

# Narrative Inquiries into the Agency of Madrasah EFL Teachers in Developing their Professional Identities

Nuri Ma'rifatil Laili<sup>1</sup>, Nunung Suryati<sup>2</sup>, Niamika El Khoiri<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Universitas Negeri Malang

---

## ARTICLE INFORMATION

---

### Article History:

Accepted: 30-11-2022  
Approved: 30-12-2022

---

### Keywords:

*teacher agency;*  
*madrasah teachers;*  
*teachers identity;*  
*professional identity development*

---

### Correspondence Address:

Nuri Ma'rifatil Laili  
Universitas Negeri Malang  
E-mail: lili.rui28@gmail.com

---

---

## ABSTRACT

---

**Abstract:** This paper aims to explore how Madrasah EFL teachers manifest their agency in developing their professional identities. The study is a narrative inquiry involving eight EFL teachers from Madrasah around Indonesia. Data were collected through narrative frames followed by in-depth interviews to clarify blurred stories written in narrative frames. The data were analyzed and elaborated into three themes, the novices, beyond the shell: the journey to be professional teachers, and the lifelong learners. The result shows that the dynamic change enacted by Madrasah EFL teachers can be categorized into three dimensions, the iterational, the practical evaluative, and the projective dimension.

---

Studies on teacher agency have got much attention since teachers have important roles in education reform. They are not only responsible for their duties in classroom settings, but they are demanded to employ agency in making the right decision for educational practice. The growth of education quality requires change which is constructed by agentic educators with their professional decision-making. Therefore, teachers need to empower their teaching performances by investing in their professional agency. Investing in agency means teachers' effort to realize who they are and how they perceive their profession in educational practices (Teng, 2019). Agentic professional teachers influence policy implementation and reform innovation (Gao & Tao, 2020) that determine the ideal education system, especially in language teaching. Taken for example, teachers' professional agency can be acknowledged from their efforts to have reflective on teaching strategies, build rapport with the students, struggle with challenging situations in the school environment, and set up intentional acts to modify and improve students' learning based on their own belief (Teng, 2019).

However, exerting agency needs more effort and is sometimes full of obstacles since it deals with negotiating constraints, conflicts, or dilemmas in terms of desires, intentions, needs, and preferences (Kayi-Aydar, 2019). Teachers need to be aware that being teachers is not only a job but a profession. They should perform their agency to make sense of what they have done as EFL teachers. Therefore, the exercising of teachers' agency will determine whether language teachers will overcome the problems and be successful in emerging their professional identity, or they will give up and decide to quit the struggle of being professional.

Numerous studies on teachers' agency have been conducted by some experts covering the theoretical understanding of agency and identity development (see, e.g., Duff, 2012; Priestley, Biesta, & Robinson, 2015; Buchanan, 2015). In line with teachers' agency, which affects the development of professional identities, Kayi-Aidar (2019) explains how distinct elements, such as race, ethnicity, language background, and power, interconnect as teachers make choices and form professional identities. The struggle to negotiate any constraints or hindrances will be valuable in constructing teachers' professional identities. However, the result of the study conducted by Kayi-Aidar cannot be generalized since it was only a case study that focuses on a Hispanic language teacher. Therefore, to extend the previous findings, the present study will examine how EFL teachers exert their agency on their professional identities in the wider area involving a group of language teachers from Islamic School (*Madrasah*) in Indonesia.

Burgees (2012) emphasizes that agency is a key factor in the development of initial careers for teachers' professional identities. She examined Aboriginal teachers in enacting agency, which was influenced by their personal experience and their reaction to the school context. Other studies on teachers' agencies have been conducted by Vähäsantanen (2015), Lai, Li, and Gong (2015), and McKay (2016), which reported that professional agency emerges as a fundamental element for the development of professional identity. All studies observed the agency of minority teachers, which influences their professional identities in cross-cultural teaching contexts. The exercise of agency focuses on the interaction between social factors, including school structure, cultural system, and the associated power relations, and personal resources, including professional identity, self-imposed roles, confidence, and competencies shaped by their past and present experience (Lai et al., 2016)

Another study of agency highlighted that agency can be seen as the psychological response which refers to reactions to challenging conditions, and also as the sociocultural response in negotiating the capability to act meaningfully and intentionally (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998) as cited in Gülmez (2019). Agency performs when teachers have a positive mindset that there must be several options to focus on what can work rather than what is not working (Brown & Lee, 2015). Problematic environments in their daily practices potentially lead the teachers to occupy transformative roles to which they possess or show agency. Hence, enacting agency starts from the smallest things by making some small changes in teaching. Taken for an example, teachers who have the capability to act purposefully within the schooling environment in such a way will influence student outcomes (McKay, 2016). By contrast, the study of teacher agency in the Indonesian context only focuses on teacher engagement with the curriculum aspect. Astriningsih (2019) examined teacher agency in relation to curriculum implementation. She assumed there is a different type of agency between teachers from the private and public schools in coping with a new curriculum. Teachers from private schools tend to focus on the meaning of making process in teaching. However, EFL teachers from public schools are required to meet the demand set by the policymakers.

Referring to the definition of professional agency, teachers' capacity to take control of their teaching has an essential effect on successful language teaching (Teng, 2019). The agency is also a crucial aspect that determines the way language teachers develop their professional decision-making. In other words, all teachers should perform their best performance within their working setting as a significant process in their professional identity development. They are demanded to be agents of change (Sang, 2020) in school improvement, curriculum development, classroom teaching, and learning engagement.

Prabandari (2020) mentioned several factors which give influence to teacher identity development, such as teachers' learning, knowledge, cognition, and emotion, and teachers' past experience. Therefore, teachers should have a reflective habit to empower their capacity in making decisions and developing their professional identity. Considering an important element of teacher identity development, Siswanto & Kuswando (2020) explained that teacher identity construction is the process of making meaning of how teachers define or redefine themselves. Developing identity requires authority, integrity, and strong will from the teachers, especially a sense of agency in resisting to conflict and tension.

Dealing with teachers' acts in response to particular situations or constrain in their working setting, there are several challenges faced by EFL teachers. The most common problems confronted by EFL teachers are related to the shortage of professional development, limited teacher training programs, and digital literacy issues (Songbatumis, 2017). The lack of facilities, resources, and materials also becomes a crucial issue for many EFL teachers in Indonesia. The challenges get even bigger for Madrasah EFL teachers. Amid the challenging situation faced by many Madrasah EFL teachers, they have similar responsibilities to fulfil various demands for successful and efficient professional learning. The condition should be considered an important issue that Madrasah EFL teachers need some attention for education reform so that the ideal education system can be realized.

