

**EXPLORING THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS
IN AN EFL TEACHER IDENTITY:
A NARRATIVE INQUIRY**

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's degree in
English Language Education

A Thesis



By:

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**MASTER'S PROGRAM IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE EDUCATION
UNIVERSITAS PENDIDIKAN INDONESIA**

Exploring The Role of Religious Beliefs in an EFL Teacher Identity: A Narrative Inquiry

Oleh
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Sebuah Tesis yang diajukan untuk memenuhi salah satu syarat memperoleh gelar
Magister Pendidikan (M.Pd.) pada Fakultas Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni

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Januari 2024

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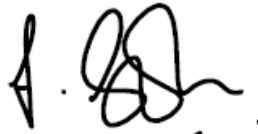
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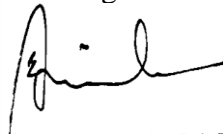


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STATEMENT OF AUTHORIZATION

I hereby state that this research paper entitled “*Exploring The Role of Religious Beliefs in an EFL Teacher Identity: A Narrative Inquiry*,” submitted for a Master’s degree in English Language Education, is entirely the result of my own work. I am fully aware that I have quoted some statements and ideas from various sources. All quotations are already properly acknowledged.

Bandung, 1 Januari 2024



Nabila Hasri Ainun

PREFACE

This study presents a report on the role of religious beliefs in an English teacher identity. Specifically, it discusses how the religious beliefs of a particular English teacher shape her understanding of English and her teaching practices. It also explores how the teacher deals with the conflicts arising from her religious beliefs in the classroom.

This study can be of interest to educators and policymakers. For educators, it offers insights into foreign language teaching practices and materials, encouraging the integration of cultural and religious perspectives into their practices. For policymakers, it gives better insights into the implications of religious and cultural diversity in language education, emphasizing the need for inclusive teaching materials and professional development initiatives that can empower teachers to navigate these dynamics.

Finally, I am aware that this study is far from perfect, and therefore, any constructive feedback is highly appreciated. Overall, this study is expected to contribute to the literature on the role of religious beliefs in teacher identity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah, I extend my gratitude to Allah SWT for the continuous blessings and strength bestowed upon me throughout this thesis journey. Without His guidance, I would never be able to survive on this journey. Also, peace and blessing be on the Prophet Muhammad SAW, whose teachings have been my guiding light, instilling in me the resilience to persevere.

While completing the thesis, I was fortunate to receive incredible support, assistance, guidance, and motivation from many individuals. Therefore, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to those who contributed.

Gratitude flows from the depth of my heart as I express my biggest thanks to my supervisors, Dr. Rd. Safrina, M.A., and Isti Siti Saleha Gandana, Ph.D., for their invaluable contributions to my academic journey. I would like to sincerely thank my academic advisor and my main thesis supervisor, Dr. Rd. Safrina, M.A., for her generosity in giving her time, support, constructive feedback, and positive energy. I feel deeply fortunate and sincerely grateful for the privilege of working under her supervision. I also want to sincerely thank Ibu Isti Siti Saleha Gandana, Ph.D., my thesis supervisor, for her invaluable support, consistent encouragement, constructive feedback, and excellent ideas given to me throughout the thesis completion. She is an intelligent, passionate, humble, and sincere figure who has inspired me in many ways.

I want to thank all my lecturers in the English Education Study Program, School of Postgraduate Studies, for their guidance and inspiration that have illuminated my academic path while pursuing my Master's degree. I also would like to thank the English Education Study Program staff for their assistance in delivering excellent administration services.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the inspiring 'Ibu Tiara' who was willing to participate in this study. Her narratives as an English teacher have not only enriched my research but also served as a profound wellspring of inspiration, encouraging me to give my best to my students. My special thanks also go to the school's principal for allowing me to do the research.

To my dearest friends who have shared this journey, Ezi, Tira, Teh Arin, Kak Yoza, Kak Winda, and Teh Rina, I am deeply grateful for your presence in my life. I will never forget your encouraging words and our sweet memories that have painted this Master's degree quest with vibrant hues of joy. Your support and encouragement have been a cherished gift to me. My appreciation also extends to all my classmates, as this journey would not be the same without our memorable moments. To my kajian sister and my go-to person, Nunik, thank you for making my life in Bandung feel home because of your company.

Next, I would like to give a special acknowledgement to my family. To Ayah, Buya, Bunda, Ibu, Lati, Pak Ajo, Tante, Makcik, and all my beloved uncles and aunts, thank you for making me feel loved. Whenever I miss my late parents, I feel very grateful at the same time that God has sent the love of my parents through my uncles and aunts. I am forever indebted to them. To my grandma, I am so blessed because of your endless prayers. To my cousins, thank you for encouraging me to endure and persevere during my difficult moments. You let me know what it feels like to have sisters and brothers. To my ORF family, I thank you for your unwavering support since our high school time. I truly honour your support and companionship.

Finally, I express my sincere gratitude to my beloved parents, Syamsidar and Washington, for their love, support, and prayers when they were still alive. They are not physically present beside me, but their love and prayers linger eternally in my heart. To my parents, I am forever grateful for the gifts of resilience and determination you have instilled in me. It is to both of you that I dedicate this thesis. As I pen down these words, I eagerly wait for us to reunite again in Jannah. *Insyaa Allah*.

ABSTRACT

Teachers' religious beliefs are essential in understanding teachers' actions and decisions in their classroom practice. However, research about teachers' religious beliefs in relation to their identity as teachers, specifically in the Indonesian context, has not been much investigated. This study explores how the religious beliefs of one particular teacher shape her English Language Teaching (ELT) practices. Moreover, the study seeks to understand how she deals with the conflicts arising from her religious beliefs in the classroom. I employed a narrative study design and collected data through interviews, observations, and document analyses. The participant was a senior English teacher at an integrated Islamic school in West Java Province. The findings unveil the Islamic epistemology in every layer of her teaching practices. Moreover, her religious beliefs also influenced her ELT practices that emphasized the teaching of Islamic values. In dealing with the conflicts about the learning materials and the pervasive influence of the Global North, the teacher took an agentive action to raise critical awareness of the students' own values as Muslims so that they have a better sense of their own identities. The study highlights that beyond language instruction, a teacher plays a crucial role in nurturing religious and cultural values in the students. This study implies the advocacy for recognizing the proactive role of English teachers in maintaining students' cultural identity within an Islamic context. The study also offers better insights into how a teacher navigated religious and cultural complexities in language instruction, promoting a more contextually sensitive approach to English language teaching.

Keywords: Indonesia, Islamic schools, religious beliefs, teachers' beliefs, teacher identity.

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