

STRATEGIES FOR SHAPING THE IDENTITY OF NOVICE ARABIC TEACHERS IN A PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Abstract

This study investigates the strategic formation of professional identity among novice Arabic teachers within a teacher professional education program. It aimed to delineate the core identity values fostered and to elucidate the specific strategies employed by the program to cultivate this identity. Employing a qualitative case study design, data were generated through direct observation and semi-structured interviews with program implementers, educators, and student teachers, selected via snowball sampling. Analysis involved a staged process of data reduction, coding, and categorization, framed by Uril Bahrudin's theory of language education development. The findings demonstrate that professionalism and learning are the central identity values instilled throughout the program. This identity, which serves as an indicator of professional competence, is systematically forged through a multi-faceted strategic approach that includes matriculation, targeted assignments, curated teaching materials, comprehensive assessment and evaluation, and activity-based methods. These strategies effectively guide novice Arabic teachers in developing their professional identity and shaping their long-term teaching trajectory.

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Keywords:

Arabic Language Teacher; Professional Identity; Professional Education Program.

مستخلص البحث

تناول هذه الدراسة التكوين الاستراتيجي للهوية المهنية لدى معلمي اللغة العربية المبتدئين ضمن برنامج الإعداد المهني للمعلمين. تهدف الدراسة إلى تحديد قيم الهوية الأساسية التي يتبناها المعلمون، وتوضيح الاستراتيجيات المحددة التي يوظفها البرنامج لغرس هذه الهوية. باستخدام منهج دراسة الحالة النوعي، تم جمع البيانات من خلال الملاحظة المباشرة والمقابلات شبه المنظمة مع منفذي البرنامج، والمربين، والطلاب المعلمين، الذين تم اختيارهم بأسلوب عينة كرة الثلج. وقد تم تحليل البيانات عبر عملية مرحلية من تقليص البيانات وتمييزها وتصنيفها، في إطار نظرية أوريل بحر الدين لتطوير تعليم اللغة. تُظهر النتائج أن "المهنية" و"التعلم" هما قيمتا الهوية المحوريتان اللتان يتم ترسيخهما. وهذه الهوية، التي تعد مؤشراً للكفاءة المهنية، تُصاغ بشكل منهجي عبر نهج استراتيجي متعدد الأوجه يشمل التهيئة الأكاديمية، والتكليفات الموجهة، والمواد التعليمية المتقاة، وعمليات التقويم والتقييم الشاملة، والتعلم القائم على الأنشطة؛ مما يشكل مسارهم المهني بفعالية.

كلمات أساسية: مدرس اللغة العربية؛ الشخصية المهنية؛ برنامج التعليم المهني.

Introduction

Teachers play a vital role as key components in educational institutions, particularly in enriching the diversity of teaching and learning processes. The success of educational institutions in achieving learning objectives and guiding students toward their aspirations largely depends on the effectiveness of teachers.¹ As stated in Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, a teacher is defined as a professional educator whose primary duties include educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students.² To perform these duties effectively, teachers must possess four core competencies: pedagogical, personal, social, and professional.³ Pedagogical competence, in particular, is essential for establishing a comfortable and effective learning environment in the classroom, both theoretically and practically. According to Mansir, this competence is further enhanced when paired with appropriate teaching methods, strategies, and media.⁴

Efforts to improve the professionalism of novice Arabic teachers can include supervision, fostering discipline, providing motivation, offering guidance, and facilitating training.⁵ According to Jaewoo, it also includes participating workshops, sustainable professional development, collaboration with other agencies, making learning instruments and conducting self-reflection with peer.⁶ One of the Government's efforts to improve the quality of education in Indonesia is by creating a program called Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG). The concept of developing certified educator teachers is directed at the professional development and competence of teachers. From the phenomena in the field and the results of the research, the concept of a strategy for developing the competence of language teachers based on linguistic values is needed.

¹ Parivash Mohammad Nezhad and Steven A. Stolz, "The Interplay of Context and Need: Unravelling the Interwoven Threads of Teachers' Professional Learning/Development," *The Australian Educational Researcher* 52, no. 2 (April 2025): 1315–43, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13384-024-00764-7>.

² Triwahyu Budiutomo et al., "Reconstruction of Teacher Certification Policies According to Law Number 14 of 2005 Concerning Teachers and Lecturers Based on the Value of Pancasila Justice," *Scholars International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice* 4, no. 3 (March 16, 2021): 151–58, <https://doi.org/10.36348/sijlcj.2021.v04i03.004>.

³ Umi Rusilowati and Wahyudi Wahyudi, "The Significance of Educator Certification in Developing Pedagogy, Personality, Social and Professional Competencies," in *Proceedings of the 2nd Social and Humaniora Research Symposium (SoRes 2019)* (Bandung, Indonesia: Atlantis Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.200225.095>.

⁴ Adnan Hakim, "Contribution of Competence Teacher (Pedagogical, Personality, Professional Competence and Social) On the Performance of Learning," *The International Journal Of Engineering And Science* 4, no. 2 (2015), <https://www.theijes.com/papers/v4-i2/Version-3/A42301012.pdf>.

⁵ Wati Susiawati, "Arabic Learning Styles at State Islamic Universities in the Society Era 5.0," *Arabi : Journal of Arabic Studies* 8, no. 1 (July 2, 2023): 56–66, <https://doi.org/10.24865/ajas.v8i1.594>.

⁶ Jaewoo Choi and Woonsun Kang, "Sustainability of Cooperative Professional Development: Focused on Teachers' Efficacy," *Sustainability* 11, no. 3 (January 23, 2019): 585, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11030585>.