Misdi (2017) states that teachers' and learners' voices at Madrasahs still lack attention in both school and instructional decision-making. The database of Madrasah from the platform <http://emispendis.kemenag.go.id> shows that there are more than 370.000 teachers in Islamic Junior High Schools (MTs) and 190.000 teachers in Islamic Senior High Schools (MA). Despite the large number of Madrasah teachers, they tend to be ignored, underestimated, and discriminated to other teachers from public schools or vocational high schools (Misdi, 2017). Fajaryani, et al. (2018) categorized two major challenges faced by EFL Madrasah teachers in teaching English, that is academic and non-academic factors. The academic factor refers to students' demotivation and low students' abilities. Further, non-academic factor consists of a crowded classroom, lack of facilities, socio-economic, school management, and curriculum.

In order to confirm the similar perception of *Madrasah* EFL teachers, the researcher initially conducted a preliminary study of the prospective EFL teachers who were pursuing their master's degrees at Universitas Negeri Malang. The researcher observed and made unstructured interviews to approve the perception of Madrasah EFL teachers. The result of the preliminary study stated that most EFL teachers at Madrasah had similar conditions related to the working environment and local policy issues that affect their performance. Most of them felt lacking attention though they got more complicated problems compared to teachers in public schools, as most of their students are from middle-low proficiency, the schools often have insufficient facilities, and they are rarely engaged in the workshop or teacher training programs arranged by the local policy maker.

Most Madrasah, especially the private ones, accept students from various economic, social, and aptitude backgrounds. Some students enroll at Madrasah because they are not accepted in their favorite institutions or public schools. Some of them think that Madrasah offers an affordable education that can be accepted by all societal levels, and some others learn at Madrasah only for their parents' sake or for distance consideration. However, still many people believe that studying at Madrasah will be useful in sharpening their Islamic and science or general knowledge. The various levels of students become a challenge for language teachers to give meaningful tasks that can be accepted by all students from different proficiency levels.

Moreover, the demand for being technology literate confronting the 4.0 era becomes contradictory to the fact that many Madrasahs still have insufficient facilities, textbooks, or even infrastructure. The absence of training, workshop, and seminar given by the local authorities, also become a constraint for language teachers at Madrasah to be an agent of change in developing their professional identities. The policy of teacher certification programs also becomes a striking gap between teachers under the ministry of education and religious affair. Therefore, teachers must be creative, innovative, and independent to be professional by making sense of their experiences.

Another factor that influences language teacher performance at Madrasah is the policy related to the time allotment for English subject. Madrasah has more subjects than public schools, so it is difficult to give additional time for English subject, especially at Islamic senior high schools or Madrasah Aliyah (MA) which has only two sessions in the first implementation of K-13 then it was changed to three sessions based on KMA 184 year 2019. The curriculum policy related to the reduced time English lesson offers more challenges (Lestari, 2019) to parents, students, and schools. In addition, most Madrasah EFL teachers feel under-pressured whether they have to focus on the purpose of teaching language for communication or for encouraging their students to get good scores in the final examination, Olympiads, or other proficiency tests. The lack of resources, an overloaded curriculum, time constraints, and the multiple complex demands on teachers mean that such responsibilities are often difficult and may not be fulfilled. By responding to this important call, the present study will examine how language teachers at Madrasah exercise their agency to achieve the level of being professional teachers.

## METHOD

The study employed a narrative inquiry research design to understand the experience of Madrasah EFL teachers. Narrative research involves drawing portraits of individuals and documenting their voices and their visions within social and cultural contexts (Creswell, 2012). In line with the research design, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) interpret narrative inquiry as a study that aims to understand an experience through stories. It is one of the important research designs which give a contribution to the development of self-study of teaching and teacher education (Craig, 2011).

The procedure of the study started by using digital questionnaires as a preliminary study to identify the phenomenon of agentic acts exerted by Madrasah EFL teachers. The questionnaire let Madrasah EFL teachers share their personal information and give checklists of some problems or conditions that matched their life history. Furthermore, the questionnaire consisted of a list of professional development activities that have been done by EFL Madrasah teachers. The questionnaires also explained what are the activities that should be completed if EFL teachers agreed to be the participants of the study, which are by writing the story in narrative frames and doing in-depth interviews.

The study involved eight Madrasah EFL teachers who got a scholarship program for master English Language Teaching in 2019 funded by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. There were fourteen Madrasah EFL teachers who were targeted in this study. However, only eight teachers met the subject selection criteria to be the subject of the study. To prevent vulnerability to selection bias, there were some criteria that should be set in the process of subject selection: 1) Madrasah EFL teachers who were attending a master program scholarship held by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2019 at Universitas Negeri Malang; 2) having more than five years as Madrasah EFL teachers, 3) actively engage in several activities in developing their professional identities; and 4) willing to follow all the steps of the study, starting from filling the digital questionnaire, writing a narrative story, engaging in a depth-interview, and reviewing the compiled story.

The process of collecting stories was started by explaining the purpose of the study and the procedure of writing on narrative frames. The teachers were asked to complete the narrative frames either in English or Bahasa Indonesia. Because asking individuals to write was a challenging task, the information collected from the narrative frames was limited. Therefore, the researcher asked the participant to do in depth-interview to get the real and complete story. The interview lasted around 20 – 40 minutes by using various ways, such as via meeting conference, face-to-face, and voice notes (from WhatsApp Messaging). The information gained from the interviews included clarification from the result of digital questionnaires and narrative frames, and it collected more information that was still missing.

The result of stories collected from Madrasah EFL teachers became the starting point for the researcher to retell or remap the story. Since narrative inquiry belongs to qualitative research, it uses qualitative data analysis which requires the researcher to move back and forth between narrative data, codes, themes, and theoretical underpinning (Creswell, 2012). The process of restorying was started by examining narrative data from the written story of the narrative frame. In this phase, some new stories were added by adding similar points from the result of in-depth interviews. After that, the researcher identified the key elements and arranged them in chronological order from the past, present, and future experiences. In analyzing the data, discourse markers played, literary elements of setting, characters, actions, problem, and resolution also became important points in this stage. Furthermore, the themes were categorized based on the theory of teacher agency and professional identities which used three dimensions of teacher agency as proposed by Priestly et. al (2015).

After restorying process finished, the new version of the narration was given back to the owner of the story to verify whether the frame really represented their stories. They were requested to revise or give further information when they found the stories were not as they wished. When all the teachers agreed with the new version, then the narrative data was analyzed by using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the process of categorization and classification of the stories in which the data was coded and classified based on the themes.

## FINDINGS

Referring to the research question “how did Madrasah EFL teachers enact their agency in the development of professional identities?”, the teachers’ experiences are sketched into three themes that represent the stream of the stories. The first theme is “the novices”, “beyond the shell: the journey to be professional teachers”, and “lifelong learners”.

