

NEGOTIATING PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY: ENGLISH TEACHERS' PRACTICES IN INDONESIAN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS

Roviatul Hasanah¹, Bradhiansyah Tri Suryanto²

¹Universitas Nurul jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo

²Universitas Nurul jadid, Paiton, Probolinggo

Corresponding Author(S): roviatulh515@gmail.com

Abstract:

Teacher professional identity plays a crucial role in shaping instructional practices and students' learning experiences. However, limited research has examined how English teachers construct their professional identity within the unique context of Indonesian Islamic boarding schools. This study investigated the professional identity construction of English teachers by exploring its formation, influencing factors, negotiation with Islamic values, and enactment in classroom practice. Employing a qualitative multiple case study, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, document analysis, and students' achievement records. The findings revealed that teachers constructed their professional identity as both language educators and moral mentors, shaped by personal beliefs, institutional culture, and Islamic values. They actively negotiated English language teaching with religious principles by adapting instructional materials and classroom practices while maintaining communicative learning objectives. The study implies that teachers' professional identity is dynamic, context-dependent, and fundamental to culturally responsive English language teaching in Islamic boarding schools.

Keywords:

Professional identity, Islamic boarding school, English language teaching, qualitative case study



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INTRODUCTION

Teacher professional identity has attracted increasing attention in educational research because it influences how teachers perceive their roles, make instructional decisions, and respond to educational changes. Rather than being a fixed characteristic, professional identity is a dynamic and continuous process shaped by teachers' personal beliefs, professional experiences, institutional contexts, and interactions with others. As educational environments continue to evolve, teachers are expected not only to possess pedagogical competence but also to adapt to changing curricular demands, technological developments, and sociocultural expectations. Consequently, understanding how teachers construct their professional identity is essential for explaining their classroom practices and professional development.

Within the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), professional identity becomes increasingly complex because English teachers operate at the intersection of global educational practices and local cultural contexts. English is widely recognized as an international language that provides learners with access to global communication,

education, and employment opportunities. At the same time, English language teaching often introduces cultural perspectives that may differ from the values maintained by local educational institutions. Therefore, English teachers are required to make continuous pedagogical decisions regarding instructional materials, classroom activities, and teaching strategies while ensuring that learning remains relevant to students' social and cultural backgrounds.

This complexity is particularly evident in Indonesian Islamic boarding schools (Islamic Boarding School), where education is not solely intended to develop students' academic competence but also to cultivate Islamic character and moral values. As one of Indonesia's oldest educational institutions, Islamic Boarding School integrates religious instruction, character education, and formal academic learning within a distinctive educational environment. Consequently, English teachers in Islamic boarding schools are expected to fulfil dual professional responsibilities. Besides developing students' English proficiency, they are also expected to become moral educators who demonstrate Islamic values through both their teaching practices and daily interactions with students. This dual role distinguishes their professional identity from that of English teachers working in general secondary schools.

The increasing globalization of English language education has created additional challenges for teachers in Islamic boarding schools. Many English textbooks and learning resources contain cultural content originating from Western societies that may not fully reflect the religious and cultural values upheld by Islamic Boarding School. As a result, teachers frequently adapt learning materials, modify classroom examples, and contextualize instructional activities to ensure that English language learning remains compatible with Islamic values without reducing students' opportunities to develop communicative competence. Such pedagogical adaptation reflects not only teachers' instructional expertise but also the ongoing construction of their professional identity within a unique institutional context.

Previous studies have acknowledged that teacher professional identity is influenced by personal beliefs, institutional culture, professional experiences, and interactions within educational communities. Researchers have also emphasized that professional identity is continuously negotiated throughout teachers' professional careers rather than being established at the beginning of their teaching profession. In the context of English language teaching, several studies have examined identity negotiation among teachers working in multilingual and multicultural settings. Meanwhile, studies conducted in Islamic educational institutions have primarily focused on curriculum implementation, character education, or the integration of Islamic values into English language teaching. Although these studies have contributed to understanding English language education in religious settings, they have provided limited attention to how English teachers construct their professional identity while simultaneously negotiating pedagogical responsibilities, institutional expectations, and religious values within the context of Indonesian Islamic boarding schools.

In addition, most previous studies have relied primarily on interview data to explore teachers' perceptions of their professional identity. While these studies have offered valuable insights into teachers' beliefs and experiences, they have rarely triangulated interview findings with classroom observations, institutional documents, and students' learning achievement. Consequently, there is still limited understanding of how teachers' professional identity is translated into observable classroom practices and how it influences instructional decision-making within Islamic boarding schools.