Several key considerations are essential in the formation of a teacher's identity. First, the formation of teacher professionalism starts from identity. Novice Arabic teachers must have an identity in themselves as professional Arabic teachers.⁷ This foundational identity is crucial in preparing them to face the diverse challenges of teaching and learning in school settings.

Second, it is important to acknowledge that some Arabic teachers do not have an academic background in Arabic language education. In other words, their educational qualifications may not align with the professional demands of teaching Arabic.⁸ As observed by the researcher during a preliminary visit to the State University of Malang on September 13, 2024, this discrepancy stems from the historical lack of Arabic language instruction in secondary education, which resulted in a limited number of Arabic education graduates. Consequently, many Arabic teachers in madrasahs come from Islamic religious education backgrounds. From the perspective of efficacy theory, the identity of Arabic teachers with non-linear academic backgrounds may be perceived as less effective, especially when compared to those trained specifically in Arabic education.⁹ The participation of such teachers in professional training programs presents both a challenge and an opportunity in shaping their professional identity.

Third, teacher professional education programs, grounded in the professional domain, aim to cultivate the identity and self-efficacy of prospective teachers. These programs are designed to equip future educators with the mindset and competencies required to fulfill educational goals and responsibilities. Through structured training and reflective practice, teacher professional education provides valuable insights and developmental experiences that help novice Arabic teachers form a clear and confident professional identity.¹⁰ This is very useful in giving an overview to beginner Arabic teachers.

Research on the identity formation of novice Arabic teachers participating in the Teacher Professional Education (PPG) program is considered urgent for at least two key reasons. First, the PPG program represents a continuation of the government's broader policy on teacher education. It serves as one of the primary benchmarks for producing professional educators. As a result, novice teachers—

⁷ Aulia Mustika Ilmiani et al., "Arabic Teacher Identity: In the Perspective of Performance during Distance Learning," *Jurnal Al Bayan: Jurnal Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 14, no. 1 (May 18, 2022): 58–78, <https://doi.org/10.24042/albayan.v14i1.10830>.

⁸ Zurqoni Zurqoni et al., "Has Arabic Language Learning Been Successfully Implemented?," *International Journal of Instruction* 13, no. 4 (October 1, 2020): 715–30, <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2020.13444a>.

⁹ Vikri Aflaha Qomari et al., "Problems of Students in Learning Arabic Language at Madrasah Aliyah," *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research of Higher Education* 5, no. 1 (January 26, 2022): 18–27, <https://doi.org/10.24036/ijmurhica.v5i1.124>.

¹⁰ Sabine Fabriz et al., "How a Professional Development Programme for University Teachers Impacts Their Teaching-Related Self-Efficacy, Self-Concept, and Subjective Knowledge," *Higher Education Research & Development* 40, no. 4 (June 7, 2021): 738–52, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2020.1787957>.

including prospective Arabic language teachers—are now required to participate in this program as part of their professional journey. Second, understanding the identity of novice Arabic teachers is crucial because professionalism is rooted in self-identity. The development of a teacher's identity emerges from personal experiences throughout the learning and training process—shaped by the activities undertaken, the decisions made, and the challenges encountered along with their corresponding solutions.

Based on this urgency, this study focuses on describing and understanding the identity formation of novice Arabic teachers within the context of teacher professional training. Specifically, the aims of this research are twofold: first, to describe the identity values held by novice Arabic teachers who undergo the Teacher Professional Education (PPG) program; and second, to identify the strategies used in shaping their professional identity during the training. Previous research in this area serves to support, contextualize, and enrich the current study, while also helping to distinguish its unique contributions.

In this study, three international journal articles were included in previous research related to the concept of Arabic language teacher identity. The first is a study entitled "Investigating the critical influences on emerging trainee teacher identity in the UAEU, taken from a study by the Professional Doctor of Education University of the West of England researched by Altahair Attia Adelkarim in the United Arab Emirates in 2020 which tells about the influence on teacher identity that appears in students who intend to become Arabic teachers or English teachers.¹¹ This journal discusses the description of the important factors involved when teacher identities emerge in student groups, and which have influenced their career choices. The result of this qualitative research method is the identity of the teacher as seen by female student teachers in the UAE who believe that "becoming a teacher" is easy by showing determination to stay in this profession. The implications of this research are threefold: the absence of a clear separation between "traditionalist" and "modernist" teachers; improve the status of teachers in the UAE, and encourage more primary school teachers for boys. The results of this study are used by researchers to be a source of information in seeing the identity of beginner Arabic teachers in teacher professional training.

Second, the research entitled "Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher as Perceived by Iranian Teachers and Learners of English", taken from the journal *English Language Teaching*, was researched by Homa Babai Shishavan in Iran in 2014 which tells about the character of English quality of effective English teachers (EELT) as perceived by Iranian teachers and students. The result of this qualitative method is that teachers must give homework and

¹¹ Altahair Attia Adelkarim, "Investigating the Critical Influences on Emerging Trainee Teacher Identity in the UAEU: A Case Study of Elementary Arabic and English Language Students' Views" (Ph.D thesis, Bristol, University of the West of England, 2020).

integrate group activities into the classroom.¹² In contrast, students agree that teaching English in Persian is one of the distinguishing characteristics of EELT. The implication of this research is the investigation of positive characteristics that must be possessed by effective English teachers. The results of this study are used by researchers to be a source of information in looking at the characteristics of beginner Arabic teachers.

