

## Digital lecturers in the making: Identity construction in Indonesia's online English language teaching

 Rizka Safriyani<sup>1</sup>,  Pratiwi Retnaningdyah<sup>1\*</sup>,  Ahmad Munir<sup>1</sup>,  Zulfikri Malik<sup>1</sup>,  Suhartono<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia; rizka.21019@mhs.unesa.ac.id (R.S.) pratiwiretnaningdyah@unesa.ac.id (P.R.) ahmadmunir@unesa.ac.id (A.M.) zulfikri.23019@mhs.unesa.ac.id (Z.M.) suhartono@unesa.ac.id (S.)

**Abstract:** The change in Indonesia's educational paradigm has substantially affected the training of aspiring lecturers teaching English as a second language. These lecturers must now instruct using a blended approach, incorporating online teaching sessions where they must produce their instructional strategies. This study examines how English Language Lecturers develop their identity while engaging in online teaching. This qualitative case study research offers a comprehensive examination of the development of professional identities among four lecturers based on interviews conducted with them. The data were gathered via semi-structured interviews and reflective writings. The interview questions were formulated according to Kelchtermans [1] framework of Lecturer Professional Identity. The data analysis utilized thematic analysis. The coding commenced with preliminary data analysis to discern repeating patterns and topics. The results indicate that the shift to online teaching has transformed these lecturers into 'digital lecturers.' Their identities are affected by several elements, including task beliefs, personality traits, job motivation, self-image, and future aspirations. In addition, factors such as teaching experience, feedback, and competency in technology are crucial in shaping this process of identity formation. The study provides guidelines for improving the identity development of English Language Lecturers in digital educational contexts.

**Keywords:** English pedagogy, Formation, Online teaching, Professional identity.

### 1. Introduction

The complex relationship between technology and society has been a central focus of academic research for many years, with the emergence of the digital era triggering significant changes in different areas [2, 3]. In this period of rapid technological innovation, it is crucial to thoroughly analyze the effects of these changes on human behavior, communication, and social structures. The widespread adoption of digital devices and platforms has transformed how people communicate and significantly impacted more significant cultural norms and values. This introduction aims to offer a thorough overview of the critical topics and challenges related to the influence of technology on social interaction. It draws multidisciplinary perspectives from sociology, psychology, communication studies, and computer technology.

Social networking platforms, instant messaging software, and video conferencing tools have introduced novel methods of communication, allowing people to communicate with each other despite being far apart geographically [4]. This transition prompts necessary inquiries concerning the caliber of these encounters, the characteristics of relationships established in digital realms, and the capacity for technology to augment and impede authentic human connection.

Furthermore, the influence of technology on social interaction extends beyond convenience and has significant consequences for the development of one's identity and how one shows oneself to others [5]. Within digital platforms, individuals frequently construct their online personas, strategically

showcasing specific facets of their lives to others. This behavior has been associated with several psychological consequences, such as heightened social comparison and the possibility of reduced self-esteem. The conflict between genuine self-expression and the demands of online presentation underscores the intricacies inherent in contemporary social interactions, requiring additional investigation into how individuals traverse these difficulties.

The convergence of technology and social interaction also raises crucial ethical problems [6]. The prominence of concerns such as privacy, data security, and the transformation of personal information into a commodity has grown as people interact with digital platforms. The ramifications of these problems go beyond individual users, impacting public confidence and the fundamental structure of community life. Given technology's ongoing advancement, researchers and practitioners must confront these ethical concerns and develop a more sophisticated comprehension of the obligations that come with digital involvement.

Moreover, technology's influence on social interaction extends beyond personal and moral aspects, as it also affects broader societal frameworks and establishments [7]. Digital communication has revolutionized conventional methods of spreading information, challenging existing power structures, and facilitating novel activism and civic participation avenues. Social movements, which formerly depended on physical gatherings and local networks, have utilized internet channels to rally support and increase awareness on a worldwide level. This change highlights the capacity of technology to serve as a dual-purpose tool, granting individuals power but also presenting risks to established social structures.

Identity is a multifaceted concept that includes an individual's understanding of their connection to the world, how they structure that connection throughout time, and their expectations for their future paths [8]. The process of developing one's identity is significantly impacted by the incorporation of other individuals' thoughts and convictions. Lecturers' identity is formed through explicit and implicit engagements with students, colleagues, institutions, and the wider community. A lecturer's identity is complex, including many perspectives representing different degrees of distinctiveness and diversity. The concept of intersectionality is essential for going beyond the constraints of single-issue analyses and achieving a more holistic comprehension of identity.

Lecturers engage in dialogic negotiation to actively shape and discuss their identities and the nature of their jobs rather than simply accepting external validation. Recognition encompasses behaviors aimed at obtaining validation from others or acknowledging the contributions made by others. Forming a lecturer's identity involves the concurrent establishment of personal significance as a lecturer and the professional relevance of teaching. The two types of meaning, semantic and pragmatic, are intricately connected and undergo constant transformation during teaching. The development of interpretations associated with the teaching profession is greatly influenced by numerous perspectives, stemming from various origins and displaying different levels of universality. These factors, such as cultural norms, intellectual discussions, and institutional rules, can shape a lecturer's sense of self.

The assumption of several roles by an individual does not necessarily indicate the presence of many identities. Instead, this assortment of roles forms their distinct personality. There has been an increasing focus on examining the identities of foreign language lecturers in recent years, as it is recognized that these identities play a vital role in shaping lecturers' dedication to their profession and adherence to their duties. Contemplating lecturer identity offers language educators a significant understanding of the individuals involved in teaching and how lecturers consistently shape and reshape their understanding of their duties as language lecturers in particular situations [9]. Furthermore, it encourages investigation into inquiries concerning the sociocultural surroundings of education, teaching methods, linguistic beliefs, and how language and communication are influenced [10]. Considerable studies have been carried out on the professional growth of TESOL lecturers, particularly emphasizing the psychological aspect. This research highlights the interplay between individuals and their social environment [11]. By considering language learning motivation as a sociological notion founded on identity, we may enhance our comprehension of how motivation is connected to the distinctive

experiences of language learners in specific sociocultural settings [12, 13]. Studies on identities in multilingualism have also examined social contexts [14, 15]. However, most of these studies have primarily concentrated on migrant populations, paying little attention to the professional identities of language lecturers, especially in online settings.

