

The Role of Emotion in the Teacher Identity Construction of English Novice Teachers

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Abstract: Emotion plays an essential role for teachers because it can determine learning success. Not only that, emotion is also a crucial in constructing teacher identity, especially for novice teachers. The objective of this study is to investigate how novice teachers manage their emotions to construct their identities. This study was qualitative research at a university in Central Java. The participants were 10 novice teachers. An interview and the distribution of a questionnaire were used to gather the data. The questionnaire was distributed on Google Form, and the interview was conducted face-to-face. A Microsoft Word document would be used for transcribing the interview results, and after that, the researcher would classify and put them into the tables. The results showed that there are some strategies and techniques used by novice teachers to manage their emotions, such as seeking support, building boundaries with students, learning emotion regulation techniques, self-evaluation, engaging in the professional community, engaging in hobbies in the teaching process, and seeking feedback.

Keywords: Teachers' emotion, Teachers' identity, Novice teacher

Introduction

Teacher identity has been explored for many years. According to Henry (2016), researchers have examined the teachers' professional identities since 1970. According to Beijaard (2004), Teacher identity explains how teachers sense, comprehend, and assign significance to what they accomplish during the course of professional growth. In teacher identity construction, emotion plays an essential role, especially during the teaching process. As stated by Cowie (2011), Many studies have been done recently on how focusing on emotional elements might aid in the teaching and learning process. It means that we cannot separate emotions from teacher identity because those things are intertwined. As stated by Nazari & Karimpour (2022). The study of language teachers' identities and emotions has exploded in recent years, largely due to an understanding of how important sociocultural elements are in determining how effectively teachers learn and develop professionally and how identity and emotions are intertwined.

However, according to Chen (2016), in recent studies on teacher identity, the process of working on one's identity is an emotional one, and teachers' negative feelings might cause them to struggle with or have conflicts when constructing their professional identities. It means that teachers' emotions also have a bad impact on their identity if they can not control the negative feelings or emotions. As stated by Yoo and Carter (2019), Emotions bring two negative or positive impacts. Furthermore, Chen (2019) argues that Emotions can have both positive and negative effects on learning. Negative effects can cause students to become less open-minded and learn less effectively. Based on that problem, this paper aims to investigate how teachers manage their emotions to construct their identity.

This research was conducted in Central Java, because there are some of my friends still working as novice teachers. It might help me to meet them and collect data easily. Also, the participants are novice teachers. They will be asked to fill in the questionnaire and answer the interview question. The research question of this study is "how does a teacher manage their emotion to construct their identity?". By finding out the aim, I hope this paper can help novice teachers in managing their emotions wisely to build their teacher identity for the future.



Literature Review

Teacher identity

Teacher identity is a process that happens continuously. The result will also change over time due to various aspects. Rodgers & Scott (2008) argue that the literature on teaching and teacher education reveals a common belief that identity is dynamic and that a teacher's identity changes over time as a result of a variety of factors, both internal to the individual, like emotion, and external to the individual, like job and life experiences in specific contexts. Furthermore, Sfard & Prusak (2005) stated that the dynamic that exists can be understood by viewing teacher identity as both a process and a product, as a type of continuing interaction within teacher development.

Moreover, according to Sachs (2005) As it "provides a framework for teachers to create their concepts of "how to be," "how to act," and "how to interpret" their work and their place in society, teacher identity is crucial to the teaching profession.". in other words, teacher have to know and recognize how to be a good teacher, how to act as a professional teacher and how to interpret the social environment. Then, Rodger and Scots (2008) believe that Many academics agree that the teaching profession depends on the development of teacher identity.

There are some criteria for teacher identity. According to Marcia (2002), it is divided into 4 categories. The first one is successful identity, the second one is early identity, the third is late identity, and the last one is confused identity. People with successful identities engage with their environment and engage in professional discovery while being dedicated to their professional aims and ideals. Early identity describes persons who have committed to their professional ideals and aims by their adaptation to the views and attitudes of others, such as their parents and other significant individuals. Late identity describes the identity of people who seek out their professional interests, values, and viewpoints to become committed to their careers. Last but not least, the confused identity refers to people who are dedicated to professional principles and aims through partaking in professional inquiry.