Third, the study titled "Professional Identity of the Teacher and Its Relationship with Commitment to the Ethics of the Profession", published in the journal *Al Jamik fi Dirasat an Nafsiyyah wa Ulum Tarbawiyah* and conducted by Soulev Mecheri in Algeria in 2018, examines the concept of professional identity among teachers.¹³ This research explores the connection between the formation of a teacher's professional identity and their commitment to professional ethics, viewed from a psychological perspective. Utilizing a qualitative research method, the findings suggest that achieving a professional identity is not a guaranteed outcome, nor is it universally attained by all teachers. Notably, the study emphasizes that professional identity is not necessarily linked to age, but rather to the training and development processes teachers undergo. The findings of this study serve as a comparative reference point for the current research, particularly in analyzing the identity development of novice Arabic teachers before and after participating in professional teacher training.

From the literature study, the researcher stated that some prospective teachers who will carry out teaching practices in educational institutions find it difficult to deliver learning materials. This identifies that pedagogic competence is a necessity in the identity of novice teachers.¹⁴ Research by Adelkarim in the UAE shows the importance of personal factors in choosing a teacher's career. However, the study lacked insight into how a structured program can systematically shape such identities post-career choices.¹⁵ Similarly, the Shishavan and Sadeghi study in Iran focused on the characteristics of effective teachers from student perceptions, but not on the process of how novice teachers construct those characteristics.¹⁶ This gap is what this study seeks to fill: namely identifying institutional strategies in the PPG program to actively shape the identity of novice teachers. Second, the

¹² Homa Babai Shishavan and Karim Sadeghi, "Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher as Perceived by Iranian Teachers and Learners of English," *English Language Teaching* 2, no. 4 (November 17, 2009): p130, <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v2n4p130>.

¹³ Maher A. Hassan et al., "Professional Identity and Its Relationship to Job Satisfaction Among General Education Teachers in Light of Some Variables," *Evolutionary Studies in Imaginative Culture*, October 14, 2024, <https://esiculture.com/index.php/esiculture/article/view/1773>.

¹⁴ Irit Sasson, David Kalir, and Noam Malkinson, "The Role of Pedagogical Practices in Novice Teachers' Work," *European Journal of Educational Research* 9, no. 2 (April 15, 2020): 457–69, <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.9.2.457>.

¹⁵ Adelkarim, "Investigating the Critical Influences on Emerging Trainee Teacher Identity in the UAEU: A Case Study of Elementary Arabic and English Language Students' Views."

¹⁶ Shishavan and Sadeghi, "Characteristics of an Effective English Language Teacher as Perceived by Iranian Teachers and Learners of English."

discovery and formation of the identity of beginner teachers in teacher professional training participants requires a strategy so that it will be a source of efficacy in developing pedagogic competence for beginner Arabic teachers.

Method

The research method used in this research is qualitative research. Qualitative research methods are used to function their tasks as descriptive research.¹⁷ According to Moleong, qualitative research is research that uses several natural approaches, one of which is the case study.¹⁸ The researcher selected the Teacher Professional Education Program (*Pendidikan Profesi Guru* or PPG) conducted at the State University of Malang as the research site. This location was chosen due to its relevance to the research focus and its effectiveness in providing access to the target participants. The primary objective of the study is to explore strategies for shaping the professional identity of novice Arabic teachers. In this context, beginner teachers refer to individuals who are in the initial stages of entering the teaching profession—either recent graduates from educational or non-educational undergraduate programs who aspire to become professional teachers. From a practical standpoint, the 2024 Pre-service Arabic Teacher Training Program is actively being implemented at the State University of Malang, making it a suitable and accessible site for conducting this research.

Primary data sources were obtained from key informants involved in the implementation of the 2024 Arabic Teacher Training Program. These included the Head of the Arabic Teacher Training Program, lecturers of the Arabic Teacher Training at the State University of Malang, and training participants. Participants were selected using the snowball sampling method, with particular attention given to those who did not come from an Arabic language education background, in order to capture a diverse range of perspectives.¹⁹ Secondary data were collected from brochures and relevant literature related to the research focus. Data collection techniques included both observation and interviews. Observations were conducted directly during the implementation of the program to ensure a contextual understanding of the training environment and processes. Meanwhile, in-depth and semi-structured interviews at the State University of Malang. The analysis process used in this research is carried out qualitatively in stages;

¹⁷ Brylialfi Wahyu Furidha, "Comprehension of The Descriptive Qualitative Research Method: A Critical Assessment of the Literature," *Journal Of Multidisciplinary Research*, January 12, 2024, 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.56943/jmr.v2i4.443>.

¹⁸ Lexy J Moleong, *Qualitative Research Methodology* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2007).

¹⁹ Irina-Maria Dragan and Alexandru Isaic-Maniu, "An Original Solution for Completing Research through Snowball Sampling—Handicapping Method," *Advances in Applied Sociology* 12, no. 11 (2022): 729–46, <https://doi.org/10.4236/aasoci.2022.1211052>.

reduction, coding and categorized based on the Arabic language development strategy presented by Uril Bahrudin in the previous study.²⁰

Data reduction was employed to extract essential information from selected informants who provided objective insights into the program. Following data collection, a coding process was conducted to sort relevant information obtained from interviews and documentation. This was followed by categorization, which served to extend and deepen the coding process. The primary aim of this research was to identify and categorize the strategies used in shaping the professional identity of Arabic language teachers. To ensure the validity of the data, standard qualitative research validation techniques were applied, including credibility and transferability.