### Theme 1: The Novices

Teaching English at Madrasah is considered something challenging in which teachers have to manage the class properly in a complex situation. The challenge gets even bigger for EFL teachers since they have to integrate English subjects into the Islamic context in a limited time. Madrasah has more subjects compared to public institutions under the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendiknas) so it is almost impossible to give additional sessions for a particular subject, especially English. Based on the results of a preliminary study through digital questionnaires, the challenges faced by Madrasah EFL teachers can be explained as follows:

**Table1. The challenges faced by Madrasah EFL Teacher**

Challenges (Cha)	Percentage
1. Big Class	62,5%
2. Heterogeneous students	87,5%
3. Limited time allotment	50%
4. Lack of facilities	50%
5. Lack of professional development program	28%
6. Administrative tasks	78%

The table shows that Madrasah EFL teachers encountered similar challenges in some elements. As the initial years for novice teachers are considered a “transition shock” or a “not knowing” period (Corcoran in Al-Naimi, 2020), Madrasah EFL teachers found out that teaching is quite different from the real classroom. The most significant challenge was the heterogeneous students. Most Madrasahs accepted all students from various levels. Six of eight teachers mentioned their Madrasahs did not have strict criteria for selecting prospective students. All students from various backgrounds could be accepted so that everyone got the same chance to have an education right. Therefore, teachers were also demanded to adjust the curricula so they could cover all students’ needs from various levels.

The second challenge faced by Madrasah EFL teachers was the number of administrative tasks. Most Madrasah EFL teachers grumbled as they could not focus on their classroom if the government asked them to deal with a pile of paper works. Most teachers tried to simplify their lesson plans and adapt worksheets from available platforms. Therefore, they would not deal much with paper tasks.

The lack of facilities and low-motivated students become a common challenge at Madrasah, especially the private ones. Most teachers mentioned that they have been teaching at Madrasah which was not well-equipped. Though some of them were teaching at public Madrasah, they explained that their school was not as great as at the present time. They experienced a difficult time at the very beginning of their teaching experience. However, other teachers even get problems regarding facilities until now.

The result of the questionnaires was slightly shocking on point five. The table shows teachers did not have any problem with the number of professional development programs. However, when they were investigated through deep interviews, it was found that the regional government did not provide adequate training or workshops for Madrasah EFL teachers. The number of training or other professional development programs was not sufficient or even non-existent, but EFL teachers have a strong willingness to learn and update their competencies in another way. All teachers looked for new information autonomously by participating in any available online seminars, workshops, or training. Besides, some teachers also asked their friends from other institutions related to teaching strategies or recent issues of teaching language.

The issue of the Professional Education Program (PPG) for institutions under the Ministry of Religious Affairs is not only a constraint from the policymakers that burdens Madrasah EFL teachers. Anything related to the curriculum changes also become a crucial tension that should be coped with in the right way. The transition of the new curriculum at the present time mostly deals with administrative tasks and time allotment. The time allocation is considered important since it refers to the chance to give students many exposures to English. However, some teachers, especially those who teach at the senior high school level (Madrasah Aliyah) said that the time is not enough for the students. They only have one meeting or two sessions for a week.

Referring to the previous challenges which are related to the working environment and the curriculum, there is an exception for a participant who teaches at a well-known favorite institution. He did not find similar conditions as the other participants, such as the big class, heterogeneous students, the lack of facilities, and even the number of professional development programs because his school is one of the elite institutions that is directly managed and supervised by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Therefore, it has sophisticated facilities and there is an annual program that is held by the same institutions around Indonesia. However, he has their own problem which is the high demand to train the students in any competitions and to ensure the students can reach high scores both in national examinations or for university admission.

The hardest situation faced by Madrasah EFL teachers was also caused by the individuals, who were not familiar with the technology or recent teaching methods and strategies. T1 narrated that she could not access the internet and T3 told about their first experience in which technology still became expensive stuff and could not be accessed by all people. The challenge

caused by the individuals also refers to the lack of self-confidence since they were just graduated from the university, hence they tended to have less experience especially in applying several teaching methods and techniques.

As novice teachers, teachers who teach with less than five years of teaching experience, they have problems not only with pedagogical aspects, but the social life also became a challenge for Madrasah EFL teachers. The relationship might not be as well as at the beginning of the teaching experience. Only one teacher had an unfavorable relationship with their colleagues. However, the rest of the participants agreed that they have good support systems in their working environment. They learned many things from their superiors and make good collaborations with the seniors. Furthermore, they are often engaged in some agendas that should be conducted collaboratively, such as the commemoration of Islamic days or national events.

The previous explanation confirms that all Madrasah EFL teachers had various challenging situations dealing with the individuals, the workplaces dealing with the environment and the policy system, and their social relationships. They realized that they should not just accept their current situation but they had to find solutions to their limitations and constraints. They concerned much on their responsibility to make English instruction at their Madrasah become meaningful activities.

### Theme 2: Beyond the shell - the journey to be professional teachers

All the participants believed that they need identity transformation to increase teachers' proficiency, and enhance their knowledge and skills throughout their carrier. Although not all the participants were certified because the selection of the Teachers Professional Education Program (PPG) for the institution under the Ministry of Religious Affairs was relatively strict, they still have to take another path to develop their competencies and empower their capacity to be professional teachers. There are several activities that Madrasah EFL teachers did as their struggle to exert a higher degree of professionalism within their working setting, such as participating in any professional development programs, engaging in the teachers' forum (MGMP), or attending conferences and courses. The table below presents the agentive acts taken by Madrasah EFL teachers to enhance their professional identities.

**Table 2. Agentive acts taken by Madrasah EFL Teachers**

Agentive Acts (AA)	Percentage
1. Reading or studying articles and books	75%
2. Developing teaching media	75%
3. Attending conferences and course	75%
4. Doing research or publishing articles	25%
5. Discussing ideas with peers	75%
6. Reflecting on teaching practice	25%
7. Attending teachers' forum (MGMP)	87%
8. Mentoring or training other teachers	25%
9. Creating learning innovation	37%
10. Other professional development programs	62%

All the participants carried out a number of agentive acts to better equip themselves as professional teachers. The best action done by Madrasah EFL teachers is joining the teachers' forum or MGMP which enables them to share and keep up to date with the latest trends and issues in English language teaching. T3 told about her position on the teachers' forum which is not only as the participant but also as the mentor for her colleagues. She positioned herself as a mentor or presenter willing to share her knowledge with her colleagues. Teachers' forums are conducted in various situations, taken for example T3 mentioned that she contributed to the teachers' forum at the regency level but T6 joined the teachers' forum at the school level. Only three teachers were active in the teachers' forum arranged by the local institution and the rest participated in unstructured programs. It means that the teachers' forum has a valuable impact on teaching capacity though it is held in the smallest scope that is at the school area which involved some teachers who teach the same subjects.

The following professional agentive acts taken by the participants are related to looking for new information, such as reading references about ELT and attending training or workshops. The main sources of information are books and articles which can be freely accessed from the internet or other electronic devices such as television, YouTube, or Podcasts.