To address these gaps, this study investigates the professional identity construction of English teachers in an Indonesian Islamic boarding school through a qualitative multiple case study. Guided by Beijaard's framework of teacher professional identity, Wenger's Communities of Practice, and Berry's Acculturation Theory, this study explores how English teachers construct and express their professional identity, negotiate institutional and cultural expectations, adapt English language teaching practices to Islamic values, and enact their professional identity in classroom practice. To obtain a comprehensive understanding of these processes, the study employs multiple sources of evidence, including semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, document analysis, and students' achievement records.

This study contributes both theoretically and practically to the growing literature on teacher professional identity. Theoretically, it extends existing discussions by examining professional identity within the distinctive educational context of Indonesian Islamic boarding schools, where pedagogical, institutional, and religious responsibilities intersect. Methodologically, the study strengthens previous research by triangulating multiple sources of qualitative data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of identity construction. Practically, the findings are expected to provide valuable insights for English teachers, school leaders, curriculum developers, and teacher education institutions in designing culturally responsive English language teaching that balances international pedagogical standards with Islamic educational values.

Accordingly, this study investigates the professional identity construction of English teachers in an Indonesian Islamic boarding school. Specifically, it aims to explore (1) how English teachers construct their professional identity, (2) the factors influencing the construction of their professional identity, (3) how teachers negotiate English language teaching practices with Islamic values, and (4) how professional identity is reflected in classroom practices and students' learning achievement. By addressing these issues through interviews, classroom observations, document analysis, and students' achievement records, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of professional identity construction within the unique educational context of Indonesian Islamic boarding schools.

METHOD

Research design

This study employed a qualitative multiple case study design to explore how English teachers constructed and enacted their professional identity within the context of an Indonesian Islamic boarding school. A multiple case study was selected because it enabled an in-depth understanding of teachers' professional identity from multiple perspectives and through various sources of evidence. The study focused on the interaction between teachers' personal beliefs, institutional expectations, pedagogical

practices, and religious values in shaping professional identity within English Language Teaching (ELT).

The study was conducted at Nurul Jadid Al-Islami Islamic Boarding School, Jember, East Java, Indonesia. This educational setting was selected because it integrates formal education with Islamic values, creating a distinctive context in which English teachers simultaneously fulfill academic and religious responsibilities.

Respondents

The participants consisted of English teachers who were purposively selected based on their teaching experience and active involvement in English language instruction at the Islamic boarding school. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that participants possessed sufficient professional experience to provide rich and relevant information regarding the construction of their professional identity. All participants had experience teaching English within the Islamic Boarding School environment and were familiar with integrating institutional values into classroom practice. Their experiences enabled the researcher to examine how professional identity was constructed, negotiated, and enacted in daily teaching activities.

Data Collection

Data were collected through four complementary techniques: semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, document analysis, and students' achievement records. The use of multiple data sources enabled methodological triangulation and enhanced the credibility of the findings.

Semi-structured interviews served as the primary source of data for exploring teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and experiences regarding their professional identity. The interviews focused on teachers' self-definition, professional roles, institutional expectations, cultural and religious influences, and classroom practices. Each interview was audio-recorded with participants' consent and subsequently transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Classroom observations were conducted to examine how teachers enacted their professional identity during English language instruction. The observations focused on instructional strategies, classroom interaction, adaptation of learning materials, integration of Islamic values, and teacher–student communication. Field notes were recorded throughout each observation to capture both instructional activities and contextual classroom events.

Document analysis was employed to support the interview and observation findings. Documents analyzed in this study included lesson plans, teaching materials, instructional modules, and other institutional documents relevant to English language teaching. These documents provided evidence of how institutional values were embedded in curriculum planning and instructional practice.

Students' achievement records were also analyzed to provide additional evidence regarding learning outcomes associated with teachers' instructional practices. Although student achievement was not treated as the primary indicator of professional identity, these records offered complementary information regarding classroom implementation and learning effectiveness.

Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2019) thematic analysis. The analysis followed six stages: familiarization with the data, initial coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report.

Interview transcripts, classroom observation notes, institutional documents, and students' achievement records were analyzed iteratively to identify recurring patterns related to teachers' professional identity. During the coding process, both inductive and deductive approaches were employed. Inductive coding allowed new themes to emerge from the data, while deductive coding was guided by Beijaard's framework of teacher professional identity, Wenger's Communities of Practice, and Berry's Acculturation Theory.