Result and Discussion

Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG)

The Teacher Professional Education (PPG) program in Indonesia is implemented under two ministries: the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Higher Education, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Currently, within the Ministry of Religious Affairs, only Islamic teacher training programs are actively conducted. The In-Service Teacher Training Program (commonly referred to as *Dalam Jabatan*) is organized for teachers who are already in service, encompassing both madrasah and general schools, whether public or private. The subjects offered in the teacher professional training for madrasah include *Aqidah Akhlak*, Fiqh, Islamic Cultural History, Qur'an, Hadith, and Arabic.

There is also a separate program for Islamic education teachers who teach in public or private non-religious schools under the Ministry of Education. This program, however, is still administered through the Ministry of Religious Affairs and uses the same curriculum as that used for madrasah teachers. Notably, for the year 2024, there is no Pre-Service Arabic Teacher Training for madrasah due to budget constraints. Since 2021, the Arabic Teacher Training Program for both madrasah and general schools under the Ministry has been limited to In-Service teachers only, with no provisions yet for Pre-Service teacher training.

In the past, before the establishment of the current Teacher Professional Education (PPG) program, a program known as PLPG (*Pendidikan dan Latihan Profesi Guru*) was implemented, with an initial duration of one month, later reduced to 15 days. In contrast, the Pre-Service Teacher Training Program involves a more extensive process, in which participants engage in academic activities similar to regular university students. The In-Service Teacher Training is typically

²⁰ Uril Bahrudin, *Rekonstruksi pengembangan pendidikan bahasa Arab* (Malang: CV Lisan Arabi, 2017).

conducted online over a four-month period, while the Pre-Service Program is delivered offline and spans one full year.²¹

In general, the structure and learning patterns used by both the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Religious Affairs are similar. However, a new pattern is expected to be introduced in the near future. The Pre-Service Program specifically targets prospective teachers who have no prior teaching experience. It is designed for fresh graduates who, upon completing their bachelor's degree, may directly enroll in the program.

The implementation process for the Pre-Service Program begins with registration and selection, which is coordinated by the respective ministry. Although the ministry holds the primary responsibility, it often collaborates with universities to assist in organizing the selection and execution of the program.

"If you want to register for teacher professional training, you should always update the ppg.kemendikbud.go.id website because the selection of Pre-Service Arabic teacher training is carried out nationally because it is organized by the ministry. At the State University of Malang, Pre-Service Arabic teacher training is currently running which is carried out offline all with an implementation duration of 1 year. In 2024, there will be 4 waves of Pre-Service program with different registration times." (Interview: November 06, 2024).

Arabic Teacher Training Membership and Structure

Participants of the Pre-Service Arabic Teacher Training Program are individuals preparing to teach Arabic subjects in public schools, as these schools fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Culture, rather than the Ministry of Religious Affairs. According to the program manager (Interview: September 13, 2024), students in the Pre-Service Program receive scholarships covering tuition fees only; they do not receive living allowances or pocket money, and are therefore responsible for their personal expenses.

Eligibility for the Pre-Service Program requires academic linearity, typically admitting alumni from Arabic Language Education or Arabic Literature departments. However, most Pre-Service Arabic teacher trainees at the State University of Malang come from non-education backgrounds. As such, these participants are required to undertake a Matriculation course to bridge the pedagogical gap (Interview: November 6, 2024).

In terms of financing, the Pre-Service Program is self-funded, whereas the In-Service Program—intended for currently practicing teachers—is supported by external sources such as the National Zakat Agency (*Badan Amil Zakat Nasional* or BAZNAS), regional governments, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The objective of the In-Service Program is twofold: to enhance teacher competence and

²¹ Farah Khan and Muhammad Haseeb, "Analysis of Teacher Training Education Program: A Comparative Study of Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan," *Paradigms* 11, no. 1 (June 15, 2017): 13–17, <https://doi.org/10.24312/paradigms110103>.

to support teacher welfare. Upon successful completion, participants are eligible to receive a professional certification that qualifies them for government-regulated professional allowances. While the authority for certification lies with the Ministry, local governments may offer financial assistance for participation in professional training.

As of 2024 (batch 2), the Pre-Service Program is conducted over a one-year period. However, a notable issue persists regarding the limited number of Arabic alumni who pass the program. Questions have arisen as to why so few Arabic graduates succeed in passing the selection. This may be due to a combination of graduation criteria and strategic efforts to replace retiring teachers. Currently, 142 Pre-Service Program participants are from non-education backgrounds, reinforcing the need for preparatory pedagogical training.

At the State University of Malang, the Teacher Training Program was initially not managed under the Postgraduate School but operated through another institutional unit. However, since 2019, both the Pre-Service and In-Service Programs have come under the auspices of the Postgraduate School. The Teacher Training Program at the university oversees 33 different study programs, each with a designated field coordinator. These coordinators are typically the heads of the respective undergraduate departments. For instance, the Head of the Arabic Language Department also serves as the Coordinator of the Arabic Teacher Training Program (Interview: November 11, 2024).

The primary responsibility of the Head of the Teacher Training Study Program is coordination. Academic and administrative oversight of the program is conducted at the university's graduate school level. For example, if a lecturer fails to submit student grades, it is the responsibility of the Teacher Training Study Program office to follow up through the field coordinator.

Most Pre-Service teacher training participants are graduates of the State University of Malang, except for certain specialized fields such as nursing or animal husbandry, which are based on collaborative agreements with other universities (Interview: November 6, 2024).

The individuals who deliver instruction in the program are referred to as lecturers. However, during workshop sessions, practicing teachers also assist by supporting the lecturers. These cooperating teachers, or *pamong* teachers, are selected from nearby schools based on their professionalism and certification status. They are recruited to contribute to hands-on program activities and provide practical insights during the workshops.

