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**Identity-agency and life-course agency of English teachers in  
Tegal City, Banyumasan area, Indonesia**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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Applied Linguistics

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## **Abstract**

This study explores the identity formation of English teachers in Tegal City, Banyumasan area in Central Java, Indonesia. It draws on the frameworks of identity-agency and life-course agency within three different contexts: Ladang High School teachers, Ladang Private Tuition Centre teachers, and Ladang University pre-service teachers. It seeks to answer two research questions: 1) How does identity-agency support pre-service teachers in Tegal City to develop their professional identity? 2) What experiences contribute to the identity formation of English teachers in Tegal City within their life-course agency? A dialogical approach is used to analyse data to develop insights into how each of the nine participants exercises his/her agency in the complexity of their relationship with their social environments and values, significant others, and how they forge and navigate different pathways in making their professional identity. This study employs a qualitative approach and uses case study methods. Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews, classroom observation, narrative accounts, photographs, documents, and online contact. The first data collection stage was conducted from December 2015 to February 2016 and included site visits, observations, interviews, narrative accounts, and document collection. A researcher's journal and field notes were used as supportive data. The second stage was conducted from August to September 2016. It was conducted through follow-up interviews and revisiting each research site to collect photographs and additional documents. The findings indicate that diverse elements contribute to the shaping of identity through life-course agency and identity-agency: religion, learning experiences, family members, regulations, and social contexts where these participants chose a particular action, changed or dropped a decision, and in so doing, they exercised their agency. Initial contact with English was generated from family members, media idols, or objects such as brochures and leaflets written in English. The teacher participants' narratives indicated that they did not plan to be English teachers, but their journey and complex trajectories had led them to the profession. By way of contrast, the pre-service teachers' narratives indicated that they majored in English education to be English teachers, but they ended up using English differently to shape their identity. The study concludes with implications for theory and practice arguing that the frameworks of identity-agency and life-course agency can be useful development tools for understanding both teachers' professional lives and their trajectories in Indonesia.

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## **Dedication**

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