After themes were generated, findings from the four data sources were compared to ensure consistency and strengthen the credibility of the analysis. The integration of interviews, classroom observations, document analysis, and students' achievement records enabled a comprehensive understanding of how English teachers constructed, negotiated, and enacted their professional identity within the Islamic boarding school context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Professional Identity Construction of English Teachers

The first research question explored how English teachers constructed their professional identity in an Indonesian Islamic boarding school. The findings revealed that teachers constructed their professional identity through three interconnected dimensions: (1) perceiving themselves as both language educators and moral mentors, (2) positioning themselves as role models for students, and (3) continuously developing their professional competence while maintaining Islamic values. These dimensions demonstrate that professional identity in the Islamic Boarding School context extends beyond instructional responsibilities to encompass moral, religious, and professional commitments.

Professional Identity as Language Educators and Moral Mentors

The interview findings indicated that teachers did not perceive English teaching merely as the process of transferring linguistic knowledge. Instead, they viewed their profession as a responsibility to educate students academically while simultaneously nurturing their moral character and Islamic values. One participant explained:

"Bagi saya, menjadi guru Bahasa Inggris bukan hanya mengajarkan grammar atau vocabulary. Saya juga punya tanggung jawab untuk membimbing siswa agar memiliki akhlak yang baik, tetap memegang nilai-nilai Islam, dan mampu berpikir kritis dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Jadi, tugas saya bukan hanya membuat mereka bisa berbahasa Inggris, tetapi juga membantu mereka tumbuh menjadi pribadi yang lebih baik."

The quotation demonstrates that teachers perceived English language teaching as a holistic educational process rather than solely an academic activity. Professional identity was constructed through the integration of linguistic instruction, character education, and religious values. The teachers believed that language competence should be developed alongside students' moral and spiritual growth, reflecting the educational philosophy of the Islamic boarding school. This perception was consistently reflected in classroom practices. During classroom observations, teachers did not only explain language concepts but also incorporated Islamic values into classroom discussions and

learning activities. Moral messages were naturally embedded in examples, classroom interactions, and reflective questions that encouraged students to relate English learning to their daily lives as Muslim students. Teachers also encouraged respectful communication, discipline, and responsibility throughout classroom activities.

These observations demonstrate that teachers enacted their professional identity through authentic instructional practices rather than merely expressing personal beliefs. The finding supports Beijaard et al. (2004), who argue that teachers' professional identity is constructed through the interaction between subject matter expertise, pedagogical knowledge, and personal beliefs. In this study, however, personal beliefs were strongly influenced by Islamic educational values, resulting in a professional identity that integrated pedagogical competence with moral and religious responsibilities.

Professional Identity as Role Models

Another important dimension emerging from the interview data was teachers' perception of themselves as role models. Participants believed that students learned not only from classroom instruction but also from teachers' attitudes, behaviours, and daily interactions. Consequently, teachers considered exemplary conduct to be an essential component of their professional identity. One participant stated:

"Di kelas, saya selalu berusaha menghubungkan materi Bahasa Inggris dengan nilai-nilai Islam. Jadi siswa tidak hanya belajar bahasa, tetapi juga belajar bagaimana menerapkan nilai-nilai tersebut dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Saya juga merasa sebagai guru harus bisa memberi contoh melalui sikap dan perilaku karena siswa sering belajar dari apa yang mereka lihat."

This quotation indicates that teachers understood professional identity as something demonstrated through actions rather than merely expressed through instructional discourse. Participants viewed themselves as individuals whose behaviour could influence students' attitudes, values, and character development.

The observation data confirmed this perception. Teachers consistently demonstrated respectful communication, fairness in classroom management, and patience when responding to students' questions. They also created a supportive classroom atmosphere where students were encouraged to participate actively without fear of making mistakes. Such practices strengthened teachers' credibility as educators and reinforced their identity as moral role models within the Islamic Boarding School environment.

These findings are consistent with Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice theory, which explains that professional identity develops through participation in a social community. Within the Islamic boarding school, teachers continuously negotiated and reinforced their identity through interactions with students, colleagues, and institutional culture. Their identity was therefore not an individual characteristic but a socially constructed process shaped by shared educational values.