In educational programs, English Language Lecturers (ELLS) cultivate their professional identities during their formative years, establishing goals and expectations before commencing their professions. Nonetheless, online and blended educational settings can significantly influence this identity development. Internships and digital connections frequently alter professional objectives, generating difficulties and, at times, estrangement from the broader teaching community due to the intricate social dynamics present in online environments. Current studies have primarily concentrated on establishing professional identity in in-person settings during the initial years of teaching [16, 17] with insufficient emphasis on the impact of digital transitions on this process. Although online education has been swiftly embraced, the shift has encountered difficulties. Many students and educators had challenges accessing personal devices and dependable internet connections, especially in remote and impoverished areas. Nonetheless, the post-pandemic period underscored the tenacity and adaptation of educators and learners alike, as numerous institutions devised meticulously prepared instructional materials and implemented diverse learning methodologies to engage students.

This study examines a significant gap by investigating how English Language Lecturers in Indonesia develop their professional identities throughout a six-month blended course. This research highlights the sociocultural aspects of professional identity in online environments, contrasting with earlier studies that primarily focus on technical or pedagogical perspectives of digital education. The Indonesian setting, marked by varied cultural, religious, and socio-economic elements, poses distinct difficulties and opportunities for the digital transformation of education. Lecturers may encounter challenges in maintaining traditional values while adapting to the globalized context of online learning environments, necessitating a delicate balance between innovation and cultural preservation.

This research aims to provide a comprehensive approach to understanding identity development by integrating process-oriented and product-oriented techniques. The study examines conceptual frameworks while incorporating practical findings to guide policy and professional development initiatives. This dual approach underscores the intricacies of digital identity development, framing the Indonesian experience as a case study with wider ramifications for global education. This research enhances the discussion on digital professional identity by illustrating how cultural and contextual elements influence the relationship between technology and teacher identity development.

The results are practical for those fostering English Language Education programs, such as lecturer educators, curriculum developers, and other stakeholders. Digitizing education and its influence on interpersonal conduct will unavoidably develop novel vocational profiles [18]. Furthermore, by monitoring and assessing the process of professional identity formation among English Language Lecturers through a lecturer training course that is specifically tailored for this purpose, rather than a conventional university course, it is possible to uncover the evolution of teaching methods and offer suggestions for enhancing the construction of lecturer identity. This research provides valuable insights into the relationship between professional identity concerns and identity formation, helping lecturer educators comprehend these intricate processes.

## 2. Literature Review

Identity is an individual's self-awareness and understanding of themselves, expressed through personal narratives and life stories. It encompasses both the intrinsic self-awareness of individuals—how they perceive themselves—and the extrinsic perception, influenced by how others, such as pupils and coworkers, perceive them. Identity encompasses lecturers' educational roles, such as educators, mentors, and leaders [10]. The identity development process is essential for human progress, as it dramatically impacts how individuals interact with others, face difficulties, and anticipate their future responsibilities in society.

Their ideals and surroundings mold an individual's identity, which might restrict certain behaviors while facilitating the development of others to become customary [19]. This phenomenon may elucidate why specific individuals cultivate robust identity features when their interactions with others bolster their preexisting thought patterns and behaviors. Identity negotiation is an ongoing process, especially in difficult situations like combat zones, where individuals can embrace, alter, dismiss, or reinforce specific aspects of their identity [20]. From a sociocultural perspective, professional identity is seen as a dynamic and hands-on process of self-formation influenced by one's past and current daily activities. Teaching is frequently debated, although it encompasses fundamental professional attributes [21]. Many professionals experience a profound sense of obligation towards their organized organization, with their regular tasks constituting an essential aspect of their professional identity. When there is a shift in either personality or role, it creates a mismatch that needs to be resolved through a process of identity construction to regain harmony.

Forming, rebuilding, and advancing lecturer identity are fundamentally social procedures in different institutional settings [22]. Defining lecturer identity, especially regarding its impact on educational practice, is difficult due to its discontinuous nature, social dimension, and complexity. Academics have debated that lecturer identity development encompasses the individual and vocational aspects of becoming and behaving as a lecturer. In contrast, alternative scholars propose that establishing lecturer identity is associated with the interaction between personal and professional factors, in which individual experiences and societal discussions contribute to shaping one's professional perspective and overall outlook [23]. The shift to online teaching has brought forth new aspects to forming the professional identity of English language teachers, specifically within the educational framework of Indonesia. As educators adapt to the digital environment, their sense of self is constantly transformed by incorporating technology into their teaching methods, the evolving nature of student engagement, and the broader social demands for digital proficiency. Lecturers must adjust their traditional roles to the needs of digital education when shifting to online teaching. This adjustment typically involves developing new skills and techniques [19].

In this particular setting, the process of identity creation goes beyond simply acquiring new tools or procedures. It profoundly alters how lecturers understand their identities and professional obligations. Lecturers face a problem adapting their teaching approaches to the digital world, as they must balance their established pedagogical identities with the need for effective novel practices in online instruction. The bargaining process is shaped by multiple factors, such as institutional backing, technological accessibility, and the changing demands of students [20]. The identity of English language lecturers is changing due to the interaction between their values, professional experiences, and the requirements of the digital era.

In Indonesia, technology significantly influences the identity of lecturers. This is particularly significant due to a digital divide and varying levels of digital literacy, which may provide challenges in implementing online education. Educators must synchronize their professional identity with the realities of the digital landscape, including limited resources, varying levels of student technological access, and the imperative for continuous professional development [19].