Identity Values of Beginner Arabic Teachers

As previously explained, the term novice teacher refers to individuals who are just beginning their careers in education. This early stage involves a process of learning and adjustment, both personally and professionally, including classroom management and the development of effective teaching methods. Based on the

findings of this study, two core identity values have emerged: professionalism and learning. Professionalism refers to the self-perception of Pre-Service participants as aspiring professional Arabic language teachers. Learning, on the other hand, encompasses the instructional approaches, strategies, and experiences embedded within the program, which also serve as a basis for evaluating its effectiveness.²²

Regarding professional identity, a distinction is evident between participants in the In-Service and Pre-Service programs. In-Service participants already possess teaching experience and complete their training in four months, as their current teaching responsibilities contribute to their academic credit. In contrast, Pre-Service participants are typically recent graduates without prior teaching experience. Their program spans a full academic year and follows a structured curriculum designed to prepare them for the teaching profession.²³ As such, eligibility for the Pre-Service program requires a bachelor's degree and excludes those already categorized as In-Service teachers (Interview: November 6, 2024).

From the perspective of learning identity, the Pre-Service program is designed specifically for novice teachers, and therefore includes a greater number of courses—ranging from six to twelve—which are completed over the course of one year. In contrast, the In-Service program comprises only three courses and is completed within 36 days. According to one interviewee (Interview: 6 November 2024), this substantial difference contributes to the more effective formation of professionalism among Pre-Service participants, although further research is required to examine this claim in depth. The extended duration of the Pre-Service program allows novice teachers to undergo comprehensive training across all pedagogical areas. The coursework is categorized into Compulsory, Selective, and Affective subjects. In addition, the program includes a significant number of assignments, particularly through the Learning Management System (LMS), involving various tasks and instructional materials.²⁴ Given the volume and intensity of these academic and practical activities, Pre-Service participants are exposed to a wide range of learning experiences that contribute meaningfully to their professional identity development.

In the Pre-Service program, assignments are primarily structured around Teaching Practice (*Praktik Pengalaman Lapangan* or PPL), which is integrated directly with the courses studied. This stands in contrast to undergraduate (S1) programs, where PPL is typically conducted in the seventh semester after students

²² Wasis D Dwiyo, "Developing a Blended Learning-Based Method for Problem-Solving in Capability Learning," *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology* 17, no. 1 (2018), <https://www.tojet.net/articles/v17i1/1716.pdf>.

²³ Mohammad Zaelani Musonif, Novita Kusumadewi, and Mohammad Ahsanuddin, "Blended Learning Dalam Pengajaran Bahasa Arab: Kolaborasi Antara Guru Tersertifikasi," *Arabi : Journal of Arabic Studies* 8, no. 2 (December 27, 2023): 193–203, <https://doi.org/10.24865/ajas.v8i2.575>.

²⁴ Iqbal Desam Girinzio et al., "Improve Critical Thinking Students in Indonesia for New Learning Management System," *International Transactions on Education Technology (ITEE)* 1, no. 2 (May 7, 2023): 111–21, <https://doi.org/10.34306/itee.v1i2.311>.

have completed most of their coursework. In the Pre-Service program, however, PPL is carried out in an alternating schedule: one week is allocated for lectures, followed by one week dedicated to field-based teaching practice or experiential learning activities.²⁵

This integrated system, which links theoretical coursework with practical field experience, significantly enhances the professional development of Pre-Service students. Certain courses assign tasks that must be completed as part of the PPL, meaning that the knowledge acquired during lectures must be applied directly in real classroom settings (Interview: 11 November 2024). The outcomes of the PPL activities are then reported and discussed in class, providing opportunities for reflection on new experiences, challenges encountered, and insights gained.

Professionalism is assessed using clear criteria and indicators, most notably through formal examinations. Each assignment and module includes a final test that must be completed individually by students. Thus, in addition to practical teaching experience, mastery of content knowledge is a critical component in evaluating the professional identity of Pre-Service participants.

Strategies for Shaping Identity for Novice Arabic Teachers

In terms of strategies for forming the identity of beginner Arabic teachers, some of the things carried out in the implementation of the Pre-Service program are as follows:

Matriculation Strategy

The matriculation program is a program intended for prospective non-educational Pre-service students. Thus, non-education alumni must take matriculation courses which amount to three courses, including curriculum and education courses. This matriculation activity was held for 1 month, with an independent learning program system, before program students attended regular lectures. So, if the prospective student does not pass matriculation, he cannot take regular lectures (Interview: November 06, 2024).

Strategy in the form of assignments

The form of assignment is carried out in an integrated manner, such as deepening the material, workshops (several times), PPL (at the teaching location and video assignments), comprehensive exams, then there is PPG UKM (consisting of two, namely Performance Exam (UKIN) and UP (Knowledge Test). UKIN is carried out by reporting documents or portfolios such as teaching modules, research works (PTK), participating in seminars or activities, teaching materials, reflections.

²⁵ Moh. Ainin et al., "Analyzing Errors in Lesson Plans of Arabic Teacher Professional Education Participants During the Teaching Practise at Schools," *Al-Ta'rib : Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya* 9, no. 2 (December 2, 2021): 133–44, <https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v9i2.3043>.

The UP (Knowledge Test) is a standardized national examination administered by the Ministry. This test serves as a key determinant of certification eligibility. Should a candidate fail the UP, they are required to retake it in the following year.