Professional Identity through Continuous Professional Development

The interview findings further revealed that teachers perceived professional identity as a lifelong developmental process. Participants believed that becoming an English teacher required continuous learning, self-reflection, and professional improvement to meet both educational and institutional expectations. As one participant explained:

"Saya ingin siswa memiliki kemampuan Bahasa Inggris yang bisa mereka gunakan untuk melanjutkan pendidikan atau menghadapi dunia kerja. Tetapi yang tidak kalah penting, mereka juga harus memiliki karakter yang baik sehingga ilmu yang mereka miliki bisa digunakan dengan bijaksana sesuai ajaran Islam."

Another participant added:

"Menurut saya, keduanya sama pentingnya. Siswa memang perlu menguasai Bahasa Inggris sebagai bekal masa depan mereka, tetapi kemampuan itu harus diimbangi dengan karakter yang baik. Dengan begitu mereka bisa menggunakan ilmu yang dimiliki secara bertanggung jawab."

These quotations demonstrate that teachers continuously reflected on their professional responsibilities and sought to balance academic excellence with character education. Their professional identity was therefore not static but continually reconstructed through teaching experience, institutional expectations, and personal reflection.

Overall, the findings indicate that English teachers constructed their professional identity through the integration of pedagogical competence, moral commitment, and religious values. Rather than viewing these dimensions as separate responsibilities, teachers perceived them as complementary aspects of their profession. This multidimensional identity reflects the distinctive characteristics of English language teaching within the context of an Indonesian Islamic boarding school and illustrates how institutional culture contributes to shaping teachers' understanding of professionalism.

Factor shaping English Teachers' Professional Identity

Factors Shaping English Teachers' Professional Identity The second research question examined the factors that shaped the construction of English teachers' professional identity in an Indonesian Islamic boarding school. The analysis revealed that teachers' professional identity was not formed by a single influence but through the interaction of personal beliefs, teaching experiences, institutional culture, and the religious environment of the Islamic Boarding School. These interconnected factors continuously influenced how teachers perceived their professional roles and enacted their responsibilities in English language teaching.

Personal Beliefs and Teaching Experiences

The interview findings indicated that teachers' personal beliefs played a fundamental role in shaping their professional identity. Participants believed that becoming an English teacher required not only academic competence but also sincerity, responsibility, and a commitment to continuous self-improvement. Their teaching experiences further strengthened these beliefs, allowing them to develop confidence in balancing language instruction with character education. One participant explained:

"Menurut saya, menjadi guru itu adalah proses belajar yang tidak pernah berhenti. Setiap hari saya belajar dari pengalaman mengajar, dari siswa, bahkan dari tantangan yang saya hadapi di kelas. Semua itu membantu saya menjadi guru yang lebih baik."

Another participant added:

"Saya merasa setiap kelas memberikan pengalaman yang berbeda. Dari situ saya belajar bagaimana menyesuaikan cara mengajar agar siswa lebih mudah memahami materi tanpa meninggalkan nilai-nilai yang kami pegang di Islamic Boarding School."

These quotations suggest that teachers viewed professional identity as a dynamic and evolving process rather than a fixed professional status. Their beliefs were continuously reconstructed through classroom experiences, reflection, and interaction with students. Instead of relying solely on formal teacher education, participants considered everyday teaching experiences as an essential source of professional learning.

Classroom observations further supported this finding. Teachers demonstrated flexibility in adjusting instructional strategies according to students' responses and classroom situations. Rather than rigidly following lesson plans, they modified explanations, examples, and classroom activities whenever necessary to facilitate students' understanding while maintaining a supportive learning environment. Such adaptive practices reflected teachers' growing professional confidence developed through experience. These findings align with Beijgaard et al. (2004), who argue that professional identity develops through continuous reflection on professional experiences. The present study reinforces this perspective by showing that teaching experience functions not only as a source of pedagogical knowledge but also as a means of strengthening teachers' professional beliefs and commitments.

Institutional Culture and Leadership

Another significant factor influencing teachers' professional identity was the institutional culture of the Islamic boarding school. Participants consistently emphasized that the values promoted by the institution strongly shaped their understanding of what it meant to be a professional English teacher. One participant stated:

"Lingkungan Islamic Boarding School sangat memengaruhi cara saya mengajar. Sebagai guru, saya tidak hanya dituntut menyampaikan materi, tetapi juga menjaga nilai-nilai yang menjadi budaya di sekolah ini."

Another participant explained:

"Kami memiliki visi yang sama bahwa pendidikan bukan hanya tentang prestasi akademik, tetapi juga pembentukan karakter. Karena itu, setiap guru memiliki tanggung jawab yang sama untuk mewujudkan tujuan tersebut."