Besides, Madrasah EFL teachers attended various training or workshops that invested in teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies. They learned many things including the way to engage with technology and how to use technology in their classroom. Teachers also make use of technology to learn how to develop teaching media. They assumed that it would be more satisfied when they successfully made their own learning resources or media that meet their students' needs. Besides, they believed that their students could easily master the lesson well since it has been modified and adjusted to their students.

'I decided to learn more about how to be digital literate so I could find many kinds of media or other learning resources. I join some webinars on how to manage online classes, how to create online learning resources, and how to improve my professional and pedagogical competencies.' (AA-T1)

'I also participated in various training to upgrade my skill in creating such interactive, innovative, and fun learning media' (AA-T4)

T1 and T4 confirmed that technology is meaning too much for teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to support and transform education in many ways. T4 focused on creating and modifying attractive media while T1 learned not only the way to make use of technology but the methods and strategies for managing the class as well. They expressed concern about how they keep up with developments in technology to create innovative learning spaces. Some Madrasah EFL teachers created various innovations by using technology. Apart from the powerful technology that has profoundly changed our education system, other fields of training and workshops are dealing with pedagogical knowledge, such as classroom management, teaching strategies, assessment method, etc.

Teachers also considered training and workshops as crucial aspects to develop teachers' professional agency. However, being active and consistent in those programs was not easy due to some factors like the time barrier or the high cost. EFL Madrasah teachers were challenged to be more selective and come up with as many solutions as they can do, such as selecting online workshops which enabled them to adjust their time or looking for high-quality programs which were free of charge.

Teachers' transformation in terms of their capacity in selecting appropriate teaching methods and developing innovative learning media is the outcome of self-reflection in various ways. Some teachers use class observation, and some of them use a reflective journal to determine the best practice in the classroom. They tried to know the problem in their classroom and find several possible techniques or methods as the solution. In addition, peer supervision also becomes an inspirational path as teaching reflection as T6 described below:

'I observed the way my senior taught English, and I found that some methods they used were too old and boring. Therefore, I opened my book and looked for different methods and strategies that would make my class become more interesting'. (AA-T6)

Other professional development programs achieved by Madrasah EFL teachers refers to some activities, such as assessing their professional competence, having extensive listening, peer discussion to improve professionalism, accessing teaching resources for classroom purposes, and so on. T2 explained that assessing English proficiency should be done by EFL teachers because they have to master the content knowledge. They did not want to be considered as less knowledgeable than his students because their students are way ahead of the teacher in the term or era and technology. Besides, EFL teachers should be expert in English knowledge because they are the most important resource for their students.

Being persistent on several development programs enable Madrasah EFL teachers to read and critically reflect on their past experience and as the commitment that they have understood the philosophy of professional teachers. If teachers are able to reflect to their prior experience, they will qualify to make better projection for their future and determine the correct path that should be taken to develop their future career.

'Making changes to my teaching performance as EFL teachers is something that should be done by having more awareness to the development of my profession.' (TR-T1)

'Compared to the first three years of my experiences as an EFL teacher, I felt that I am building my capacity as a professional English teacher.' (TR-T3)

Teachers' reflections narrated above indicate that the participants knew what professional teachers should transform into the development and maintenance of professional expertise. Besides, it expands teachers' sense of professional engagement behaviors, professional attitude to work, professional roles, and professional knowledge or skills. The more they learn, the more they know what they should do to develop their capacity. One of the participants also mentioned that he personally changed from a dictator teacher to a salience teacher who has a better understanding of his students.

The agentic acts in developing professional identities also involve the social aspect of EFL teachers. Teachers are not only good in improving their skills, but they have to build good relationships with their colleagues, their students' parents, and even the local policymaker. Teachers have to understand their position in the society, especially with other Madrasah teachers.

'However, not only to be competent in professional chores, but a teacher also needs to build good relationships with the colleagues. There are many events that should be handled collaboratively by teachers in a particular institution, such as students' admission, graduation, the commemoration of both national and Islamic days, and so on. Therefore, I always respect the elders and keep in touch with younger though we have different educational backgrounds'. (SS-T1)

All the agentic acts accomplished by Madrasah EFL teachers related to the professional or the subject knowledge, pedagogical, and social competencies bring them to the personal transformation who insist the professional beliefs as the narratives follow:

'As professional teachers, we should have good competencies, both pedagogical and professional competencies. We need to understand the materials, and the students' characteristics including their learning styles, and it is also recommended to have an international standard of English proficiency test to measure our language skills' (TP-T2)

‘As professional teachers, we have to upgrade our skills and never be satisfied with what we have now. Personally, the more I learn the more I feel that I need to broaden my knowledge, especially engaging with technology. Therefore, I never stop learning because I like something new to support my work as a professional English teacher. (TP-5)

Teachers’ perceptions summarized above proved a good understanding of the beliefs and values of professional identity that should be carried out by Madrasah EFL teachers. Among those activities, all the participants agreed that the most significant path along their professional journey was the time when they were accepted on a scholarship funded by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 2019 to continue their studies for masters’ degree.

‘I feel more confident because my competencies and skills have much improved, especially when I was accepted in a scholarship program given by the ministry of religious affairs in 2019.’ (AA-T1)

The scholarship program was a turning point for Madrasah EFL teachers in developing their professional identity in which they got new insights into pedagogical skills, and subject knowledge. All teachers granted that there were many new things they got during their master’s degree program. They became more confident because they enhanced their knowledge, especially the new trends and issues in English language teaching. Besides, they have to put more personal effort into the learning process and engage on their own in any program offered during their study. This situation improved new personal and professional skills, such as independence, self-motivation, time management and persistence. There are some new habits gained after pursuing master’s degree programs, for example teachers exposed themselves to scientific research articles and started conducting research. In the past, teachers observed their students and wrote the students’ progress on their personal notes with no follow-up activity or written report. Now they can present their observation into the article and publish it on some reputable journal publishers.

Accomplishing several professional development program as the effort of Madrasah EFL teachers in manifesting their agency proved that they were proud to be Madrasah teachers. Their love for Madrasah creates a sense of belonging and a strong willingness to dedicate their energy, their thought, and their time to Madrasah development as the following narratives.

‘Although I still don’t get the chance to join the certification program, my body and soul are totally dedicated to Madrasah’. (TP-T1)

‘As a certified teacher, I dedicated my life to my Madrasah. My headmaster asked me to be the coordinator of the English teacher forum at my school’. (TP-T3)

Those elaborations concluded that Madrasah EFL teachers who have strong beliefs about their capacity will take professional actions toward their personal or contextual challenges. They have successfully enacted their agency and empowered their capacity to the level of professionalism in various ways.

