

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes a brief explanation of the introduction to the area of this study. It contains background of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, statement of the problem, scope of the study, aim of the study, significance of the study, and organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

The concept of identity has various meanings in the literature. Deng (1995, in Fearon, 1999) argues that conventionally, identity is used to describe the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language, and culture. However, the concept of identity in today's recent poststructural perspective is viewed as vibrant, multiple, and constructed concept moving from essentialism to a non-essentialist concept (Amirulloh, 2008). Beijgaard, Meijer & Verloop (2004) argues that what the various concepts of identity have in common is the idea that identity is not a fixed attribute of a person, but a relational phenomenon. Identity development itself takes place in an 'intersubjective' field and can be best characterized as an ongoing process interpreting oneself as a certain kind of person and being recognized as such in a given context. Tsui (2007) also argues that identities are

formed and constructed through continuous negotiation, discussion, and justification meaning that the identities are both given and achieved.

As a concluding point of the conceptualization of identity, Amirulloh (2008) argues that through some reviews of the concept of identity from various perspectives, the notion of 'identity' itself clearly rotates on three major points. First, identity is not fixed; second, identity is relational, and third, identity is context-related.

The issue of identity, as said by Coll & Falsafi (2010), has now been placed in an important position on different disciplines research agendas and it is studied as a concept, phenomenon, and human feature. Particularly in English education discipline, teacher identity is one of important issues to be studied because as Cross (2006) admits, a focus on teacher identity deepens and extends the understanding of who teachers are, what teaching is, and how they interact with the world since 'identity is contingent on experiences and sociocultural encounters' (Grow, 2011). This means, a study of teacher identity sees teachers as subjects, how they see themselves and are perceived by others in the world of teaching.

Despite of the various definitions and kinds of studies related to teacher identity formation, Phan (2008) argues that research related to how to teach English in English as an International Language (EIL) context and how English teachers

negotiate their identities and reconceptualize their pedagogies still remain under-discussed. In other words, while attention has been given to the development of EIL and EIL methodologies, the question of EIL teacher identity formation has hardly been addressed (Phan, 2008). Although some studies related to teacher identity formation are available, as those conducted by Graham & Phelps (2003), Alsup (2005), and Phan (2008) but in fact, those studies of teacher identity formation were not conducted in Indonesian EIL context. Graham & Phelps (2003) described the identity formation of teachers in Australian context while Alsup (2005) and Phan (2008) focused on teacher identity formation in American and Vietnamese EIL context. Hence, this study is essential in order to investigate how teacher identity is constructed in English as an International Language (EIL) context in Indonesia.

Hence, as this study tries to investigate how teacher identity is constructed in English as an International Language (EIL) context in Indonesia, case study and narrative inquiry are chosen as methods used in this study. Choosing case study as one of the methods in investigating the issue of teacher identity formation in Indonesia EIL context does fit since Hancock (1998) says that case study involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system (i.e., a setting, a context). In addition, narrative inquiry is chosen because this study involves 'the gathering of written, oral, and or visual narratives focusing on the meanings that people assign to their personal experiences, seeking to provide insight that befits the human lives complexity' (Josselson, 2006, in Trahar, 2009).

1.2 Reasons for Choosing the Topic

As what has been elaborated above, Phan (2008) argues that the study of teacher identity remains under-discussed, infrequent, and being put aside. She also adds that even though there are some studies discussing the role of English as an International language, identity is not put as a fundamental concern on some studies of teacher identity in bilingual and second language education. Neither is teacher identity in these works explored in close relationship with local teaching contexts and English as an international language (Phan, 2008). She also proposes her comment on the lack number of studies related to teacher identity in the present time.

“Various aspects of teacher identity are assumed and imagined rather than proved in current literature on the ownership of EIL, such as whether teachers of English see themselves as ambassadors/international mediators or ‘servants’ of English, whether they negotiate their identities according to the romanticising prospects of EIL and how being teachers of English is seen by their societies”.

(Phan, 2008, p.2)

1.3 Statement of the Problem

On the basis of the previously mentioned background, this study tries to answer this question: “How is teacher identity constructed in English as an International Language (EIL) context in Indonesia?”

1.4 Scope of the Study

In this research, the theories of teacher identity construction in social and postcolonial perspective are mostly used as the main logical frames in investigating English teachers' identity formation in Indonesian EIL context addressing the current issue of language internationalization and *nativespeakerism*. Other traditions in theorizing various notions are also used order to enrich this study.

1.5 Aim of the study

The main concern of this study is to find out how teacher identity is constructed in English as an International Language (EIL) context in Indonesia

1.6 Significance of the Study

As this present study tries to analyze the issue of teacher identity formation based on the theory of identity in social post-colonial perspective, this study is hoped to give new insights and fill the gaps in theories giving reasonable arguments that becoming English teachers is a process of 'being and becoming'. This study is important because Phan (2008) contends that in the past, this issue was only seen from the developmental process. In addition, the result of this study is also hoped to be able to give knowledge, example, image and reflections for further research

to be carried out and for any educational practice related to English Language Teaching in general and especially for the teaching of English as an International Language.

1.7 Organization of the paper

This paper consists of five chapters. Each chapter is subdivided into subtopics that will give further elaboration of the investigated issues.

Chapter 1 is the introduction of the paper. It contains the background of the study, reasons for choosing the topic, the research question, aim of the study, the significance of the study, and the organization of the paper.

Chapter 2 is the theoretical foundation covering theorizing language, culture, and society, conceptualizing identity, (re)contextualizing ELT in Indonesia: English as an International Language (EIL), and the dichotomy of Native and Non-Native English Teachers and Western and Non Western-Trained English Teachers.

Chapter 3 is the research methodology. In this chapter, research design, research setting, research participants, data collection, and data analysis will be clearly presented.

Chapter 4 will talk about the findings and the discussion of the study. Here, the findings and the discussion of data obtained from the research will be comprehensively investigated and elaborated.

Chapter 5 is the conclusion and suggestions of the research where the research conclusion is delivered along with the appropriate suggestions needed for future studies.

Reference ends the paper. In this part, the list of the references used in the study is presented and it is arranged in alphabetical order.