Strategies in Teaching Materials

In the implementation of Pre-service Arabic teacher training, a digital learning platform is utilized—namely, the Learning Management System (LMS). The LMS serves as the central hub for learning materials, including structured modules that guide the instructional process.²⁶ This integration of technology represents a significant step toward the digitization of teacher education. Learning materials are primarily accessed through the LMS, while lecturers act as facilitators, providing guidance and support to help participants engage with the content effectively.

The program is supported by experienced teaching staff, who must meet specific qualifications, including holding at least a Lecturer position, possessing an academic background in Education, and being certified as lecturers. The strategic use of the LMS is essential to achieving the intended learning outcomes and ensuring the overall effectiveness of the program.²⁷

Strategies in Learning Systems

In the Pre-service program, both the learning modules and the Learning Management System (LMS) adopt the *MERDEKA* learning flow as mandated by the Ministry. *MERDEKA* is an acronym that outlines a progressive learning model: M (*Mulai dari diri* – Starting from the self), E (*Eksplorasi konsep* – Concept exploration), R (*Ruang kolaborasi* – Integration and connection), D (*Demonstrasi kontekstual* – Contextual demonstration), E (*Elaborasi* – Elaboration), K (*Koneksi antar materi* – Connection across concepts), and A (*Aksi nyata* – Real action). (Interview: November 06, 2024). This learning flow provides a structured pedagogical foundation, which is further enriched by each lecturer's chosen methods, techniques, and instructional strategies to deliver the content effectively.

Strategies in assessment and evaluation

In terms of cognitiveness, the graduation score of Pre-service students at the State University of Malang must get a score of 75. This is a bit high with the graduation standard from the Ministry with a score of 70. This assessment is applied to anticipate the achievement of Pre-service students' scores so that they are not trivial in terms of graduation scores and at the same time to motivate them to achieve the highest graduation scores. Meanwhile, in terms of Affective and

²⁶ Moh. Buny Andaru Bahy et al., "Digitalization of Arabic Language Textbook Based on Communicative Learning to Improve the Linguistic Competence of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Students," *An Nabighoh* 26, no. 1 (June 14, 2024): 67–78, <https://doi.org/10.32332/annabighoh.v26i1.67-78>.

²⁷ Moh Nurul Huda et al., "Applicative Arabic Language Learning Media: Innovations for Arabic Language Education Lecturers in Higher Education," *Arabi : Journal of Arabic Studies* 8, no. 2 (December 27, 2023): 136–47, <https://doi.org/10.24865/ajas.v8i2.686>.

Psychomotor, it will be determined from the assessment of the lecturer who teaches. Furthermore, if they have passed all courses, Pre-service students will take the Participant Competency Exam (UKP PPG). This exam consists of performance test (UKIN) and the Computer-Based Written Exam (UTBK), which tests the field of pedagogy and knowledge. Before the exam, program implementers at the State University of Malang held a Try Out before UTBK. Students are trained with exam questions both about pedagogic questions and about lecture materials.

At Pre-service, there are no courses related to the content of the field of study. However, teaching lecturers are expected to insert the content of the field of study, because not all students master this. Because during the exam, material about the content of the field of study is also tested. This proves that students must be able to learn independently about the content of the field of study.

Strategy in the form of activities

In addition to academic activities, the Teacher Professional Education program implemented by the State University of Malang also includes a series of non-academic activities. While academic components focus on classroom instruction and teaching practice, non-academic activities serve as extracurricular self-development programs. These initiatives aim to equip prospective teachers with additional competencies beyond pedagogical knowledge. Non-academic activities within the Pre-service program include National Defense training, Scout participation, Mental Refreshing sessions, Islamic Spiritual Quotient (ISQ) programs, Scientific Enrichment (Science Insights), Global Diversity Insights, Cultural Appreciation, and Entrepreneurship training. These activities are designed to enhance the holistic development of future teachers, preparing them to contribute meaningfully to school life beyond instructional duties—for instance, by serving as Scout leaders or promoting national character education. This aligns with the broader mission of fostering the Pancasila Student Profile and supporting character-building goals in Indonesia's educational framework.

Activities carried out to form the identity of professional teachers as taken from PPG Instagram posts of the State University of Malang such as; 1) Holding an Independence Work with the theme "Bangkit Guruku, Maju Negeriku" which displays the best works of Pre-service students Batch 2 of 2023, 2) Holding a PPG BK Leadership Project Batch 1 of 2024 State University of Malang, 3) "KULTURA FUSION" which describes modern integration by emphasizing the merger of traditional Indonesian arts and culture, 4) Cakrarunika: Exhibition Week of the State University of Malang, 5) KMD and KML Pre-service 1 YEAR 2024 Scouts, 6) Mental and Spiritual Reflection Pre-service program 1 Year 2024. 7) Workshop Teacher training program with Prof, Michele Simons, students and teachers in Malang City, 8) Lesson Study Training to Improve the Competence of Pamong Teachers in pre-service program Guidance PPL Batch 2 of 2023, dan 9)

Improvement of Examiner Competence UKIN UKPPPPG for Certain Teachers Phase 3 of 2024 Session 1 and Session 2.