### **Theme 3: Lifelong Learners**

Referring to all the challenges and the agentic acts that the teachers have been passing through, they felt they should not stop at their present achievement. All the participants shared their hopes at the end of the narratives. They noticed that there should be continuity and consistency in making education reform. Therefore, teachers should make dynamic changes in manifesting their agency as the narratives follow:

‘I will sharpen my literation skill to enrich my references and obtain new information related to the various techniques and strategies in language teaching. Moreover, I need to conduct self-evaluations of teaching regularly. By doing an evaluation or reflection on my teaching performance, I can find my weaknesses that should be improved so that I will be a better teacher in the future.’ (TAs-T4)

‘I am going to try to join any activities which can develop my competencies and do reflections on my teaching performance so I can continuously improve my teaching. By learning from the limitation, teachers will be able to detect the problem in their instructional setting.’ (TAs-T5)

One important point perceived by Madrasah EFL teachers was as EFL teachers, they should never stop learning. T4 argued teachers should refresh their academic skills and improve their pedagogical skills to boost their self-confidence in their profession. T5 focused on class reflection to know their weaknesses and strengths for future improvement. There is always something new to learn that can promote and enhance their professionalism by observing and reflecting on their teaching performances, looking for new information by participating in various professional development programs, and even planning to continue their studies at a higher level.

All participants valued taking part in any development programs, such as teachers’ forums, seminars, or training, which have a significant impact on developing their professional identities. In addition, they build a strong commitment to be consistent and persistent in making changes and determining professional agency for their career as EFL teachers. The following table describe the summary of the findings on teachers’ agentic behaviors.

**Table 3. The summary of the Findings on Teachers Agency**

Instruments	Themes	Categories	Data	Participants
NF1	<b>The novices:</b>	Challenges of being Madrasah EFL Teachers	Individuals Working Environment/ Situation Social relationship	
NF2	The <i>iterational</i> dimension - Teachers' experiences in their initial career	The factor of difficulties or challenges	<b>Individuals:</b> Less experienced (include of technology and teaching methods) Lack of professional development program Immaturity emotion <b>Working Environment/ Situation:</b> Big Class Heterogeneous students Limited time allotment Lack of facilities Curriculum/ Administrative tasks Institution demand  <b>Social Relationship:</b> Have social constrain with colleagues	T1, T3, T4, T5, T7, T8 T1, T2, T3 T6, T8 T2, T3, T5 T1, T2, T5, T7 T4 T1, T2, T3, T7 T3, T4, T6 T6, T8 T2
NF3	<b>Beyond the shell: the journey to be professional teachers</b>  The practical-evaluative dimension - Teachers' efforts to develop their professional agency	Agentic acts (Participating in any professional development programs)	1. Looking for new information (reading articles or books, attending seminars or workshops, 2. Cooperation with colleagues (attending teachers' forums, discussing ideas with peers, and mentoring others) 3. Researching or publishing articles or books 4. Teaching innovation (reflecting on teaching practices, developing teaching media) 5. Others (watching podcasts or YouTube, assessing skills, extensive listening, accessing teaching resources for the classroom)	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T7 T1, T2, T3, T5, T6, T7 T1, T3, T4, T5 T1, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7 T2, T3, T4
NF5		Teachers' Reflection	Philosophy of the profession: (Professional attitude to work, professional roles, professional knowledge/ skills)	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8
NF4, NF6		Teachers' Perception of professional identity	Five indicators of teachers' professional identity (self-efficacy, professional commitment, task orientation, work motivation, and future perspective)	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8
NF7	<b>Lifelong Learners</b> The projective dimension – Teachers' capacity in projecting their future trajectories	Viewing now and future direction	Continuing teachers' professional development programs Aspiration for professional teachers demands	T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, T8

## DISCUSSION

Referring to the main theory of an ecological approach to professional agency proposed by Priestley, et al. (2015), this discussion is divided into three main parts, 1) iterational dimension, 2) practical evaluative, and 3) projective dimension. The iterational dimension refers to teachers' professional histories which are suitable to theme 1 (the novices) that elaborates on teachers' initial careers. The practical evaluative dimension encompasses the teachers' capacity to make professional decisions among the alternative possible actions concerning the challenges and constrain of the current situation. It relates to theme 2 (beyond the shell: the journey to be professional teachers) which clearly described various agentic acts taken by Madrasah EFL teachers within their context in developing professional identities. The projective dimension entails teachers' action regarding the possible future trajectory that is in line with theme 3 (the lifelong learners).

### Theme 1: The Novices (The iterational dimension)

The findings revealed the life histories of Madrasah EFL teachers at the beginning of their profession. It elaborates on how different aspects, such as individual, social skills, and working environment, shape teachers' agency. The challenges which come from the individuals refer to the unpreparedness of EFL teachers because of the lack of experience, knowledge of class management, and emotional instability. The professional challenge is common for novice teachers (AL-Naimi et al., 2020) in



which teachers feel nervous at the beginning of teaching because they have less experience in the term of managing the class and applying various teaching strategies, especially dealing with the use of technology.

At the beginning of their teaching career, they never got involved in any development programs arranged by the local government. The program was only intended for the prominent institution because of its limitation. The number of Madrasah EFL teachers was too big compared to the program arranged by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Therefore, most of the participants learned from the experience and knowledge they acquired during their teaching profession.

In addition, some of them had difficulty managing their emotion and become too strict with their students. They could not get the attention of their students, which made the learning process an awkward situation. Besides, they lacked self-confidence and self-efficacy beliefs that affect their performance in developing their professional agency. This phenomenon leads novice teachers to reflect on their teaching practices and make transformations in their behavior to be salience teachers who are successful in managing their personal emotions and pedagogic skill.

The challenge dealing with the working environment is caused by several factors, 1) the big classes, 2) the heterogeneous students, 3) the number of administrative tasks, 4) the curriculum, 5) the lack of facilities, 6) the institution/ local policy, and 7) the institution demands. The challenges related to the working setting can be categorized into two areas, the reach institution, and the common institution.

The reach institution refers to a public Madrasah that is well-equipped and well-managed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Teachers who teach at this institution relatively have less challenge compared to the teachers from the common institution. The challenges encountered by EFL teachers from institutions with superior programs only deal with the institution's demands. They felt that they had a big burden in accomplishing their work commitment to achieve targeted scores. They were demanded to make the students pass any national or international tests for any purpose, such as Olympiads, university admission tests, and scholarships.

On other hand, the challenges faced by Madrasah EFL teachers in common institutions are relatively bigger because it deals with many aspects such as overcrowded classes, heterogeneous students, the number of administrative works, curriculum changes, the lack of facilities, and the local policy. Although all teachers had many challenges during their beginning experience, they endeavor proactively to look for solutions to achieve professional development conditions by showing several agentive acts.