Teachers' Emotion

Farouk (2012) divided the level of teachers' emotions into three: the first one is the dynamic mental state of teachers, the second one is the level of ability of emotional self-regulation, and the last one is their responses to external and internal stimuli. Therefore, Dewell and Paulsco (2019) stated that Emotions have a remarkable influence on how people learn and teach English. When we talk about emotion, it means that we are dealing with the feelings and mood of a person. Especially in the learning process, it will impact the teacher as the main role in the classroom. Miri and Pisghadam (2021) argue that when addressing issues with emotions in the context of second language or foreign language learning, our main focus is on the emotional, mood, or attitudinal factors that influence the behavior of teachers and students. Furthermore, Yoo and Carter (2017) stated the effects of teachers' emotions on many parts of a language lesson in the context of a language class.

Emotions can set up the behavior, attitude, and personal life of a teacher. As stated by Nichols (2017), teachers' emotions can influence their actions, lifestyles, teaching methods, professional identity, and also educational change from the teacher. So, negative emotions from the teacher can impact the learning process, as stated by Yoo and Carter (2017), negative feelings can make the learning process run ineffectively, while positive emotions bring effective learning. So, in order to minimize negative reactions and foster a positive emotional environment among our children in the classroom, we must find strategies to do both.

Professional Identity Development

According to Winslade (2002, p.35), it is possible to define professional identity as the development of "self-descriptions" by using terminology from narrative literature. Furthermore, Atkinson et al (2004) stated that professional identity is viewing oneself as a teacher and "by others" while "continually constructing a sustainable identity as a teacher. It

can be said that professional identity is a sustainable process that the teacher should experience. That is why being a professional teacher cannot be done in a short time. It takes a long time because many aspects are included, like experience. For a novice teacher, one of the crucial things is the environment. As stated by Coldron & Smith (1999), since each school placement might be very different, the sustainable aspect of identity for novice teachers is particularly fragile from one practicum experience to the next. Usually, the professional identity of a teacher is built during a teaching practicum, and it will develop step by step when the teacher gains experience in employment. As stated by Dam and Blom (2006), the pre-service teacher's professional identity is bound to begin to evolve during the practicum, but it is ideal to encourage this development rather than leave it to chance by creating favorable environments.

Previous studies

Another study from Ling Cheng (2021). The study investigated the role of teachers' emotions and their professional identities in English as a Foreign Language EFL or English as a Second Language ESL classroom. The study was conducted in China. This study was done qualitatively, and the participants are professional teachers. The study's findings help teacher educators understand how crucial emotions are in forming teachers' identities in EFL/ESL classrooms. According to the study, teachers' positive or negative emotional experiences that are at odds with the views of inexperienced teachers have a big influence on how they build their identities. The similarity of this study with my study is that it discusses the role of emotion in teacher identity construction. However, the gap in my study is the participants of the research. This research took professional teachers as participants. Whereas the participants of my study are novice teachers.

Another study was from Min Hue Nguyen and Xuan Min Ngo. The study entitled An Activity Theory Perspective on Vietnamese Pre-Service English teachers' identity construction in relation to tension, emotion, and agency. This study was done qualitatively, and a semi-structured interview was used as an instrument. The results of activity system analysis and theme analysis indicated that tensions, emotion, agency, and identity all coexisted as tensions prompted efforts to ease tensions and create language teacher identities. The similarity of this study with my study is that both discuss emotions in the teacher's identity, and the participants are also still relevant to each other. Nevertheless, in my study, there are two instruments included. Whereas, in this study, only one instrument, which is a semi-structured interview, was used.

Method

Context of study

This study was conducted in Central Java. The cause is that some of my friends are still working as novice teachers. It would help me to meet them and collect data easily. Also, they are still developing their teacher identity. Most of them struggle to control their emotions in the classroom.

Participants

The participants of the study are 10 English novice teachers. Then, 5 of them will be chosen to be interviewed. I choose novice teachers because they are still building or constructing their identity for their future careers as teachers. They are expected to share their experience in managing emotions while teaching in the classroom.

Data Collection Instrument

The instrument for gathering data for this study is a questionnaire and interview questions. This research uses closed-ended questions. For the interview, the participants will have to respond to some of the questions the researchers will pose based on their ideas, experiences, and approaches without any interruption or pressure from the researcher. Because participants could express their opinions freely in interviews, the researchers used that method

to collect the data. Interviews are helpful for obtaining the facts supporting a participant's experiences.

Data Collection Procedure

The participants would complete the questionnaire, which the researchers would distribute using Google Forms. The questionnaire, which has 28 questions, is in the appendix. The researchers would then pick 5 participants for interviews. If the participants were unable to meet the researcher personally, the interview was performed through a face-to-face session or an online meeting using a platform like WhatsApp, Google Meet, or Zoom. The meeting would be set up via WhatsApp chat. I interviewed them because I wanted to offer them a chance to share their experiences and ideas. Also, I was interested in seeing their body language while they talked about their experiences. The interview section could be conducted in Indonesian for the participants' convenience. Also, dependent on the participant's availability, the location will be adjusted. The interview took around 20 minutes and was recorded using Zoom recording (if online).