Recent research has highlighted the influence of online micro-teaching and digital identity development in similar socio-educational environments. With the COVID-19 emergency shift to online teaching, educators must redefine their professional identities by incorporating digital pedagogies [24]. The micro-teaching courses have influenced educators' digital proficiency and confidence [25]. Moreover, Educators should take advantage of the opportunity to organize and integrate the extensive range of digital resources into the curriculum, utilizing technologies like augmented reality [26].

The post-pandemic has transformed lecturers' digital identities, emphasizing the adaptation to hybrid teaching models, digital infrastructure, and the consequences for professional development [27]. Furthermore, Juma and Patel [28] examined the obstacles and opportunities associated with digital identity creation among educators, highlighting the impact of cultural and institutional issues. In this context, reconciliation denotes the reevaluation of conventional notions of teaching and learning.

Lecturers strive to maintain their pedagogical ideals while embracing online education's benefits and challenges.

Additionally, the social setting significantly influences identity formation among English language teachers. In Indonesia, the transition to online teaching might cause conflicts between traditional teaching methods and the requirements of the digital realm due to the strong influence of cultural values and educational traditions. Lecturers frequently encounter similar conflicts, requiring them to redefine their identity to adapt to their position's evolving demands [23]. The formation of one's identity is shaped by the broader societal conversation surrounding education, which emphasizes the significance of digital literacy and the need for educators to be flexible in response to technological advancements [21].

The requirement for novel methods of interaction and connection with students exacerbates the effect of online teaching on the identity of lecturers. Within a digital setting, the conventional dynamics of a classroom change, necessitating educators to formulate novel approaches to captivate pupils, offer feedback, and cultivate a sense of camaraderie. These modifications can prompt a reassessment of the lecturer's position, as they must balance the requirements of digital pedagogy and their established teaching philosophy and identity [20]. The process entails reconciling traditional educational roles with the emerging requirements of online instruction, shaped by sociocultural, technological, and institutional influences. As lecturers adapt to this transformation, their identity is expected to change due to the interaction between their values, professional experiences, and the evolving educational scene in the digital era.

### 3. Research Methods

This research employed a qualitative case study methodology within a social constructivist paradigm to examine the formation and evolution of professional identities among English Language Lecturers. Acknowledging that lecturer identity is not fixed but developed via evolving encounters over time, this perspective is consistent with accepted notions of identity as an ongoing process.

Four female volunteer lecturers, aged 23 to 26, who had recently obtained their degrees, participated in the study. All participants were native speakers of Indonesian and were chosen from the same university. Recruiting participants from one institution were selected to maintain uniformity in their educational environment and mitigate discrepancies in institutional procedures and resources that might affect identity development. This uniformity facilitates a concentrated investigation but unavoidably constrains the generalizability of the results to broader contexts.

The decision to pick only four individuals was made to provide a comprehensive qualitative investigation of identity development processes. The limited sample size enabled the researchers to allocate additional time to examine the intricate experiences of each participant. The selection was predicated on their willingness to engage, as demonstrated by their voluntary responses to an open call and the caliber of their reflective diaries. The reflective journals constituted a primary data source, providing comprehensive insights into the participants' involvement and comprehension of identity creation. Semi-structured interviews enhanced the diaries, offering more depth and facilitating data triangulation.

The data analysis utilized a thematic analysis. The coding commenced with preliminary data analysis to discern repeating patterns and topics. The initial codes were methodically modified via several iterations, with the research team actively analyzing and discussing emergent themes to ensure reliability and rigor. The final themes emerged from a consensus among the researchers, guaranteeing that the interpretations faithfully represented the participants' lived experiences. This iterative method sought to deliver a thorough and nuanced comprehension of professional identity creation among English Language Lecturers.

The study did not aim to investigate how age or gender variations affect identity formation; hence, the sample was homogeneous in terms of these factors. Each participant provided their informed consent by signing consent forms, which ensured the confidentiality of their personal information by

using pseudonyms. Additionally, they confirmed that their involvement would not impact their academic assessments. The data were gathered via semi-structured interviews and reflective writings. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian to facilitate participants' comfortable and genuine self-expression. The interview questions were formulated according to Kelchtermans [1] framework of Lecturer Professional Identity, which centers around five fundamental elements: task beliefs, personality, job motivation, self-image, and future objectives [1]. This framework offered a thorough perspective to analyze the participants' evolution of their professional identity. In addition to the interviews, every participant submitted four reflective essays. These essays were used as written tools to document their continuous thoughts and observations about their development as English Language Lecturers. The reflective writings offered valuable qualitative data that enhanced the interview findings.

Triangulation was utilized to increase the accuracy and reliability of the research results. The process entailed cross-validating data from several sources, including semi-structured interviews and reflective essays, to ascertain consistent patterns and themes in the participants' identity formation. Triangulation meant that the findings made were robust and not reliant entirely on one data source. Thematic analysis, a suitable tool for detecting and understanding patterns of meaning in qualitative data, was employed to analyze the data. The study commenced by classifying the data and assigning codes to developing units such as modal verbs, adverbs, adjectives, mental process markers, and value markers. These codes facilitated recording the participants' attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions, thereby uncovering their preferences, aversions, strengths, and areas of difficulty. Subsequently, the coded units were conceptually distinguished, rearranged, and compared to formulate comprehensive themes. The study followed an iterative process in which the researcher and an independent expert continuously assessed and improved the categories to ensure they accurately represented the data. The procedure of collaborative analysis and constant comparison facilitated the establishment of the trustworthiness and reliability of the identified themes. To enhance the credibility of the results, the researcher implemented various methodologies. A qualitative research specialist offered guidance throughout the analysis process, assisting in refining themes and ensuring the analysis was thorough. Subsequently, the participants were allowed to examine and provide feedback on the findings to verify the appropriate portrayal of their experiences. An audit trail was kept, providing comprehensive documentation of the data gathering and analysis procedures. This procedure ensured transparency and the potential for replication. The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the State University of Surabaya, Indonesia, and approved by the Institutional Review Board on November 2024.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Professional Identities Formation among English Language Lecturers through Online Teaching Activities

This study investigates the formation and evolution of professional identities among English Language Lecturers through online teaching activities, informed by Kelchtermans [1] theory of Lecturer Professional Identity [1]. The analysis centers on five essential elements: task belief, personality, job motivation, self-image, and future directions. The subsequent parts present the conclusions drawn from the narratives of the four participants, emphasizing the impact of online teaching on their professional identity development.