Referring to the theory proposed by Ruohotie-Lythy & Moate (2016), the agentive acts taken by Madrasah EFL teachers in developing their professional identities can be categorized as renegotiating the agency. It refers to the progress in which teachers develop their professional identities because of the current situation, which can be additive development or transformative development. Additive development belongs to teachers from the reach institutions where teachers have to develop their professional identity because of the consequence of their profession or the demands of the school. Meanwhile, teachers from common Madrasah enhance their professional competences in transformative development, which allow more purposeful agency in the environment.

In other words, Madrasah EFL teachers from the reach institutions were constrained to manifest their agentic behavior compared to EFL teachers from common institutions who had much freedom fostering their agentic choice and action. Overall, Madrasah EFL teachers have strong beliefs in themselves that they have personal capacities to enact their agentive roles so that they passionately make professional decisions in their repertoire to conquer all challenges at hand.

### **Theme 2: Beyond the shell (The practical evaluative dimension)**

The finding confirmed that Madrasah EFL teachers showed various efforts to develop their capacity as professional teachers. They encounter challenges at the beginning of their career and decide to have transformations in personal, professional, pedagogical, and social aspects. During developing their professional identity, Madrasah EFL teachers revealed some indicators of agentic behavior, namely self-efficacy, professional commitment, task orientation, work motivation, and future perspective.

#### **Self-efficacy**

Self-efficacy becomes the crucial element that contributes to professional identity development. All Madrasah EFL teachers developed their self-efficacy after several years of becoming teachers. They believed they become more efficacious after doing several agentive acts that totally change them from novices to experienced teachers. They believed that they successfully improved their capabilities in developing their competencies and solving the problems in teaching English. This condition is related to the individual's capacity to achieve a particular purpose by accomplishing several purposeful tasks. In addition, their self-confidence leads them to have better performance, motivation, persistence (Chin et al., 2020), and be goal-oriented.

Self-efficacy was built from different points of view, which depends on several factors, such as the working environment and the goal set by the individuals. Teachers who can figure out their weaknesses or unsupported situations will find possible chances to exercise their agency, which means they will make a choice that promotes their self-efficacy and their professional identity. Therefore, their decision to do several professional development programs in order to enhance their competencies was a fabulous path in their journey to be professional teachers.

### **Professional Commitment**

Another indicator of teachers' professional identity development is the strong commitment possessed by Madrasah EFL teachers, which has been shown in their narratives. Teachers who exercise their agency have a professional commitment that shapes their 'ideal selves'. The ideal selves mean what EFL teachers want or should be in their profession. All teachers know that there are some criteria that professional teachers should do, such as becoming open-minded, never stopping learning, and doing reflective tasks. The more teachers adjust their competencies to the present condition, the best version of EFL teachers will meet the definition of 'ideal selves' and lead them to their professional satisfaction and identity.

Meihami (2021) explains that teachers should complete several goals to help them in developing their professional commitment, such as relational goals, mastery goals, and ability-approach goals. Relational goals can be accomplished through good interaction with colleagues, a close rapport with the students, or social reciprocity. It is suitable for teachers' efforts in building good social skills for all the components of the Madrasah institution. They are often engaged in many programs involving collaboration among colleagues, students, students' parents, and even the school committee and the school board.

Mastery goals mean teachers should improve their professional knowledge, both pedagogical and content knowledge to enhance their domain as EFL teachers. In this context, Madrasah EFL teachers tried hard to look for new information and adjust their capacity, such as participating in seminars or workshops, reading books or articles, joining teachers' forums (MGMP), and training their language proficiency.

Professional commitment also can be built if EFL teachers have strong ownership of the institution. The findings showed that all participants are proud of their profession as Madrasah EFL teachers. Besides, the sense of ownership leads EFL teachers to serve the education field wholeheartedly. They gave their best to their career, though they faced various challenges within their educational context.

### **Task Orientation**

A focused task orientation can boost EFL teachers' professional identity. The narratives showed that teachers' agency helped EFL teachers to develop their task orientation beliefs. As cited by Meihami (2021), teachers will perform various parts, including decision-maker and syllabus designers (Hanks, 2017). Teachers must be able to make a priority in determining the valuable tasks to advance their teaching performance. Therefore, making correct decisions in selecting purposeful tasks can lead to teachers' professional identity development.

Most of the participants have clearly explained the challenges found at their Madrasah to provide the right solution, which led to their professional identity development. In this context, their agentive behavior to develop their professional identities can be associated with the task orientation process. It indicates that they understood teaching principles to orient their charge purposefully. Therefore, a purposeful task orientation can be considered as a bridge to reach teachers' professional identity development.

### **Work Motivation**

Motivation is the crucial key for individuals to reach their goals or dream since it allows us to change our mindset and behavior and develop our competencies. Teachers with strong motivation can use their professional knowledge in teaching or search for new information to solve their problems in the classroom setting. Furthermore, powerful motivation leads EFL teachers at Madrasah to improve their teaching performances and manifest their professional agency. In conclusion, only strong motivated teachers can negotiate the challenges and develop their professional identity.

### **Future perspective**

The finding showed all teachers had similar decisions and that they should never stop developing their competencies, both professional and pedagogical. Teaching experience brings EFL teachers to have future perspectives on different issues. Therefore, teachers who have positive experiences would be motivated to create a future with professional negotiation, performances, and activities (Meihami, 2021), to develop their professional identity.

### **Theme 3: Lifelong Learners (The projective Dimension)**

As discussed earlier, the professional identity developed by Madrasah EFL teachers was an ongoing process. Gülmez (2019) argued that lifelong learners empower agent teachers to have consistent and systematic actions to look for learning opportunities. Besides, they should reflect on and evaluate their teaching performance regularly.

Teachers' agency and professional identity development of Madrasah EFL teachers were not static and had no end. They learned from their past experience, which was mostly bitter for the most part, and performed better to be competent teachers. They never gave up to be knowledge hunters in which they look for new insights related to language teaching, starting by joining seminars, and workshops, and even continuing their studies at a higher level. The more they learn new things, the more they felt a craving for knowledge. The knowledge they got in the magister program gave them self-confidence and empowerment in the education practice, particularly in English language teaching.

## CONCLUSION

To sum up, the result of the previous analysis confirmed that Madrasah EFL teachers' agency in developing their professional identities involved the experiences from the past, engagement with the present, and the projection toward the future. Although they have different challenges and motivations, they still enacted their professional agency along with constructing their profession. It could be seen from various agentive acts taken by Madrasah EFL teachers during their journey to achieve a professional level, their perception of professional teachers, and their aspiration to keep up with the future condition.