Data Analysis

The researchers will count the number of responses from participants and then summarize their results in tables. Then, the researcher will frequently read the interview transcript in a Microsoft Word document before classifying it into themes. Then, the participants will be contacted to see if the researcher has properly analyzed the transcription.

Finding and Discussion

The findings of this study will explain how novice teacher regulate their emotions

- Seeking support

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Always	10	100 %
Often	0	0 %
Rarely	0	0 %
Never	0	0 %
Overall	10	100

Based on the findings, all novice teachers always have a support system in school. They can share their experience with their friends or other teachers when they have problems managing their emotions. Connecting with others familiar with the teaching profession might help with emotional support and perspective. Participant 3 stated, "When I had a problem during the teaching process, I got angry in the classroom. I always share with my friends, and she gives some suggestions for me to control my emotions, and I think it is valuable for me, who is still constructing my identity. In this case, interaction with other teachers is important. As stated by Zembylas et al (2003), one factor that influences teacher identity is the strong relationship with others. Furthermore, he added that this relationship is especially significant, especially since the other friends are the mentors in school.

- Building boundaries with students

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Always	7	70.0 %
Often	2	20.0%
Rarely	1	10.0 %
Never	0	0 %
Overall	10	100

The result shows that most teachers (4 teachers) always use this strategy to create a more cheerful classroom environment. Therefore, the learning process can run well. It can affect the emotions of teachers and students; they will get positive emotions from the learning process, which can help teachers in constructing their identity. Also, setting these boundaries can contribute to the development of a pleasant and respectful learning environment by minimizing potential causes of stress. As stated by participant 2, “When I come to the class, first thing that I usually do is making bonding with students. Because it is very important for their feeling and emotions. When they have good emotion in the classroom, then the learning process can be successful”. As stated by Hargreaves (1998, p.838), in the school community, teachers had a "heavy emotional investment" in their interactions with students. That thing can affect the teacher’s emotions. If the bounding is good, then the teacher will have positive emotions.

- *Learning Emotion Regulation Technique*

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Always	6	60.0 %
Often	2	20.0%
Rarely	2	20.0 %
Never	0	0 %
Overall	10	100

Based on the result, most teachers (6) usually learn some techniques about how to regulate emotions. Some of them learn from articles, books, etc. By developing these skills or techniques, teachers’ emotions can be stable in challenging situations. Participant 1 stated, “To make my emotions stable, I usually read some articles about the technique of managing emotions. "Participant 5 also said that “when I was in my office, I often seek some books or journals that discuss how to regulate the teachers’ emotions. However, the teacher used the emotional regulation technique in the school environment. Otherwise, the strategies or techniques cannot run well. According to Zembylas (2003), while teachers were forced to follow the "emotional techniques" acceptable for the professional teacher in a certain school culture. It can be concluded that acknowledgment of emotions was crucial in identity construction.

- *Self-Evaluation*

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Always	10	100 %
Often	0	0%
Rarely	0	0 %
Never	0	0 %
Overall	10	100

The finding shows that all participants always reflect on themselves after teaching to manage their positive emotions. By reflecting on themselves, they can know what aspects should be improved. It may also assist in the development of one's sense of professional growth and identity. Participant 1 stated that “By evaluating our performance, I can know what things should be done in the next meeting to construct my identity as a teacher”. Also, Participant 4 stated that “By doing self-evaluation, I can measure my emotions so far. It can be beneficial for me in the future to make my emotions stable”. The finding is similar to the statement by Brookfield (1995), which indicates that reflection can assist the novice teacher in insight into

their own emotional and cognitive rhythms and stimulate a prompt question. By reflection, novice teachers can gain something new to do better over time.

- *Engage in Professional Community*

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Always	8	80.0 %
Often	1	10.0%
Rarely	1	10.0 %
Never	0	0 %
Overall	10	100

The result shows that most teachers (80%) join the professional community to gain experiences and new insights to manage their emotions and construct their identities. In the community, they can share experiences, share ideas, and seek advice. Most of them join the offline community, and only 1 teacher joins the online community. Participant 3 stated that “It is useful for me as a novice teacher because I can gain advice from my senior in the community”. Another Participant stated that “In the community, I usually share my experience and my difficulties in managing emotions, so I can gain new insight from my friends”. Some communities can support teacher in constructing their identity, such as the school community. As stated by Hargreaves (1998), the School community could be a way for teachers to develop their identity. The teacher can choose other communities that support the growth of their identity.