#### 4.1.1. Beliefs about Tasks

Participants exhibited a varied comprehension of language instruction, recognizing the benefits of online teaching for their professional development. For example, EN01 conveyed: *"Employing programs or digital platforms, such as Zoom, for virtual communication between lecturers and students and utilizing Quizizz's online platform, Live Worksheet, and other software tools to augment instruction. Moreover, lecturers are proficient in conducting interactive classroom instruction and may also improve the educational experience for students in virtual environments."*

This statement emphasizes the crucial role of digital tools in promoting successful teaching practices and facilitating personalized, engaging learning experiences. The story of EN01 corresponds



with the task belief aspect of professional identity, demonstrating how technological integration enhances instructional methods. In a similar vein, SA03 commented:

*"This microteaching program provides several additional benefits, especially the variety of teaching methodologies. I conduct instruction via in-person, online, and pre-recorded sessions. Furthermore, I create interactive films that clarify the reasons for the prior non-adoption of this strategy before the outbreak."*

Social Identity Theory argues that individuals define themselves regarding their membership in social groups. For Indonesian English language lecturers, the transition to online instruction has established a novel collective identity known as "digital lecturers." SA03 emphasizes the creative versatility and adaptability necessary for various instructional approaches. By integrating innovative methods, lecturers augment their professional repertoire, influencing their changing self-perception and task-oriented convictions. These observations agree with social identity theory since participants actively synchronize their professional objectives with the demands of the digital educational environment. During the transition, lecturers can maintain a positive social identity by utilizing creative versatility to bridge the distance between traditional and digital teaching methods.

The participants' gradual implementation of online teaching strategies and tools enhanced their pedagogical skills and bolstered their professional motivation. The interaction of self-perception, external expectations, and technology adaption highlights the evolving nature of identity formation in the digital era.

The participants' responses demonstrate a profound comprehension of the changing field of language instruction, explicitly highlighting the crucial role that online teaching plays in equipping them for future professional pursuits. Acknowledging the benefits of digital tools and platforms in education is a prevalent theme, as academics generally agree that participating in online teaching activities is crucial for enhancing their teaching abilities and adjusting to digital settings. EN01's words highlight the significant impact that may be achieved by incorporating applications and digital platforms, such as Zoom and Quizziz, into the educational process. This integration simplifies communication and interaction between lecturers and students and enhances the teaching experience by providing diverse tools to improve class delivery. Effectively harnessing these technologies enables the creation of a more captivating and interactive learning environment, empowering lecturers to customize their teaching methods to accommodate the varied requirements of their pupils.

Furthermore, the observations offered by SA03 emphasize the significance of innovation and adaptability in education, especially in light of the digital transformation required due to the pandemic. The mention of many teaching modalities, such as face-to-face, online, and pre-recorded sessions, emphasizes the importance of educators' adaptability in their teaching methods. Lecturers are demonstrating their innovation and adaptability by creating interactive videos and experimenting with new ways of delivering knowledge in response to the constraints of online education. The ongoing development of teaching methods promotes a strong professional identity, providing educators with the necessary skills and mindset to succeed in a constantly changing educational environment. As educators adopt these cutting-edge methods and incorporate technology into their instruction, they improve their ability to captivate students, broaden learning opportunities, and contribute to the general progress of educational approaches in the digital era.

#### *4.1.2. Traits Shaping One's Unique Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors*

Online teaching exercises improved participants' attributes, resulting in heightened confidence and self-efficacy. These activities created a secure environment to alleviate initial apprehensions over teaching, ultimately cultivating a stronger professional identity and enhanced preparedness to confront actual classroom issues. For example, RM-02 articulated:

*"I am assured in my ability to produce video recordings of instructive material. I can alter the particular areas that I intend to remove."*

This viewpoint illustrates how the online educational environment enables educators to enhance their pedagogical methods autonomously. Educators cultivate adaptation, creativity, and independence

by overcoming the obstacles of a virtual environment. This autonomy promotes reflective practice, enabling lecturers to evaluate and modify their teaching practices in a low-risk setting. Consequently, they cultivate resilience and readiness for many classroom scenarios. SA04 provided additional details:

*"Initially, I perceived digital platforms as daunting, but eventually, I recognized their potential. I have acquired the ability to develop interactive classes that captivate pupils, and I now possess greater confidence in addressing technical issues."*

These insights highlight the significant influence of online instructional activities on professional development. By surmounting their initial apprehensions, participants bolstered their self-efficacy and fortified their professional identity as adaptive, technologically proficient educators. These findings demonstrate the relationship between personal growth and professional development, emphasizing that online teaching fosters confidence and competence in contemporary educational environments.

Furthermore, adjusting to online teaching tools and platforms promotes a culture of ongoing contemplation and self-evaluation among educators. Engaging in reflective practice is essential for professional development, as it allows educators to carefully assess their teaching techniques and make well-informed changes to improve student involvement and academic achievements. Online teaching exercises provide autonomy, which enhances resilience and prepares lecturers for the unpredictable nature of actual classroom situations, where flexibility and adaptation are crucial. Lecturers who can successfully negotiate the hurdles of virtual teaching are better prepared to adapt to the complexities of modern education. This negotiation ensures that their professional growth aligns with the changing demands of the digital era. The process of reflecting, adjusting, and improving results in a teaching workforce that is more self-assured, skilled, and creative, with the ability to provide excellent education in various environments.

