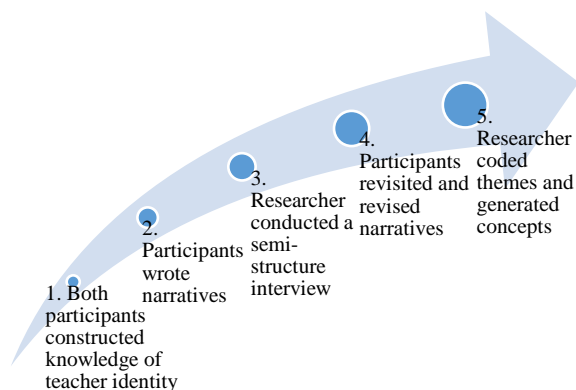


Figure 1. Stages of collecting data

Figure 1 shows that there are several stages for collecting the data. First, after constructing the knowledge of teacher identity, the participants wrote autobiographical narratives separately. Our series of narratives were written based on the significant moments of our lives as teachers titled as (1) first encounter with English, (2) students’ thinking about becoming teacher, (3) teacher education program, (4) first years

of teaching (5) teacher and professional development.. Then, the researcher conducted a semi-structured interviews to dig more Puji's narratives. Several follow-up interviews were also conducted separately to help Puji revising her narratives. The researcher then coded the revised narratives. After themes were coded, major concepts were generated using framework identity as the image-text and 'situated learning.' The generated major concepts were to help address the posed research question. These themes revolved around: (1) teacher education program vs teaching experiences, (2) the importance of senior guidance in the learning community, (3) teacher relations as a weapon, (4) affects of a new identity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Teacher education program VS teaching experiences

From our narratives, it can be seen how our identities as teachers are formed. Teacher education might contribute less to build our pedagogical knowledge. Indeed, teaching practices, teaching experiences, teacher development, and institution demands can form us to be passionate teachers. Narratives: Teacher education and teaching experience showed in Table 2.

Table 2. Narratives: Teacher education and teaching experience

Teacher education program	Teaching experiences
<p><i>"I felt I was in the wrong major. I often cried because I couldn't catch up with what my lecturers said. They almost spoke in English during the class session and I felt my English was the worst among all."</i> (Puji)</p> <p><i>"It was stressful, especially when I met my speaking lecturer. I became pessimistic to teach."</i> (Puji)</p> <p><i>"I was not impressed by too many jargons of education, teaching, teachers who were spoken (mostly in the lectures) and exhibited frequently."</i> (Bernard)</p> <p><i>"... I was too lazy to listen to lectures that were too theoretical and the lecturers talked a lot as if we had been living in their imagination."</i> (Bernard)</p> <p><i>"In several subjects, I witnessed how some lecturers could spend their time (most of their teaching time) to just criticize the way students dress. I felt the lessons were so boring and not inspiring me at all."</i> (Bernard)</p>	<p><i>"I taught in one of the private primary schools that adopted IB as their curriculum. This is an inclusive school that has special need students in each class and uses English as school's daily basis. It was great that I can maintain my English /and I am pleased to be a member of the English committee at that school."</i> (Puji)</p> <p><i>As I came back from the training in Jakarta, we continued the training in the branch in which we had to observe the senior teachers' teaching for some time. Then, we wrote a report and discussed it with the academic officer. We, for some weeks, we're scheduled to teach for some classes. Finally, the teachings would be under the supervision and guidance of trainers who visited us from Jakarta."</i> (Bernard)</p>

Puji's teacher education program seemed to discourage her teaching passion because of her lack of English skills. It happened to Bernard, too. He found the program did not motivate him due too much theoretical and full of

unpractical lessons. However, the teacher education program is designed to the connection 'self-concept' that makes students in a teacher education program aware and optimistic about teaching (Kagan, 1992).

Our impressions teaching education program are acceptable as the first semesters of the education program were designed to prepare the students of the teacher education program with the skills of the subject. The very first semesters might not contribute much to shape the 'self' as the 'self' formation is involved with a specific context, that is the school environment (Beijaard, 1995). In contrast, we think the very first semesters of the program could be also the opportunity for the lecturers of the program to shape their students 'teacher's image' through the subject taught and their daily relationship by modeling the image-text. This applies to Morgan's (2006) notion that an image-text must be discovered contingently and relationally. In other words, relationship between teachers and students in the program and curriculum design contribute to construct the teacher identity development in the program (Anspal et al., 2012).