- *Engage Hobbies in the Teaching Process*

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Always	6	60.0 %
Often	1	10.0%
Rarely	2	20.0 %
Never	1	10.0 %
Overall	10	100

Based on the findings, 60 percent of teachers use this strategy. A teacher who has hobbies in painting, writing, and singing can incorporate their hobbies into the learning process. For example, a teacher who likes singing can guide or teach students to sing an English song. As stated by Participant 2, “I usually ask my students to sing an English song to check their pronunciation. It can assist me in managing my positive emotions because I do what I love”. Another statement comes from Participant 3, who stated that “by involving my hobby in the teaching process, it can create positive emotions. By engaging in hobbies in teaching, the teacher can freely compose the materials that can bring positive emotions for both the teacher and the students. According to Naccce (1999), the teacher can be creative in developing the material and adjust to students’ interests to get students’ interest and motivate them in the learning process.

- *Seeking Feedback*

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Always	9	90.0 %
Often	1	10.0%
Rarely	0	0 %
Never	0	0 %

Based on the result, most novice teachers use this strategy to develop their identity. By seeking feedback from students and other friends, the teachers can reflect on themselves. Also, it can provide precious insight into teachers' areas of strength and areas for improvement. By providing more insight into their performance and enabling them to modify their teaching strategy, constructive feedback can help teachers better control their emotions. Participant 1 stated that "constructive feedback from my friends can help me manage my positive emotions in teaching". Another participant stated that "feedback from students and friends assists me in constructing my identity by evaluating myself in teaching". By receiving positive feedback, the self-confidence of novice teachers can be increased. According to McIntosh et al (1996), positive feedback can make people motivated, and it is an effective way to increase positive emotions. Furthermore, Adelman et al (1989) stated that expression-based feedback has an impact on physiology and subjective experience.

Conclusion

Emotion is crucial in constructing a teacher's identity. The impact of emotion can also make the learning process run well. The purpose of this study is to investigate the strategies used by novice teachers to manage their emotions.

After distributing the questionnaires, conducting the interview, and analyzing the data, some techniques and strategies were found, such as seeking support, building boundaries with students, learning emotion regulation techniques, self-evaluation, engaging in a professional community, engaging in a hobby in the teaching process, and seeking feedback.

This study result can help novice teachers who still struggle with managing their emotions. They can also use the same strategies to construct and build their professional identity. This study's findings can benefit those who want to be professional teachers. However, this study was only carried out at a University in Salatiga, an urban area. In addition, the participant also had only 10 novice teachers. As a result, the result cannot be applied to all other environmental areas. For additional study, the research can be conducted at another place and university to check the other result, for example, with novice teachers who teach in rural areas.

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Appendix

This questionnaire is retrieved from: <https://www.allo-tolerance.eu/files/resources/Knowledge%20of%20emotions%20-%20questionnaires%20for%20teachers.pdf>.

	1. Does not apply at all	2. Mostly does not apply	3. Sometimes apply	4. Apply most of the time	5. Always apply
1. Even if something terrible occurs, I can still be positive.					
2. Usually, I can express my feelings and emotions in words.					
3. I can keep a positive attitude despite the negative moods of those around me.					
4. I take lessons from bad situations and change my behavior going forward.					
5 I put more effort into my work when someone compliments or rewards me.					
6. I will express my dislike of something right away.					

7. If I like someone, I would do everything that this person likes me to.					
8 It's difficult to put me in a bad mood while I'm feeling good.					
9. I can fix any issue with ease when I'm in a good mood.					
10. If I'm feeling positive, I can learn and memorize more					
11. I am capable of recognizing when someone is feeling guilty					
12. I am aware of my behavior when I am with someone who values me.					
13. When I meet a friend, I can tell right away how he is feeling.					
14. Usually, if I can see how someone is feeling, I can tell what is going on.					
15. I can recognize when a friend is depressed or angry.					
16. I can easily find a way to get to the person I like.					
17. I am capable of expressing my feelings in the moment.					
18. I can recognize a change in the mood of my friend					
19. I can usually identify my moods and emotions.					
20. Most of my feelings and emotions I can express in words or name					
21. I can express my feelings well.					
22. I can express how I feel.					
23. Anybody who feels helpless can be seen by me.					
24. How I'm feeling is always clear.					
25. I can recognize the reason why I feel bad					
26. By looking at someone's face, I can always understand how they are feeling.					

27. When a person tries to hide his unhappy emotions, I can know.					
28. If someone acts differently from their mood, I can recognize					