#### 4.1.3. Work Enthusiasm

Their feedback during the online teaching sessions influenced the participants' job motivation. Positive comments and constructive criticism helped them identify their strengths and areas for improvement, fostering a sense of achievement and encouraging them to refine their teaching practices. This process boosted their confidence and reinforced their commitment to becoming more effective educators in a digital learning environment. YR-01 provided a report:

*"Each instance of making a mistake elicited intense distress and diminished my self-worth. However, I recognized that every misstep was an opportunity for growth and required a systematic approach to enhance my abilities."*

The narrative of YR-01 illustrates that the feedback provided is constructive as it can enhance students' abilities and help them improve. Constructive feedback can effectively convert negative emotions into a driving force for professional development, reinforcing their dedication to teaching and enriching their professional identity.

The feedback they received during the online teaching sessions influenced the participants' employment motivation, which catalyzed their personal and professional progress. Affirmative remarks gave validation, aiding lecturers in identifying their strengths, while negative feedback provided valuable perspectives on areas that need work. The dual feedback mechanism established a harmonious setting where participants could acknowledge their accomplishments and confront their difficulties, ultimately cultivating a sense of accomplishment and motivation to improve their teaching methods continuously. Receiving and responding to comments greatly enhanced their confidence, as it validated their efforts and strengthened their dedication to becoming more proficient educators in the digital learning setting. The reflection of YR-01 elucidates the profound emotional influence of committing errors, emphasizing the profound transformational potential of constructive criticism. YR-01 began to see their failures as chances for personal development. They adopted a methodical approach to improve their skills. This change in viewpoint emphasizes the significance of constructive criticism in educators' professional growth, as it can transform negative feelings into a potent motivator for enhancement. Through a systematic approach to addressing the specific issues highlighted in the feedback,



participants were able to enhance their teaching skills and strengthen their commitment to the profession, thereby enhancing their professional identity. The perpetual cycle of criticism and self-improvement exemplifies how an encouraging and introspective online educational environment can foster resilience, flexibility, and a steadfast dedication to the changing requirements of contemporary education.

#### 4.1.4. *Self-perception and Prospective Trajectories*

The participants expressed well-defined aspirations for their future roles as professional educators, incorporating their experiences with online teaching into their evolving professional identities. They viewed these digital teaching experiences as opportunities to cultivate essential skills, such as adaptability and technological proficiency, which are crucial in modern education. This forward-looking perspective enabled them to align their self-perception with their professional goals. RM-03 stated:

*"In the future, it is imperative for me to possess profound expertise, encompassing not only education but also a wide range of other subjects. Proficiency in digital media operation is essential in the current all-digital world. Furthermore, it is imperative that I maintain a positive demeanor, exhibit politeness, refrain from being biased or discriminatory against pupils, and avoid any behaviour that may be perceived as intimidating."*

The statement indicates that the participants aim to embody the qualities of a skilled and ethical digital educator, reflecting a commitment to professional excellence in an online teaching context. It emphasizes how online teaching experiences are crucial in shaping their desired professional identities. This process enables them to cultivate technical proficiency and ethical teaching practices to foster an inclusive and effective digital learning environment.

#### 4.2. *Factors Influencing Lecturers' Professional Identity Construction in the Online Teaching Context*

The construction of professional identity among lecturers is shaped by various factors, especially within online teaching. Digital environments offer new opportunities and challenges, influencing how future educators perceive themselves and their roles. Key factors such as personal beliefs, teaching experiences, feedback, technological skills, and motivation are crucial in shaping their professional identities in these virtual settings.

##### 4.2.1. *Internal Factors Individual's Personality Traits*

Participants recognized that personality traits are fundamental to establishing their professional identity. These traits affected their ability to embrace digital tools and adapt to the demands of online teaching, ultimately contributing to a more distinct and compelling professional identity in the evolving educational landscape. EN-05 declared:

*"Teaching has facilitated a broadened perspective, alleviated performance anxiety during practice, and fostered a relaxed and conducive learning environment. Personality is vital in our education, and I possess exceptional communication and empathy skills."*

This statement suggests that practical communication skills and the ability to understand and share the feelings of others are essential in developing their beliefs about teaching and interactions with others in the classroom, impacting their professional sense of self.

##### 4.2.2. *Experience in Education*

Engaging in multiple online teaching sessions was crucial in shaping one's professional identity, particularly in the context of teaching experience. Each session provided valuable opportunities for participants to refine their teaching techniques, receive feedback, and reflect on their practices. This iterative process allowed them to build confidence, adapt their strategies, and develop a more nuanced understanding of their educator role. The accumulated experience enhanced their teaching skills and reinforced their sense of professional identity and competence in the digital teaching environment. User YR-03 commented:

*"I can mask or hide my anxiety while conducting online teaching. I can also explore novel instructional mediums for students, such as showcasing films and conducting mini-quizzes on various platforms."*

This opportunity enabled lecturers to explore and experiment with various teaching media, which helped reduce anxiety and fostered a sense of proficiency and originality. Engaging with diverse tools and methods allowed them to enhance their teaching skills and build confidence, which is crucial in shaping their professional identities. By actively using various digital tools and procedures, the participants reduced their anxiety and developed a strong sense of skill and creativity. Lecturers were able to experiment with novel teaching approaches that aligned with the requirements and preferences of their students by exploring different instructional mediums, such as presenting films and conducting mini-quizzes. This experiment played a crucial role in enabling them to improve their teaching methods, resulting in a more engaging and participatory instructional approach. The chance to be innovative in the online teaching setting had a significant role in forming a unique professional personality, marked by the ability to adjust, think creatively, and strive for ongoing enhancement.