These interview findings indicate that teachers' professional identity was constructed collectively through shared institutional values rather than being developed solely through individual beliefs. Participants perceived themselves as members of an educational community working toward common educational goals.

Document analysis further supported this finding. Lesson plans, teaching modules, and school policies consistently emphasized character education alongside English language learning objectives. Teachers incorporated institutional values into instructional planning by selecting learning materials, designing classroom activities, and developing assessment practices that reflected the educational philosophy of the Islamic Boarding School. The consistency between institutional documents and classroom implementation demonstrates that professional identity was embedded within the school's organizational culture rather than functioning merely as an individual characteristic.

This finding is consistent with Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice theory, which emphasizes that professional identity develops through participation in a community sharing common practices and values. Within the Islamic Boarding School context, teachers continuously negotiated and strengthened their identity through collaboration with colleagues, institutional expectations, and shared educational goals.

Religious Values within the Islamic Boarding School Environment

The findings further revealed that Islamic values constituted one of the most influential factors shaping teachers' professional identity. Participants consistently described religion as the foundation underlying their instructional decisions, classroom interactions, and relationships with students. One participant explained:

"Nilai-nilai Islam menjadi pedoman saya dalam mengajar. Ketika memilih materi atau memberikan contoh kepada siswa, saya selalu mempertimbangkan apakah materi tersebut sesuai dengan nilai yang kami tanamkan di Islamic Boarding School."

Another participant commented:

"Mengajar di Islamic Boarding School membuat saya lebih sadar bahwa setiap pelajaran bisa menjadi sarana untuk menanamkan nilai-nilai kebaikan. Jadi, saya tidak melihat pelajaran Bahasa Inggris terpisah dari pendidikan karakter."

These quotations illustrate that religious values were not viewed as external requirements imposed by the institution but were internalized as integral components of teachers' professional identity. Participants believed that English language teaching should contribute to students' intellectual, moral, and spiritual development simultaneously.

Classroom observations corroborated these findings. Teachers frequently contextualized English learning by relating lesson topics to students' daily experiences within the Islamic Boarding School. They also facilitated discussions encouraging students to critically examine cultural differences while maintaining Islamic perspectives and respecting diversity. These instructional practices demonstrate that religious values informed pedagogical decision-making rather than restricting English language learning.

The findings may also be interpreted through John W. Berry's acculturation framework. Rather than rejecting English because of its association with Western cultures, teachers selectively adapted learning materials and cultural content to align with Islamic values. This reflects an integrative approach in which global language education and local religious identity coexist through thoughtful pedagogical adaptation.

Overall, the findings indicate that English teachers' professional identity was shaped by the continuous interaction of personal beliefs, professional experiences, institutional culture, and Islamic values. These factors did not operate independently; instead, they reinforced one another throughout teachers' professional practice. Consequently, professional identity emerged as a dynamic and context-dependent construct that evolved through ongoing negotiation between individual agency and the educational environment of the Islamic boarding school.

Negotiating English Language Teaching with Islamic Values

Negotiating English Language Teaching with Islamic Values The third research question explored how English teachers negotiated English language teaching practices with Islamic values within the context of an Indonesian Islamic boarding school. The findings revealed that teachers did not perceive English language teaching and Islamic values as

conflicting domains. Instead, they actively negotiated both by adapting learning materials, contextualizing classroom examples, and selecting instructional strategies that aligned with the educational philosophy of the Islamic Boarding School. This negotiation enabled teachers to maintain the objectives of English language learning while preserving the religious and moral values promoted by the institution.

Adapting Learning Materials to the Islamic Boarding School

Context The interview findings indicated that teachers carefully selected and modified English learning materials before using them in the classroom. Rather than relying entirely on commercial textbooks, participants reviewed the content to ensure that examples, topics, and cultural references were appropriate for students in the Islamic boarding school. One interview excerpt illustrates this approach:

"Saya tidak langsung menggunakan semua materi dari buku. Biasanya saya melihat dulu apakah contoh atau isi materinya sesuai dengan lingkungan Islamic Boarding School. Kalau ada yang kurang sesuai, saya mengganti contoh atau menyesuaikan supaya lebih dekat dengan kehidupan sehari-hari siswa."

This quotation demonstrates that teachers exercised professional judgment when selecting instructional materials. They did not reject English textbooks altogether but critically evaluated the content before presenting it to students. Such adaptations reflected teachers' awareness that English language learning should remain meaningful without compromising the religious values upheld by the institution.