With the strategy of non-academic activities carried out, it is proven that it can improve the identity of a professional teacher in both academic and non-academic fields. Some of the achievements and achievements of Pre-service students (taken from PPG Instagram post of State University of Malang) include; 1) PPG Gold Medal in the event IBCA MMA - Pekan Olahraga Nasional (PON) XXI/2024 Aceh- Sumatera Utara, 2) Silver medal in the event Selam Kolam 200M Bifins Putri – Pekan Olahraga Nasional (PON) XXI/2024 Aceh- Sumatera Utara, 3) Gold Medal in the event Greco-Roman Wrestling (87 kg) at The 32nd South East Asian Games - Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 4) Rank III in Sports Sepaktakraw Regional Zone IV 2023 - Qualifying Round PON xxi Aceh- Sumatra Utara 2024, 5) Gold Medal in the event Essay Competition FAPERTA FAIR 5 - Universitas Dhyana Pura Cooperate with Yayasan Rizki Prima Sentosa, 6) THIRD PLACE in the event KEJURDA Sepak Takraw Putri - Piala Ketua PSTI Kota Malang and Piala Umum KONI Kota Malang 2024, 7) Gold Medal with the event Essay Competition FAPERTA FAIR 5 - Universitas Dhyana Pura coopeate with Yayasan Rizki Prima Sentosa, 8) Gold Medal in the event Essay Competition FAPERTA FAIR 5 - Universitas Dhyana Pura cooperate with Yayasan Rizki Prima Sentosa, 9) Writing Articles in Gelaran Kreasi Kompetisi dan Edukasi in Universitas Yogyakarta, 10) 3rd place in the Sports Branch event Bridge Baregu Mixture - Pekan Olahraga Mahasiswa Nasional (POMNAS) XVIII 2023, dan 11) 1st place in the Tournament ITS Challenge 2023 with the theme "*Bid Your Best Card and Don't Pass The Chance*".

In general, this research activity went well in accordance with the research. There are several things that need to be evaluated according to the researcher that according to the researcher's view, the results of this research on Pre-Service program can be used as a reference and reference, as well as preliminary studies on teacher training program, especially related to the field of Arabic studies and prospective students of Arabic teachers. Then research on the formation of the identity of beginner Arabic teachers in the teacher training program needs further research. The researcher's hope is that the results of this research can complement previous research studies and enrich the research treasures on Arabic Program for future research.

Table 1. Strategy Category

Strategy Category	Description	Purpose/Outcome
Matriculation Strategy	Pre-service students from non-education backgrounds take 3 courses (including curriculum & education). Held for 1 month before regular lectures.	To ensure students from non-education backgrounds have foundational knowledge before starting regular courses.
Assignments Strategy	Integrated assignments such as deepening materials, workshops, video assignments, exams (Performance Exam UKIN and Knowledge Test UP).	To evaluate and reinforce student knowledge and teaching competencies.

Strategy Category	Description	Purpose/Outcome
Teaching Materials Strategy	Learning Management System (LMS) used for modules and directed by experienced teaching staff.	To provide structured, accessible learning materials through a digital platform, enhancing the learning experience.
Learning System Strategy	The MERDEKA learning flow system: M: Self, E: Exploration, R: Connection, D: Demonstration, E: Elaboration, K: Connection, A: Action.	To encourage student autonomy, critical thinking, and real-world application of learning.
Assessment & Evaluation Strategy	Cognitive assessment (score of 75), Affective & Psychomotor (based on lecturer evaluation). Try-Out before Competency Exams (UKP PPG).	To ensure high academic standards and prepare students for professional teaching roles.
Field of Study Content Strategy	Students expected to independently learn the content of the field of study (Arabic language).	To ensure students are self-sufficient in learning and mastering the subject content.
Non-Academic Activities Strategy	Activities such as National Defense, Scouts, Mental Refreshing, ISQ, Science Insights, Global Diversity, Culture, Entrepreneurship	To develop well-rounded skills and build the teacher identity beyond academic qualifications.
Teacher Identity Formation Activities	Events such as "Bangkit Guruku, Maju Negeriku," workshops, exhibitions, leadership projects, sports, and creative competitions.	To foster professional identity and encourage growth in multiple areas (e.g., leadership, creativity, culture).
Achievements and Competitions	Students have won various medals in sports, writing competitions, and academic events (e.g., gold medals, essay competitions)	To highlight students' achievements and reinforce their identity as professional and competent future educators

This table effectively summarizes the strategies, purposes, and outcomes of the Pre-Service Arabic teacher training (PPG) designed for novice Arabic teachers at the State University of Malang, based on the provided discussion. A key finding is the strategic integration of classroom instruction with Field Experience Practices (PPL), which reflects an intentional synchronization between theoretical and practical components of teacher preparation. This pedagogical model can be interpreted through the lens of the Communities of Practice (CoP) framework developed by Lave and Wenger. According to this theory, learning is not merely the transmission of knowledge, but a dynamic process of social participation whereby individuals transition from peripheral participants—or "newcomers"—to full members within a professional community. In this context, student teaching serves as a vital experiential component, aligning teacher education with national educational goals and supporting the professional identity formation of aspiring teachers.²⁸

The PPG program effectively creates a CoP. PPG students (as newcomers) not only learn about teaching, but they actively practice teaching in an authentic school environment. They interact intensively with the old-timers in the community, namely professional and certified lecturers and teachers. The process of evaluating PPL results in the lecture classroom, where they report new findings, problems, and experiences, serves as a mechanism of collective reflection that reinforces this

²⁸ Genevieve Aglazor, "The Role of Teaching Practice in Teacher Education Programmes: Designing Framework for Best Practice," *Global Journal of Educational Research* 16, no. 2 (November 1, 2017): 101, <https://doi.org/10.4314/gjedr.v16i2.4>.

social learning. Through this legitimate and peripheral participation, students' identities gradually transform from identities as S1 students to identities as professional teachers. This includes making sure that research is based on well-defined conceptual and theoretical frameworks, and that new policies are shaped by insights from the study of teacher identity.²⁹

The second strategy that stands out is the emphasis on diverse and comprehensive assignments, ranging from material deepening, workshops, to Performance Tests (UKIN) that require the preparation of a complete portfolio. This set of tasks can be understood as a means to build a Narrative Identity, or narrative identity. According to Beijaard, teachers' identities are constructed and negotiated through the stories they construct about who they are, what they believe, and how they act as a teacher. Finally, the various strategies in this program collectively serve to form a strong group identity, in line with the principles of Social Identity Theory. This theory states that a person's self-concept comes in part from membership in a particular social group.