The study proposes some recommendations for EFL teachers, education practitioners, policymakers, and future researchers. For EFL teachers, one point worth highlighting about the study is that educational needs are changing, and teachers need to continuously and consistently improve their competencies. There are some professional habits that can develop their professional identity, such as looking for new information, cooperating with colleagues or other EFL teachers, researching or publishing articles or books, making innovations for teaching practices, and others. Teachers should never stop at the current level and ignore educational change because of the enormous challenges they have. However, they should have the capability in making correct decisions to be agents of change and improve their competencies so they can be the best version of EFL teachers based on their professional beliefs. For education practitioners, study on teacher agency is considered important to know how teachers with different backgrounds of education, working environment, social, and personal, can manifest their professional values and beliefs. Teachers need to get attention and support to be more successful and more equitable to employ their agency. Besides, there should be professional communities as the place for EFL teachers to share and improve their capacity through collaborative and interactive groups.

The policymakers may use the study to know EFL teachers' voices that need to be heard, especially who teach at Madrasah institutions. Both teachers under the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendiknas), and the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag) have the equal right to get the opportunities to engage in any professional development programs, including the regulation of Teacher Professional Education (PPG), series of scholarship to continue their study in higher levels, and other programs that can boost teachers' professional competencies. Finally, for future researchers on teacher agency, it is recommended to examine another area of teacher agency, such as autonomy, affordances, or curriculum implementation. The relationship between teacher and student agency is also worth getting attention for further researchers on English language teaching.

## REFERENCES

- Abdulloh, S. M. (2019). Social Cognitive Theory: A Bandura Thought Review published in 1982-2012. *Journal Psikodimensia*, 18(1). Doi: 10.24167/psidim.v18i1.1708
- Aktekin, N. C., & Celebi, H. (2020). ELT Student Teacher Identity Construction: Exploring Teacher Roles and Domains of Expertise. *International Journal of Language Education*, 4(1), 113–128.
- AL-Naimi, S. R., Romanowski, M. H., & Du, X. (2020). Novice Teachers' Challenges and Coping Strategies in Qatari Government Schools. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 19(9), 118–142. <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.19.9.7>
- Chin, D., Phillips, Y., Teng, W., Clemans, A., & Kiaw, Y. (2020). *Key Components That Contribute to Professional Identity Development in Internships for Singapore's Tertiary Institutions A Systematic Review*. NUS-CDTL.
- Alsop, J. (2018). Teacher Identity Discourse as Identity Growth: Stories of Authority and Vulnerability. *Research on Teacher Identity*, 13–23. Doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-93836-3\_2
- Amalia, L.L., Widiati, U., Basthomi, Y., & Cahyono, B. (2020). Reflective Practice on Lesson Planning Among EFL Teacher Educators. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 10(1), <https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v10i1.25025>
- Astriningsih, N. (2019). Teacher Agency in Coping with the Tensions within Standardized Curriculum Implementation. Unpublished Thesis. Universitas Sanata Dharma Yogyakarta.
- Biesta, G., Priestley, M., & Robinson, S. (2015). The Role of Beliefs in Teacher Agency. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practices*, 21(6), 624–640. Doi: 10.1080/13540602.2015.1044325
- Brown, H. D., & Lee, H. (2015). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*, Fourth Edition. New York: Pearson Education
- Buchanan, R. (2015). Teacher Identity and Agency in an Era of Accountability. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practices*. 21(6), 700–719. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2015.1044329>
- Chin, D., Phillips, Y., Teng, W. M., Clemans, A., & Kiaw, Y. P. (2020). Key Components that Contribute to Professional Identity Development in Internships for Singapore's Tertiary Institutions: A Systematic Review. *Asian Journal of the Scholarships of Teaching and Learning*. 10 (1).
- Clandinin, D. J., & Huber, J. (in press). Narrative Inquiry. In B. McGaw, E. Baker, & P.P. Peterson (Eds.). *International Encyclopedia of Education* (3rd ed.). New York: Elsevier
- Craig, C. J. (2011). Narrative inquiry in teaching and teacher education. In J. Kitchen, D. Ciuffetelli Parker, & D. Pushor (Eds.), *Advances in Research on Teaching* (pp. 19–42). Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-3687\(2011\)00000130005](https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-3687(2011)00000130005)

- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th ed). Pearson.
- Colliander, H., (2018), The Experienced Newcomer - The (Trans)forming of Professional Teacher Identity in a New Landscape of Practices. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 69, 168-176.
- Duff, P. (2012). *Identity, agency, and SLA*. In A. Mackey & S. Gass (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition*, 410-426. London: Routledge
- Duff, P., & Doherty, L. (2015). Examining Agency in (Second) Language Socialization Research. In P. Deters, X. Gao, E. Miller, & G. Vitanova (Eds.), *Interdisciplinary Approaches to Theorizing and Analyzing Agency and Second Language Learning*, 54-72. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters
- Ebersöhn, L., & Loots, T. (2017). Teacher Agency in Challenging Contexts as a Consequence of Social Support and Resource Management. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 53. 80-91. Doi: 10.1016/j.ijedudev.2016.11.005
- Etikan, I., Musa, S.A., & Alkassim, R.S., (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*. 5(1), 1-4. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>.
- Fajaryani, N., Masbirorotni, M., Nuraini, N., Nafriah, N., & Nopianti, N. (2018). Different Madrasah, but the Same Stories: Academic and Non-Academic Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Teaching a Foreign Language. *Ta'dib: Journal of Islamic Education*, 23(1), 65-86.
- Gao, X. (Andy), & Tao, J. (Tracy). (2020). Language Teacher Agency. In M. A. Peters (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Teacher Education* (pp. 1–6). Springer Singapore. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-1179-6\\_123-2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-1179-6_123-2)
- Ghamoushi, M. & Zenouzagh, Z. M. (2020). Development of EFL Teachers' Engagement and Professional Identity: The Effect of Discussing Teacher Competences via E- Collaborative Discussion Forum. *Journal of Language and Translation*, 10(4), 17-36.
- Gülmez, G. (2019). *Factors Behind Teacher Agency: A Structural Equation Modeling Study*. Thesis. Doctoral Program. Middle East Technical University.
- Hahl, K., & Mikulec, E. (2018). Student Reflections on Teacher Identity Development in a Year-long Secondary Teacher Preparation Program. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(12). <http://dx.doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2018v43n12.4>
- Imants, J., & Van der Wall, M. (2019). A Model of Teacher Agency in Professional Development and School Reform. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 52 (1), 1-14, DOI: 10.1080/00220272.2019.1604809
- Jermolajeva, J., & Bogdanova, T. (2017). Professional Identity of Higher Education Teachers in Samples of Riga and Smolensk. *Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference. Society Integration Education*. May, 2017. Vol I, pp 197-207.
- Kaya, M. H., & Dikilitaş, K. (2019). Constructing, Reconstructing and Developing Teacher Identity in Supportive Contexts. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 21(1).
- Kleinsasser, R. C. (2021). Professional Development 21.0: Teachers, Second Languages, and CALL. *Journal of ELT Research*. 6(1), 2021, 1-10 doi: 10.22236/JER\_Vol6Issue1
- Kayi-Aydar, H. (2019). A language teacher's agency in the development of her professional identities: A narrative case study. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 18(1), 4–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2017.1406360>
- Lai, C., Li, Z., & Gong, Y. (2016). Teacher agency and professional learning in cross-cultural teaching contexts: Accounts of Chinese teachers from international schools in Hong Kong. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 54, 12–21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2015.11.007>
- Lankveld, T., Schoonenboom, J., Volman, M., Croiset, G., & Beishuizen, J. (2017). Developing a Teacher Identity in the University Context: A Systematic Review of the Literature. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 36(2), 325–342 Doi: 10.1080/07294360.2016.1208154
- Leigh, L. (2019). “Of Course I have Changed!”: A Narrative Inquiry of Foreign Teachers' Professional Identities in Shenzhen, China. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 86. Doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2019.102905
- Lestari, Y. B. (2019). Teacher Agency and Localisation Teaching in Indonesia. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 21(2), 10-20.
- Makoa, M., & Segalo, L. J., (2021). Novice Teachers' Experiences of Challenges of their Professional Development. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change*, 15(10), 11-20.
- Makovec, D. (2018). The Teacher's Role and Professional Development. *International Journal of Cognitive Research in Science, Engineering and Education*, 6(2), 11-20.
- Martínez-de-la-Hidalga, Z., & Villardón-Gallego, L. (2019). Teacher Identity Research and Development. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*. 1-24. 2019. DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.287
- McKay, S. E. M. (2016). *The personal and contextual factors influencing teacher agency and self-efficacy when planning and implementing individual education plans*.
- Meihami, H. (2021). EFL teachers' professional identity development through potentially exploitable pedagogical activities. *International Journal of Language Studies*, 15, 47-66.
- Meihami, H., & Esfandiari, R. (2021). Exploring EFL Teachers' Professional Identity Development in a CALL Teacher Preparation Program. *The JALT CALL Journal*, 17(2), 135–157.