#### 4.2.3. External Factors Related to Education

The participants' creation of their professional identity was significantly influenced by various educational elements, particularly feedback from lecturers and colleagues. Constructive comments and evaluations provided by these individuals offered valuable insights into their teaching practices and professional growth. YR-07 observed:

*"Engaging in direct teaching practice training, accompanied by constructive feedback from professors and peers, adequately prepares me for the teaching profession and instills confidence in my abilities. I can employ a wide range of technological applications. A proficient educator must possess the necessary skills to utilize technology in the classroom effectively."*

This excerpt emphasizes the significance of receiving constructive criticism and advanced technology skills in developing a self-assured and competent professional persona. Constructive feedback helps individuals identify areas for improvement and build on their strengths, while advanced technology skills enable them to integrate digital tools into their teaching practices effectively.

Overall, the results indicate that engaging in online teaching activities significantly influences the development of professional identities among English Language Lecturers. The participants cultivated a digital-focused teaching identity, including technology expertise and cutting-edge instructional approaches into their professional identities. Personality traits and teaching experience were vital in developing confidence and inventiveness, while educational feedback and technical training further strengthened their professional identities. The incremental and structured process of forming one's identity suggests that online teaching offers a nurturing setting for aspiring lecturers to shift from conventional duties to becoming proficient digital educators.

## 5. Discussion

Forming a professional identity is an ongoing and enduring process, significantly shaped by educational experiences and the social contexts in which these experiences occur. In education, developing one's identity is crucial for personal development. It substantially affects how individuals engage with others, tackle difficulties, and see their societal positions. The importance of identity development throughout the crucial years of adolescence, especially in educational environments, is rooted in the improved cognitive abilities of teenagers. These abilities enable them to engage in deeper self-reflection and play a role in simultaneously developing both learning and identity.

To effectively cultivate digital identity formation among lecturers, training programs must be structured to encompass both the technical and psychological dimensions of the transition to online teaching by Facilitating workshops that assist educators in comprehending the notion of professional identity and its evolution within digital environments. Utilize Social Identity Theory to elucidate the transition from "traditional lecturer" to "digital lecturer" and the significance of adopting this new identity.

The emergence of the "digital lecturer" as a unique professional identity is perhaps the most intriguing find. This archetype exemplifies a fusion of the traditional and the contemporary, as lecturers utilize their traditional knowledge while simultaneously incorporating digital tools and pedagogies. For example, one lecturer described integrating digital storytelling tools with storytelling, a cultural practice profoundly ingrained in Indonesia, to develop captivating online lessons. This hybrid identity counters the idea that digital transformation necessitates abandoning traditional practices and instead proposes a synergistic integration of the past and present time.

The convergence of learning and identity building is crucial. As learners participate in the construction of their identities, they experience a transformative process that fundamentally alters their essence. Educators play a vital role in this process by establishing learning environments that connect with students' experiences and mirror their values. This approach differs from too inflexible, academically oriented teaching methods that could neglect the relationship and developmental components of student identity. Early-career lecturers who have the opportunity to bring new and creative techniques need to think about how their job may help students build their identity through practices that involve understanding and self-reflection. Effective teaching requires more than simply conveying knowledge; it demands a profound involvement in the identity formation of pupils. To optimize their influence, educators must possess the necessary abilities and attitude to encourage introspection and facilitate the development of one's sense of self, which can be accomplished through focused instruction and guidance.

Identity is a multifaceted concept that arises when individual experiences and social interactions converge. It functions as both a provider of significance and a result of processes that create meaning [29-32]. The dynamic relationship between forming one's identity and the activities involved in instruction is mutually beneficial, as each process strengthens and improves the other. This statement is consistent with Flum and Kaplan [33] claim that students actively and thoughtfully explore their experiences, difficulties, and viewpoints through reflective learning, working with their classmates to find significance [34].

In the modern era of technology, students have been accustomed to places that are abundant in technology and anticipate the same level of involvement in their educational encounters. TikTok and Live Worksheet have been successfully incorporated into English Language instruction, showcasing the digital skills that contemporary lecturers must possess. This finding aligns with prior research emphasizing the influence of resources, such as time, technology, and financing, on adopting digital platforms like Blackboard and Zoom in educational environments [35]. Lack of digital literacy can significantly impede students' future academic and professional achievements [36-38]. English Language Lecturers are now expected to possess advanced skills in educational technology and the ability to develop innovative digital learning environments that cater to the changing requirements of their students. Digital competence comprises a broad spectrum of capabilities, knowledge, and attitudes essential for efficiently employing digital technology in the classroom.

The correlation between teaching and learning has emerged as a crucial determinant of student motivation in online environments. Although several online platforms prioritize utilizing information technology, they frequently need essential infrastructure to facilitate substantial lecturer-student and peer interactions [39]. The main goal of integrating learning and teaching is to optimize human-machine interactions, which, when properly handled, can enhance student engagement and facilitate more profound cognitive processing [40]. Virtual practical training in course delivery complements traditional instructional approaches by providing students with simulated situations to apply theoretical knowledge [41]. Lecturers must possess the necessary skills to utilize virtual technologies proficiently, establish practice-based learning environments, and assist students in navigating intricate course material.

Feedback is an essential element in how lecturers develop their professional self-concept. It acts as an external influence that forms their identity. By receiving criticism and engaging in reflective practice, lecturers are more inclined to perceive themselves as proactive catalysts for change and discerning

intellectuals within their field. Nevertheless, the potential advantages of feedback are only allowed if it is promptly acted upon. When designing feedback systems for extensive classroom settings, it is essential to consider social constructivism. This condition means that the feedback should be meaningful and able to be acted upon [42, 43].