Document analysis supported this finding. Lesson plans and teaching materials showed that teachers frequently replaced textbook examples with contexts familiar to students, such as the mosque, boarding school activities, Islamic celebrations, and daily interactions within the Islamic Boarding School. Vocabulary exercises, descriptive texts, and speaking activities were also contextualized using examples related to students' religious and social environments. This adaptation ensured that language learning remained authentic while reinforcing students' cultural identity.

Classroom observations further confirmed that teachers consistently contextualized instructional materials. During lessons, they encouraged students to discuss topics closely related to their experiences as boarding school students rather than relying exclusively on examples from Western cultures. As a result, students were able to relate English learning to their own lives more meaningfully.

These findings suggest that teachers viewed curriculum adaptation as an essential aspect of their professional responsibility. Rather than simply delivering textbook content, they actively reconstructed learning materials to create a culturally responsive English learning environment.

Integrating Islamic Values into Classroom Interaction

Besides adapting instructional materials, teachers also integrated Islamic values throughout classroom interaction. The interview data revealed that Islamic values were not presented as additional content but were naturally embedded within teaching practices, classroom discussions, and teacher–student communication. One participant explained:

"Saya tidak mengajarkan nilai-nilai Islam sebagai materi yang terpisah. Nilai itu saya masukkan secara alami ketika menjelaskan materi, memberi contoh, atau saat berdiskusi dengan siswa."

Another participant added:

"Kalau ada materi yang berkaitan dengan budaya asing, saya mengajak siswa berdiskusi. Kami membandingkan dengan budaya atau nilai-nilai Islam supaya mereka bisa memahami perbedaannya tanpa harus langsung menilai bahwa salah satu lebih baik."

These interview findings indicate that teachers adopted a reflective approach to English language teaching. Rather than avoiding cultural differences, they encouraged students to critically examine various perspectives while maintaining their own religious identity. Classroom observations illustrated this practice clearly. Teachers facilitated discussions that invited students to compare cultural practices, identify similarities and differences, and express their opinions respectfully. Throughout these discussions, teachers emphasized tolerance, critical thinking, and respect for diversity while reinforcing Islamic ethical principles. Consequently, English classrooms became spaces where students learned both communicative competence and intercultural awareness.

This finding demonstrates that negotiation occurred not only through material adaptation but also through classroom discourse. Teachers continuously balanced language learning objectives with character education by integrating Islamic perspectives into communicative activities.

Balancing Global English and Local Religious Identity

The interview findings further revealed that teachers perceived English as a global language that could support students' future educational and professional opportunities. However, they also believed that learning English should not diminish students' religious identity or cultural values. One participant stated:

"Bahasa Inggris itu penting karena bisa membuka banyak kesempatan bagi siswa. Tetapi saya selalu mengingatkan bahwa belajar Bahasa Inggris tidak berarti harus meninggalkan identitas atau nilai-nilai Islam yang sudah mereka miliki."

Another participant remarked:

"Saya ingin siswa terbuka terhadap budaya lain, tetapi mereka juga harus punya kemampuan untuk memilih mana yang sesuai dengan nilai yang mereka yakini."

These quotations illustrate that teachers did not position English and Islam as opposing concepts. Instead, they encouraged students to engage with global knowledge while remaining grounded in their own cultural and religious identities. The findings can be interpreted using John W. Berry's Acculturation Theory. Berry argues that individuals may integrate elements of a new culture while maintaining their original cultural identity. Similarly, teachers in this study adopted an integration strategy by embracing English as an international language without abandoning Islamic educational values. Rather than assimilating Western cultural perspectives or rejecting them completely, teachers selectively adapted cultural content to fit the Islamic Boarding School context.

This finding also extends previous studies on English language teaching in Islamic educational institutions. While earlier research has highlighted the integration of Islamic values into English instruction, the present study demonstrates that such integration is not a passive process. Instead, teachers actively negotiate curriculum content, classroom interaction, and pedagogical decisions to create meaningful learning experiences that are both globally relevant and locally appropriate. Overall, the findings indicate that

negotiating English language teaching with Islamic values is an ongoing professional practice rather than a one-time instructional decision.

Teachers continuously evaluated learning materials, adapted classroom interaction, and reflected on students' cultural and religious needs. Through these practices, they successfully balanced the demands of global English education with the educational mission of the Islamic boarding school, illustrating that professional identity was enacted through thoughtful pedagogical negotiation rather than simple curriculum implementation.