A narrative in the table 2 shows Puji's first teaching experience after

graduating had improved her English and getting a privilege to be a member of the community had benefited her to widen her teaching perspective, such as facilitation to special needs students and understanding of the IB curriculum. Her English skills also improved because of community policy in which she worked. Through the learning community, which are the school system and teachers' community, her participation as a learner in the learning community had led her to learn about her environment and learn about classroom skills (Darling-Hammond, 1990; Lave & Wenger, 1991). This experience happened to Bernard. His experience joining TEFL certification from a language center gave him a privilege to get the access to be a part of a learning community in which his interaction during this program made the knowledge real. This helped him not to be marginalized (Varghese, et al., 2005) and made the learning much active and effective (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

The formation of a new identity is said to be more significant when Bernard and Puji had teaching experiences which means our previously existing thinking about teachers was challenged after we got more teaching practices and experience. A difference that makes the

teacher identity formation different between the teacher education program and teaching experience is the availability of community practices that emerged from participation and multi identities (Darling-Hammond, 1990; Lave & Wenger, 1991).

The second difference of the teacher identity formation is the access, or the interaction between teachers in the different socio-political-economic structures, ages, backgrounds. This happened to Puji in her teaching experience and Bernard in his training program. This interaction lets teachers make meaning of their knowledge more visible and easier. Based on the narratives in table 2, this interaction is barely present in the teacher education program which concerns with emphasizing the 'self' as a teacher (Kagan, 1992). The lack of the interaction in the teacher education program failed to let the students in the program to be aware of classroom variables and to be optimistic about teaching.

Table 3. Bernard's narratives in teaching practice

<p><i>The moment I remember to love to be a teacher was when I had teaching practice for 3 months from my department. I spent three months teaching far away from my campus in which we had to rent a house to live in. That experience, to feel teaching and interacting with students at school, made me contemplate what my call was. Given that the school and the class I taught were special. The students were like hard to speak Bahasa Indonesia and it was impossible to enjoy teaching English to such</i></p>

students. I was in love with their world. For the very first time, I could see the teenagers' world with compassion. For me, they seemed to be one generation to save this nation; It sounds cliché, doesn't it? What was making me into teaching was to realize that the poor could be saved by education, the unlucky ones could be escaped by the knowledge, and I felt they were humans, valued by the Creator to enjoy life and to be fruitful for their life and their generations. There were sometimes during the program I visited my students' house and they looked so happy.

(Bernard)

Seeing the importance of teaching practices, Bernard's narrative in table 3 revealed that his teaching practices for about 3 months, under the teacher education program, has impacted to his teacher image formation. Through his teaching practices, the teacher education program helps students (1) confirm and validate the image of self as teacher, (2) acquire knowledge of students and use it to change the image of self as a teacher, (3) experience cognitive conflict and evaluate the appropriateness of personal images and beliefs, and (4) acquire instructional practices.

2. The importance of senior guidance in the learning community

Bernard's narrative showed in table 4 revealed how important is senior guidance for a novice teacher. The absence of guidance, especially for novice teachers, can be a trouble for the formation of the teacher's text image. The guidance can be manifested in the general principles that guide the novice to achieve the teacher's professional behaviors

(Kelchtermans, 1993). The guidance can be manifested in the form of open 'access' in the situated learning in which it helps the members of the community feel welcome and thus contextual knowledge needed by the novice teachers can be exchanged (Varghese et al., 2005).

Table 4. Bernard's narratives in senior guidance

Besides, the lack of adaption to the new school environment and no guidance on how I should teach in that two classes led me to deep frustration. The authority did not even introduce properly me. I think the moment now- that introducing a new teacher and guiding him to make him comfortable is really important.