To summarize, this study emphasizes the importance of online teaching activities in fostering the formation of a digital identity among English Language Lecturers. These activities offer educators significant opportunities to interact with technology, contributing to personal and professional development. Integrating online teaching into English Language Lecturer training programs provides several pedagogical advantages, allowing educators to improve their digital personas and teaching methods. This strategy promotes a more flexible and responsive learning environment, motivating educators to consistently assess and refine their approaches in the evolving digital context.

This study's findings enhance our theoretical comprehension of identity development in online education, specifically on the impact of digital technology on the professional identities of educators. This research thoroughly explains how English Language Lecturers' identities are influenced by their beliefs about tasks, personality traits, motivation at work, self-image, and future goals by examining the relationships between technology, self-perception, and professional development. In addition, this study extends current theories by examining the influence of online teaching on the development of one's identity, thereby establishing a basis for further investigation in this field.

This study suggests that it is essential to prioritize including online teaching activities in professional development programs for educators based on practical considerations. By utilizing the educational capabilities of digital resources, these programs can enhance student involvement and improve instructional efficacy. Furthermore, encouraging lecturers to contemplate their digital identities can result in more influential and enduring teaching methodologies. When creating and conducting training programs, institutions should consider these criteria to ensure the comprehensive development of educators in the digital era.

## 6. Conclusion

This study offers unique insights into the factors that influence the development of professional identities among English Language Lecturers. It emphasizes the critical impact of online teaching activities in building these identities. The results indicate that online teaching has significantly affected the identities of lecturers, causing them to transform into digital educators. Central to the process of identity creation are vital components such as task beliefs, personality, job motivation, self-image, and future aspirations. Furthermore, the research highlighted personality traits, teaching experience, feedback, and technological skills as crucial factors that influence these identities in online micro-instruction.

These findings highlight the necessity of implementing professional development programs that provide English Language Lecturers with the expertise and understanding to utilize online technology in their teaching methodologies proficiently. Through reflective methods, educators can cultivate digital identity development, improving teaching efficacy and empowering students to become proactive and involved learners. These initiatives should motivate educators to regularly contemplate their changing identities, allowing them to adjust to the ever-changing requirements of digital education.

Moreover, the study highlights the importance of educators establishing learning settings that foster independence and analytical reasoning. When lecturers are provided with chances to actively participate in their learning experiences and contemplate their ideas, attitudes, and behaviors, they are more inclined to perceive themselves as proactive change agents within their respective areas. Although this study provides valuable insights into identity development in online teaching settings, additional longitudinal research and bigger sample size are required to investigate these findings' long-term impacts and broader relevance. However, the discussion offered in this article is relevant. It adds to continuing arguments regarding the contextual elements in educational environments that impact the development of one's identity and the consequences this has for professional growth.

## Transparency:

The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

## Acknowledgments:

The authors would like to acknowledge the Language and Literature Study Program of the Language and Arts Faculty, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, for their essential assistance in this research study.

## Copyright:

© 2025 by the authors. This open-access article is distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## References

- [1] G. Kelchtermans, "Getting the story, understanding the lives: From career stories to teachers' professional development," *Teaching and Teacher Education*, vol. 9, no. 5-6, pp. 443-456, 1993. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X\(93\)90029-G](https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X(93)90029-G)
- [2] Z. Van Veldhoven and J. Vanthienen, "Digital transformation as an interaction-driven perspective between business, society, and technology," *Electronic Markets*, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 629-644, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12525-021-00464-5>
- [3] S. Kraus, P. Jones, N. Kailer, A. Weinmann, N. Chaparro-Banegas, and N. Roig-Tierno, "Digital transformation: An overview of the current state of the art of research," *Sage Open*, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 1-15, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211047576>
- [4] S. E. Mustafa and A. Hamzah, "Online social networking: A new form of social interaction," *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 96-104, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.7763/IJSSH.2011.V1.17>
- [5] S. Žikić, "How technology impacts communication and identity-creation," *Philosophy and Medicine*, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 297-310, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.2298/FID2202297Z>
- [6] D. Helbing and M. Ienca, "Why converging technologies need converging international regulation," *Ethics and Information Technology*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 1-14, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10676-024-09756-8>
- [7] D. Hanandini, "Social transformation in modern society: A literature review on the role of technology in social interaction," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ekotrans & Erudisi*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 82-95, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.69989/jom6cg84>
- [8] C. L. Guenther, E. Wilton, and R. Fernandes, "Identity," in *encyclopedia of personality and individual differences, V. Zeigler-Hill and T. K. Shackelford, Eds.* Cham: Springer International Publishing. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-24612-3\\_1132](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-24612-3_1132), 2020.
- [9] T. S. Farrell, "Exploring the professional role identities of experienced ESL teachers through reflective practice," *System*, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 54-62, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2011.01.012>
- [10] M. D. Miller, "Civic identity development: A study of how students conceptualize and operationalize civic engagement at an independent school," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 2009.
- [11] S. Mercer, *Towards an understanding of language learner self-concept*. Berlin: Springer Science & Business Media, 2011.
- [12] B. Norton, *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation*. Bristol: Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781783090563>, 2013.
- [13] E. Ushioda, "Language learning motivation, self and identity: Current theoretical perspectives," *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 199-210, 2011. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2010.538701>
- [14] Miller and R. Kubota, *Second language identity construction*, in *The Cambridge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- [15] J. Moate and M. Ruohotie-Lyhty, "Identity and agency development in a CLIL-based Teacher education program," *Journal for the Psychology of Language Learning*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 92-106, 2020.
- [16] S. V. George, P. W. Richardson, and H. M. Watt, "Early career teachers' self-efficacy: A longitudinal study from Australia," *Australian Journal of Education*, vol. 62, no. 2, pp. 217-233, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0004944118779601>
- [17] E. R. Miller, B. Morgan, and A. L. Medina, "Exploring language teacher identity work as ethical self-formation," *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 101, no. S1, pp. 91-105, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12371>
- [18] C. Terkowsky, S. Frye, and D. May, "Online engineering education for manufacturing technology: Is a remote experiment a suitable tool to teach competences for "Working 4.0"?", *European Journal of Education*, vol. 54, no. 4, pp. 577-590, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejed.12368>