Enacting Professional Identity in Classroom Practices and Students' Learning Achievement

The fourth research question explored how English teachers' professional identity was enacted in classroom practices and reflected in students' learning achievement. The findings revealed that teachers' professional identity was consistently demonstrated through their instructional practices, classroom interactions, assessment strategies, and commitment to students' holistic development. Although students' academic achievement was influenced by multiple factors, the data suggest that teachers' professional identity contributed to creating a supportive learning environment that facilitated both language learning and character development.

Professional Identity Reflected in Classroom Practices

The interview findings revealed that teachers believed professional identity should be demonstrated through daily classroom practices rather than merely expressed as personal beliefs. Participants emphasized that students observed not only what teachers taught but also how they interacted, responded to challenges, and managed the learning process. One participant explained:

"Menurut saya, siswa akan lebih mudah percaya kepada gurunya ketika mereka melihat bahwa apa yang kami ajarkan juga kami lakukan. Karena itu saya berusaha menjaga sikap, cara berbicara, dan cara memperlakukan siswa setiap hari."

Another participant stated:

"Saya ingin suasana kelas membuat siswa merasa nyaman untuk belajar. Kalau mereka tidak takut bertanya atau salah, mereka akan lebih percaya diri menggunakan Bahasa Inggris."

These quotations indicate that teachers regarded professional identity as something enacted through everyday pedagogical practice. Professionalism was reflected not only in lesson delivery but also in the way teachers built relationships, encouraged participation, and fostered a positive classroom atmosphere.

The classroom observations strongly supported these interview findings. Throughout the observed lessons, teachers consistently encouraged active participation by inviting students to ask questions, work collaboratively, and express opinions during classroom discussions. Rather than dominating classroom interaction, teachers acted as facilitators who guided students through meaningful learning activities. They also provided constructive feedback, encouraged respectful communication, and demonstrated patience when students encountered learning difficulties. These practices

created a learning environment where students were actively engaged and willing to participate in English learning.

Document analysis further confirmed these observations. Lesson plans included student-centred learning activities, collaborative tasks, reflective questions, and opportunities for communicative language use. Assessment plans also emphasized not only language proficiency but also students' participation, responsibility, and cooperation during classroom activities. This consistency between teachers' beliefs, instructional planning, and classroom implementation indicates that professional identity was enacted systematically rather than incidentally.

These findings suggest that teachers' professional identity functioned as a guiding framework for instructional decision-making. Rather than separating pedagogical competence from personal values, participants integrated both dimensions into their daily teaching practice.

Professional Identity and Students' Learning Achievement

The analysis of students' achievement records provided additional evidence regarding classroom implementation. Overall, students demonstrated satisfactory achievement in English, with most learners meeting or exceeding the minimum learning standards established by the school. While the achievement data alone cannot explain the reasons behind students' performance, they provide complementary evidence that supports the classroom observations and interview findings. One participant reflected:

"Bagi saya, keberhasilan siswa bukan hanya dilihat dari nilai mereka. Yang lebih penting adalah mereka berani menggunakan Bahasa Inggris, mau belajar, dan menunjukkan sikap yang baik selama proses pembelajaran."

Another participant added:

"Kalau siswa merasa dihargai dan nyaman di kelas, biasanya mereka juga lebih semangat mengikuti pelajaran. Dari situ hasil belajar mereka juga cenderung lebih baik."

These quotations demonstrate that teachers defined successful learning in broader terms than academic scores alone. Participants believed that confidence, active participation, responsibility, and positive attitudes were equally important indicators of educational success.

The observation data supported these perceptions. During classroom activities, students participated actively in pair work, group discussions, and oral presentations. Most students showed confidence in responding to teachers' questions and collaborating with peers, suggesting that the classroom environment promoted engagement rather than passive learning. Teachers consistently provided encouragement and constructive feedback, helping students develop confidence in using English despite making occasional language errors.

Taken together, the interview findings, classroom observations, document analysis, and students' achievement records suggest that teachers' professional identity contributed to creating learning environments that supported both academic and personal development. Rather than focusing exclusively on examination results, teachers emphasized meaningful learning experiences that encouraged students to develop English proficiency while maintaining positive attitudes and Islamic values.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that professional identity is not merely an internal perception held by teachers but is continuously enacted through observable instructional practices. Teachers' beliefs regarding moral responsibility, student-centred learning, and Islamic values were consistently reflected in classroom management, instructional strategies, learning activities, and assessment practices. This consistency illustrates that professional identity influenced teachers' pedagogical decisions in meaningful and observable ways.