- Moss, J. M., Gibson, D. M. & Dollarhide, C. T. (2014). Professional Identity Development: A Grounded Theory of Transformational Tasks of Counselors. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 92(1), 3-12. Doi: 10.1002/j.1556-6676.2014.00124.x
- Nashruddin, W. (2015). Teaching English as A Foreign Language at Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah: Facts and Challenges. *Dinamika Ilmu, Jurnal Pendidikan*, 15(1). Doi: 10.21093/di.v15i1.94
- Prabandari, C.S. (2020). Attending to EFL Teacher Identity: Reflective Practice in Optimizing Teacher Professional Education Program. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Studies (IJELS)*. 6(2). 2020
- Priestley, M., Biesta, G., & Robinson, S. (2012). Teachers as Agents of Change: An Exploration of the Concept of Teacher Agency. A Working Paper from the Teacher Agency and Curriculum Change Project, Jan 2012.
- Priestley, M., Edwards, R., Priestley, A., & Miller, K. (2012). Teacher Agency in Curriculum Making: Agents of Change and Spaces for Manoeuvre. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 42(2), 191–214. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23253807>
- Priestley, M., Biesta, G., & Robinson, S. (2015). Teacher Agency: What Is It and Why Does It Matter? In R. Kneyber & J. Evers (eds.), *Flip the System: Changing Education from the Bottom Up*. London: Routledge.
- Rohmah, G. N. (2017). *Teachers' Reflection on and Students' Experiences in Collaborative EFL Writing: A Narrative Inquiry*. Unpublished Dissertation. Universitas Negeri Malang.
- Ruohotie-Lyhty M. (2018). Identity-Agency in Progress: Teachers Authoring Their Identities. In: Schutz P., Hong J., Cross F.D. (eds). *Research on Teacher Identity*. Springer, Cham. Doi: 10.1007/978-3-319-93836-3\_3
- Ruohotie-Lyhty, M., & Moate, J. (2016). Who and How? Pre-Service Teachers as Active Agents Developing Professional Identities. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 55, 318–327. Doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2016.01.022
- Ruslin., Syaifa, N., Aini, Z., & Faqihudin, D. (2022). Self-Reflection of EFL Teachers in Improving the Quality of Teaching Speaking Skills. *Proceedings of Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Berbasis Multidisciplinary di Era Society 5.0*. UIN Datokarama Palu
- Sachpazian, M., & Papachristou, V. (2019). *Teacher Identities: A study in the Construction of the Teacher-Self in Greece* [Paper Conference]. May 2018. Language in Focus: Contemporary Means and Methods in ELT and Applied Linguistics, Thessaloniki, Greece.
- Salinas, D., & Ayala, M. (2018). EFL Student-Teachers' Identity Construction: A Case Study in Chile. *Journal HOW*, 25(1), 33-49. Doi: 10.19183/how.25.1.380
- Sang, G. (2020). Teacher Agency. *Encyclopedia of Teacher Education*. Singapore: Springer. Doi: 10.1007/978-981-13-1179-6\_271-1.
- Scanlon, D., Calderón, A., & MacPhai, A. (2020). Teacher Agency in Enacting Physical Education in a Period of Curriculum Change and Reform in Ireland. *The Curriculum Journal*. Doi: 10.1002/curj.80
- Siswanto, I. L., & Kuswandono, P. (2020). Understanding Teacher Identity Construction: Professional Experiences of Becoming Indonesian Montessori Teachers. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (IJELTAL)*, 5(1), 1-10.
- Sumarni (2017). Evaluation of the Implementation of 2013 Curriculum in Madrasah. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama dan Keagamaan*, 15(3), 387-404.
- Songbatumis, A. M. (2017). Challenges in Teaching English Faced by English Teachers at MTsN Taliwang, Indonesia. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning*, 2(2). Doi: 10.18196/ftl.2223
- Teng, (Mark) Feng. (2019). *Autonomy, Agency, and Identity in Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language*. Springer Singapore. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-0728-7>
- Toom, A., Pyhältö, K., Pietarinen, J., & Soini, T. (2021). Professional Agency for Learning as a Key for Developing Teachers' Competencies? *Education Science*. 11, 324, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11070324>
- Vähäsantanen, K. (2015). Professional Agency in the Stream of Change: Understanding Educational Change and Teachers' Professional Identities. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 47,1-12. Doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2014.11.006
- van Lankveld, T., Schoonenboom, J., Volman, M., Croiset, G., & Beishuizen, J. (2017). Developing a Teacher Identity in the University Context: A Systematic Review of the Literature. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 36(2), 325–342. Doi: 10.1080/07294360.2016.1208154
- Vokatis, B., & Zhang, J. (2016). The Professional Identity of Three Innovative Teachers Engaging in Sustained Knowledge Building Using Technology. *Frontline Learning Research*, 4(1), 58—77.
- Widiati, U., Suryati, N., & Hayati, N. (2018). Unraveling the Challenges of Indonesian Novice Teachers of English. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 7(3), 621—629. Doi: 10.17509/ijal.v7i3.9824