- [19] C. Beauchamp and L. Thomas, "Understanding teacher identity: An overview of issues in the literature and implications for teacher education," *Cambridge Journal of Education*, vol. 39, no. 2, pp. 175-189, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640902902252>
- [20] L. Varghese, "Constructing a worker identity: Class, experience, and organizing in workers' awaaz," *Cultural Dynamics*, vol. 18, no. 2, pp. 189-211, 2006. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0921374006066698>
- [21] U. Schimank, "New public management as de-professionalization - conceptual reflections with some applications to school teachers," in *Restructuring Welfare Governance: Marketization, Managerialism, and Welfare State Professionalism*, T. Klenk S. Pavolini, Ed., 2015.
- [22] H. Shi, Y. Wang, and Y. Wang, "'Not waiting for the storm to pass, but dancing in the rain': professional identity construction of efl teachers at tutoring institutions," *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 1-20, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-024-00304-x>
- [23] A. Sfard and A. Prusak, "Telling identities: In search of an analytic tool for investigating learning as a culturally shaped activity," *Educational Researcher*, vol. 34, no. 4, pp. 14-22, 2005. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X034004014>
- [24] A. El-Soussi, "The shift from face-to-face to online teaching due to COVID-19: Its impact on higher education faculty's professional identity," *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 1-8, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2022.100139>
- [25] W. Amran, R. Sulaiman, A. Syamsu, and M. A. Ramadhana, "The microteaching course benefits towards the students of English education study program in teaching practice," *Didaktika: Jurnal Kependidikan*, vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 319-324, 2023.
- [26] A. Alam and A. Mohanty, "Educational technology: Exploring the convergence of technology and pedagogy through mobility, interactivity, AI, and learning tools," *Cogent Engineering*, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 1-37, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311916.2023.2283282>
- [27] N. L. Kaeane and R. T. Molokomme, "Navigating the new normal: Challenges in lecturers' adaptation to online learning at a South African university of technology post-emergency remote teaching," *Edelweiss Applied Science and Technology*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 590-602, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.55214/25768484.v9i2.4541>
- [28] H. Juma and G. Patel, "Opportunities of integrating alternative assessment in higher education in the 21st Century," *Grand Academic Portal Research Journals*, vol. 7, pp. 127-132, 2024.
- [29] K. A. Lerseth, *Identity development among pre-service teacher candidates*. Iowa: Iowa State University, 2013.
- [30] H. Liu and P. Sammons, "Teaching in the shadow: Explorations of teachers' professional identities in private tutoring institutions in China," *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 1-14, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2021.100071>
- [31] J. C. Richardson and J. Alsup, "From the classroom to the keyboard: How seven teachers created their online teacher identities," *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, vol. 16, no. 1, pp. 142-167, 2015. <https://doi.org/10.19173/irrodl.v16i1.1814>
- [32] H. V. Quesada and G. A. Irgens, "Identity negotiation of pre-service teachers of English as a foreign language," in *International Society of the Learning Sciences (ISLS)*, "in *Proceedings of the 14th International Conference of the Learning Sciences (ICLS)*, Volume 4, M. Gresalfi and I. S. Horn, Eds., Nashville, Tennessee: International Society of the Learning Sciences (ISLS), 2020.
- [33] H. Flum and A. Kaplan, "Motivation and cognitive engagement in the learning process: The role of student interests and values," *Educational Psychologist*, vol. 41, no. 2, pp. 91-101, 2006. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep4102\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep4102_3)
- [34] H. Flum and A. Kaplan, "Identity formation in educational settings: A contextualized view of theory and research in practice," *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, vol. 37, no. 3, pp. 240-245, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2012.01.003>
- [35] F. Aziz, R. M. Rasdi, A. M. Rami, F. Razali, and S. Ahrari, "Factors determining academics' behavioral intention and usage behavior towards online teaching technologies during COVID-19: An extension of the UTAUT," *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, vol. 17, no. 9, pp. 137-153, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v17i09.30481>
- [36] T. Carter, "Preparing Generation Z for the teaching profession," *Srate Journal*, vol. 27, no. 1, pp. 1-8, 2018.
- [37] C. Maphosa and S. Bhebhe, "Digital literacy: A must for open distance and e-learning (ODEL) students," *European Journal of Education Studies*, vol. 5, no. 10, pp. 186-199, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2560085>
- [38] A. Zainal, "ESL teachers' use of ICT in teaching English literature: An analysis of teachers' TPCK," *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 34, pp. 234-237, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.02.047>
- [39] P. Zhang and X. Chang, "The influence of online teaching interactive behaviors on sustained learning results of learners," *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, vol. 17, no. 10, pp. 173-185, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v17i10.30941>
- [40] J. Yang and C. Jiang, "Intersubjectivity and Virtual Practice in Courses Teaching," *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, vol. 17, no. 10, pp. 4-15, 2022. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v17i10.30915>



- [41] N. Aykac, K. Yildirim, Y. Altinkurt, and M. M. Marsh, "Understanding the underlying factors affecting the perception of pre-service teachers' teacher identity: A new instrument to support teacher education," *Üniversitepark Bülten*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 67–78, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.22521/unibulletin.2017.61.6>
- [42] L. Sequeira and C. M. Dacey, "The COVID-19 diaries: Identity, teaching, and learning at a crossroads," *Front Education (Lausanne)*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 1–12, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2020.586123>
- [43] N. H. Zher, R. M. R. Hussein, and R. M. Saat, "Enhancing feedback via peer learning in large classrooms," *Malaysian Online Journal of Educational Technology*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 1–16, 2016.