These findings support Beijaard et al. (2004), who argue that professional identity is expressed through teachers' professional actions as well as their beliefs. In the present study, participants' identity was evident in the alignment between what they believed about teaching and what they actually practiced in the classroom. Such alignment strengthened the authenticity of their professional identity and reinforced students' trust in the learning process.

The findings also resonate with Wenger's (1998) Communities of Practice theory, which views professional identity as emerging through participation in everyday professional practice. Teachers enacted their identity through continuous interaction with students, colleagues, and the institutional culture of the Islamic Boarding School. Their professional identity was therefore not static but continuously reproduced through daily teaching experiences.

Finally, the findings extend Berry's Acculturation Theory by illustrating that teachers' professional identity enabled them to balance global English language education with local Islamic educational values. Rather than treating English instruction and religious identity as competing priorities, teachers integrated both dimensions into their classroom practices. This integration contributed to learning environments that supported students' linguistic competence, character development, and engagement in English learning.

Overall, the findings suggest that professional identity serves as a practical foundation for instructional decision-making rather than merely a personal or theoretical construct. Through the consistent enactment of their beliefs in classroom practice, teachers were able to create learning experiences that reflected the educational mission of the Islamic boarding school while supporting students' academic and personal growth.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the construction of English teachers' professional identity in an Indonesian Islamic boarding school through a qualitative multiple case study. Drawing on interview findings, classroom observations, document analysis, and students' achievement records, the study demonstrates that teachers' professional identity is a dynamic and context-dependent process shaped by the interaction of personal beliefs, professional experiences, institutional culture, and Islamic values. Rather than perceiving themselves solely as language instructors, the participating teachers constructed their professional identity as both English educators and moral mentors responsible for supporting students' linguistic, intellectual, and character development.

The findings further reveal that teachers' professional identity was continuously shaped by multiple interconnected factors. Personal commitment to teaching, accumulated classroom experience, the institutional culture of the Islamic Boarding School, and deeply rooted Islamic values collectively influenced teachers' understanding of professionalism. These factors not only shaped how teachers perceived their

professional roles but also guided their pedagogical decisions and interactions with students. The study therefore highlights that teacher professional identity is not a fixed characteristic but an evolving process that develops through continuous engagement with both the professional community and the educational environment.

Another significant finding concerns the way teachers negotiated English language teaching with Islamic values. Instead of perceiving English language education and religious values as contradictory, teachers actively adapted instructional materials, contextualized learning activities, and facilitated classroom discussions that integrated global perspectives with local religious values. This negotiation enabled teachers to maintain the communicative objectives of English language teaching while preserving the educational philosophy of the Islamic boarding school. These findings demonstrate that professional identity functions as a practical framework that guides teachers in balancing international language education with local cultural and religious expectations.

The study also found that teachers' professional identity was consistently enacted in classroom practice. The alignment between teachers' beliefs, instructional planning, classroom interaction, and assessment practices suggests that professional identity was reflected in observable pedagogical actions rather than remaining an abstract professional concept. Although students' learning achievement cannot be attributed solely to teachers' professional identity, the triangulation of interview, observation, document, and achievement data indicates that teachers' professional identity contributed to creating a supportive learning environment that encouraged active participation, meaningful learning, and positive character development.

The findings contribute to the growing body of literature on teacher professional identity by extending current discussions into the context of Indonesian Islamic boarding schools, where professional responsibilities are closely intertwined with religious and institutional values. While previous studies have primarily examined teacher identity in general educational settings, this study demonstrates how the unique culture of the Islamic Boarding School shapes English teachers' professional identity and influences their instructional practices. The integration of multiple data sources also strengthens the methodological contribution of the study by providing a comprehensive understanding of professional identity construction from multiple perspectives.

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. It was conducted in a single Islamic boarding school with a limited number of participants; therefore, the findings should not be generalized to all educational contexts. In addition, the study focused primarily on teachers' perspectives and classroom practices without exploring students' perceptions of teachers' professional identity. Future studies may involve participants from different Islamic educational institutions, include students' and school leaders' perspectives, or employ longitudinal research designs to examine how teachers' professional identity develops over time.

Overall, this study concludes that English teachers' professional identity in an Indonesian Islamic boarding school is continuously constructed through the interaction of professional competence, institutional expectations, and Islamic values. This identity is not only reflected in teachers' beliefs but also enacted through everyday classroom practices that support students' academic achievement and character development. Consequently, understanding teacher professional identity is essential for developing culturally responsive English language teaching that remains globally relevant while preserving the educational values of the local context.

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