Bernard

3. Teacher's relations as a weapon

Table 5. Narratives: Teacher's relations

I also realize that communication and relation are also important, especially for my introverted students. To the introverted, I keep telling them I was once an introvert, who found it hard to tell what I was feeling or telling what I was thinking. I approach them by talking to them personally about their lessons, interest, etc. I make them felt comfortable having me as their teacher. Being comfortable, my students put their trust in me. This is important when you are trusted. Your students will be so motivated in your learning.

(Puji)

As we became closer, I greeted him and listened to his interest and talk. Once, Richie, asked me: "Why do you, the local, want to teach us the Chinese (Hokkien)?" I assumed this question was based on race issues lived in his family about the local Batakese, or another traditional tribe of Indonesia. I replied, "we teach you not based on your color, we teach because we are your teacher. You are my student, no matter if we are different. Then, Richie shared his fear, as the Indonesian-Chinese, that people, the locals, might disturb him.

(Bernard)

Narratives in table 5 revealed how the teacher-student relation can be used as a weapon to share values, beliefs, and culture with the students. Puji's image-text that she was 'trusted' made her

students feel comfortable and more motivated in learning. Similar to Puji's, Bernard's narrative shows how he used the image-text 'being friendly and opened to any cultures. This made his students accept the values of multicultural issues. The teacher identity formation has emerged from the co-created relationship between teacher and students (Morgan, 2004). This benefits the teachers as the new identity helped them to be 'well-accepted by students. This 'image-text formation, manifested in teacher-students relation, is composed of the students' attitude towards teachers and teachers' expectations from their students.

4. Affects of New Identity

Table 6. Narratives: Affects of new identity

During the teaching, I always challenge my students to do something. For example, I always have my students speak English without being afraid of making mistakes, such as in pronunciation, grammar, etc. The value of being unafraid of making mistakes makes students feel relaxed and fun. They have more confidence. I also help my students familiarized themselves with different sources of learning, through songs, movies, books. I keep telling them to be exposed to resources they are really into. I feel so excited when some students tell me that they are successful in following my advice on learning.

(Puji)

Finally, after our talks, he (Jason) realized that behaving well, and following the rules at school was actually to make his mom happy. His behavior improved. His homework was done on time, his enthusiasm was better, and of course, he was not that rude. One thing I learned from Jason is that someone might misbehave and the teacher's job is to help them understand their behavior, not judging them. Since, I treat my students as I want to help them understand themselves better, instead of judging, labeling, or scolding them.

(Bernard)

The new image-text formed has affected teachers' effectiveness in

teacher-student relations. Narratives in table 6 show the impact of teacher identity to shape students' identity as a part of society. For teachers, their identities are shaped to help the students understand and practice the values, beliefs, and cultures. To put it another way, the teacher identity becomes the classroom resource (Simon, 1995) that influences the ways students think, act, and become (Sachs, 2005). This can be seen in Bernard's narrative in table 7 in which Bernard, 'the good listener', could gradually shape his student's mind to change his behavior. Similar to Bernard's, Puji's learning principle or image-text that 'making mistake' is accepted has shaped her students to enjoy learning without being afraid of making mistakes.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown how teacher identity is formed both in teacher education program and in teaching experience in the institution or school where teachers worked. The potential of teacher education programs to shape the student-teacher's identity is constructed by the background of good teaching of previous education, the curriculum, the teaching practice, and the image-text produced by the lectures. However,

teaching experience and teaching practices in the institutions or schools have significantly shaped the identity because of the availability of learning community, privilege access, and image-text composition by teacher-students relation. The formation of teacher identity at schools is highly influenced by the community guidance given by senior. This lets the novice to create the ideal identity to their community and students. The teacher-students relationship is also to help teacher take control values, cultures, and beliefs their students learn and adopt. The teacher identity itself also contributes to affect the students identity as what the teacher image works.

There are several implications of this study. First, the curriculum for the teacher education program should be

revisited to emphasize more teaching practices to shape the teacher identity when they are still in the program. Secondly, schools and educational institutions where teachers work are responsible for shaping the teacher identity by the community inside and the development program provided by the institutions.

This study suggests researchers to investigate more comprehensively to each component of the teacher education program and to investigate institution's way of shaping its teachers' identity.

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