Several strategies employed in the Pre-Service Arabic Teacher Training program clearly serve to establish symbolic boundaries that reinforce group identity and professional distinction. First, the one-month matriculation program functions as an initiation ritual, particularly for participants from non-educational backgrounds. This shared experience levels foundational understanding and fosters a sense of belonging exclusive to their cohort. Second, the adoption of elevated assessment standards—requiring a minimum score of 75, higher than the Ministry's benchmark of 70—cultivates a perception of academic rigor and positions program graduates as higher-caliber professionals. Third, the inclusion of distinctive non-academic activities, such as *National Defense Training*, *Scout Leadership Certification (KMD/KML)*, and National Insight Education, contributes not only to skill enhancement but also to the cultivation of a holistic professional identity aligned with the Pancasila Student Profile. These activities distinguish participants from those in non-professional teacher preparation tracks. Collectively, these strategies shape the identity of novice Arabic teachers as not only pedagogically competent but also as reflective members of a community of practice—positioned within an elite group defined by unique standards and shared values. Furthermore, the role of campus organizational culture may influence the development of identity and the prediction of student academic performance, emphasizing the interconnectedness between institutional environment and teacher formation.³⁰

²⁹ Elizabeth A. C. Rushton et al., "Understanding Teacher Identity in Teachers' Professional Lives: A Systematic Review of the Literature," *Review of Education* 11, no. 2 (August 2023): e3417, <https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3417>.

³⁰ Muhammad Arifin et al., "A Regression Model and a Combination of Academic and Non-Academic Features to Predict Student Academic Performance," *TEM Journal*, May 29, 2023, 855–64, <https://doi.org/10.18421/TEM122-31>.

Research on teacher identity in the UAE, Iran, and Algeria highlights that factors such as culture, personal experience, and education play a crucial role in shaping teachers' professionalism, aligning with the training approach at University of Malang. At the university, the professional identity of prospective Arabic teachers is developed through academic and non-academic strategies that emphasize professionalism and learning. The main difference lies in the methodology, as studies abroad predominantly use qualitative approaches, whereas University of Malang implements integrative strategies such as matriculation, assignments, and assessments. Additionally, research in Iran emphasizes student engagement in group tasks as an indicator of teacher effectiveness, while in the UAE, teacher identity is linked to their commitment to remaining in the profession.

From the presentation of the results of the above research, it can be concluded that the Arabic teacher pro training implemented at the State University of Malang is one of the best teacher training programs in Indonesia. The implementation of Pre-service Arabic teacher training program seeks to form professional beginner Arabic teachers, that conform to linguistic and pedagogic standards.³¹ The formation of these values of professionalism and learning is carried out with both academic and non-academic strategies. In general, the identity values obtained from the results of this study are the values of professionalism and learning.

Conclusion

This study contributes by empirically demonstrating a series of micro-strategies (academic and non-academic) used in a PPG program to shape teacher identity. Unlike many previous studies that focus primarily on personal traits or contextual factors influencing identity formation, this research foregrounds the strategic institutional practices employed to cultivate professionalism among novice Arabic teachers. The strategies identified include matriculation programs, assignment-based learning, carefully curated teaching materials, structured assessment and evaluation methods, and a range of extracurricular activities designed to foster a holistic professional identity.

Despite these promising findings, the Pre-Service program requires further development and institutional support. Key concerns include the need for improved dissemination and promotion of the program—not only by the Ministry of Education but also by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, under whose jurisdiction the majority of Arabic language teachers fall. Moreover, the implementation of Pre-

³¹ Ibrahim Babikir Elhag Abd Elgadir, Mohd Azizul Rahman Bin Zabidin, and Zahanah Binti Mohd Nadzir, "Fundamentals and Standards for Preparing Arabic Language Teachers and Their Impact on Teaching Arabic to Non-Native Speakers," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 13, no. 6 (June 12, 2023): Pages 754-764, <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v13-i6/17465>.

Service training should be decentralized, allowing campuses in more geographically accessible regions to offer the program, thereby expanding its reach and inclusivity. Enhancing accommodation and learning facilities for participants is also critical to optimizing the training experience.

Broadly, international research affirms that teacher identity formation centers on professionalism, though approaches differ based on cultural and systemic contexts. This study advances that understanding within the Indonesian context by shedding light on the strategic processes behind Arabic teacher education at the State University of Malang. It highlights the program's potential in preparing professionally competent novice teachers. Nonetheless, future studies are recommended to further explore the scalability, cross-ministerial collaboration, and infrastructural improvements necessary to strengthen the Pre-Service program's long-term impact.

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Author Contribution Statement

AR is a researcher who conducts research and data collection in the field based on the principles of research methods based on directions and inputs from BMB and UM, then the data that has been collected is examined by MA and NH. Then in data analysis, assisted by MBAB. So that everyone in this study is responsible and has a meaningful role in the completion of this manuscript.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest. The research was conducted independently and was not subject to any external pressures that could have affected the results or their interpretation.

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