Beyond classroom phenomena: Exploring Indonesian EFL teachers' professional identity metaphors

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This research sought to explore Indonesian EFL teachers' professional identity metaphors. Using a multiple case studies design, it involved three teachers in different teaching contexts. Data were collected using questionnaires that gathered the teachers' professional identity metaphors and in-depth interviews to elicit the reasons for the metaphors. The interview data were analysed using a thematic analysis technique to identify themes in reasons for the metaphors. Then, the metaphors were analysed for their educational orientations. Finally, all the findings were cross-case analysed to identify similarities and differences. The findings show three different metaphors: artist, nurturer, and the sun, along with five themes in the reasons for the metaphors: uniqueness of each English lesson, limited sources of learning, students' negative stigma about English learning, low student input, and fun English learning. Cross-case analysis shows that some themes were shared among the teachers. However, all the metaphors were learner-centred growth oriented.

Introduction

Teachers' beliefs about their identity impact on their thoughts and actions. When coming to classrooms, teachers bring with them their personal beliefs and perception of the nature of teaching and learning as well as of students (Biesta, Priestly & Robinson, 2015). Teachers are also engaged in a continuous negotiation with their own, students', parents', institutional, and the wider community's expectations of education (Ramsden, 2003). Positioned as such, teachers construct varied identities, including professional identity (Howard, 2019; Eslamdoost, King & Tajeddin, 2020; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). All of these impact on teachers' professional development, decision making, and classroom practices (Abednia, 2012; Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004; Roberston, 2017).

Although it has long been researched in other fields and professions, studies on professional identity of teachers are relatively new in education (Clarke, Hyde & Drennan, 2013; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013). Yet, they provide evidence about its centrality in a teacher's professional life. Teacher professional identity (TPI), for example, is identified to be related to teachers' job satisfaction, occupational commitment, and motivation (Canrinus, Helms-Lorenz, Beijaard, Buitink & Hofman, 2012), attitude toward regulations and adaptation of teaching methods and media (Eslamdoost et al., 2019), career motivation (Richardson & Watt, 2018), dropping out of the profession (Hong, 2010), and classroom teaching practices (Lamote & Engels, 2010 Abednia, 2012; Beijaard et al., 2004; Robertson, 2017).

Studies on TPI in the area of English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) also identify its relationship with EFL teachers' self-esteem and teaching efficacy (Kazemi, 2018; Rozati, 2017), attitude toward communicative approach policy

(Han, 2016), teachers' research interest and engagement (Xu, 2014), and practicum experience (Nagamine, 2012). These studies support the suggestion made by Varghese, Morgan, Johnston and Johnsom (2005) that –

> In order to understand language teaching and learning we need to understand teachers; and in order to understand teachers, we need to have a clearer sense of who they are: the professional, cultural, political, and individual identities which they claim or which are assigned to them (p.22).

However, as a result of the complexity of the construct, teachers often find it difficult to conceptualise and communicate their identities (Odum, 2017). To address this problem, researchers have approached the issue using metaphor analysis (e.g. Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011; Kram, Wasserman & Yip, 2012; Yesilbursa, 2012; Zhu & Zhu, 2018; Zhu, Rice & Zhu, 2020). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argued that language, human's conceptual system, thought and action are essentially metaphorical in nature. This system shapes human's functioning, interactions, and perceptions of realities. Therefore, in conceptualising and communicating complex phenomena, such as identities, human beings rely on metaphors (Sorsana & Trognon, 2018). Studies (Coombs & Zhou, 2010; East, 2009; Ma & Gao, 2017; Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011; Nguyen, 2016) support the suggestion that metaphor is "an extraordinarily powerful tool through which the teacher can express more fully the meaning of what he or she does and explore what it is to be a teacher" (Provenzo, McCloskey, Kottkamp & Cohn, 1989; p.551).

Research on professional identity of Indonesian English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers is still scarce. The literature shows that it started to grow within the last couple of years and mainly focused on factors of TPI construction such as emotion, self-efficacy, professional competence (Lomi & Mbato, 2020), teaching practicum experience (Triutami & Mbato, 2021), religious identity (Yumarnamto & Prijambodo, 2020), non-native speaker status of the teachers (Setiawan, 2015), competing values (Qoyyimah, Singh, Exley, Doherty & Agustiawan, 2020), stress and resilience (Diasti, 2021), vulnerability and burnout (Florida & Mbato, 2020), ethnicity (Widodo, Fang & Elyas, 2020), and school type preference (Rosari, 2019). However, these studies explored the TPI of EFL teachers in the same level of teaching, mainly on secondary school level, through narrative inquiries and quantitative methods. Research involving teachers in different teaching contexts, in which comparisons can be made, that explores how the teachers perceive their TPI have been overlooked. In addition, to date, research that explores Indonesian EFL TPI through metaphor analysis is still absent. In light of this, the present study aims to fill this gap by exploring and comparing how Indonesian EFL teachers in different levels of teaching perceive their TPI by exploring their metaphors, the reasons behind the metaphors, and the educational orientations of the metaphors (Oxford et al., 1998).

Theoretical framework and review of the literature

Teacher professional identity

As TPI is a specific type identity, discussions on it should embark on the concept of identity, and then to professional identity. Yet, although many studies have been

conducted on it, the concept of identity has been understood in many different perspectives and associated with a number of other concepts (Beijaard. Meijer & Verloop, 2004; Richards, 2006; Hsieh, 2010; Jaspal, 2014; Odum, 2017). However, Runcieman (2015) suggested that, overall, there are two general approaches on the concept of identity. First, a psychological approach that focuses on personal aspects that make a person unique to others. Second, a sociological approach that "...is more concerned with how people negotiate the social world around them, how they learn social roles through personal experience, and by negotiating their own position in relation to them assume a certain 'social identity' or identities." (p.35).

Identifying a common ground in the two approaches to identity, Vignoles, Schwartz, and Luyckx (2011) offered an integrative view of identity. They suggested that any conceptualisation of identity fundamentally centres on the question of "Who are you?" or "Who am I?" or "Who are we?". Despite the simplicity, they argued, the question "masks a considerable amount of complexity" (p.2) as responses to the questions can refer to a personal definition of self, to an identity of a group of individuals one associates with, or to practical undertakings one does as a being (Vignoles et al., 2011). As such, level-wise, identity can be distinguished into three levels, i.e. individual, relational, and collective, that simultaneously reflect the nature and contexts wherein each of them develops (Vignoles et al., 2011). *Individual identity* pertains to one's personal values and beliefs, standard for behaviour, decision making, self-esteem, self-evaluation and other concepts related to one's self-definition. *Relational identity* refers to how one perceives his or her roles in relation to others. Such roles include, for example, parents, husband or wife, client, etc (Vignoles et al*., 2011). Collective identity* "refers to people's identification with the groups and social categories to which they belong, the meanings that they give to these social groups and categories, and the feelings, beliefs, and attitudes that result from identifying with them" (Vignoles et al., 2011: 4). This identity includes ethnicity, religion, gender, families, work groups, and any other social groups with which one is identified or one identifies oneself (Vignoles et al., 2011).

The notion of TPI is related to the fact that one's identity is considerably shaped by one's profession (Runcieman, 2015). TPI has been largely viewed within sociological perspectives which include, first, a macrosociological theory that sees TPI as a product of a person's being part of bureaucratic and economic systems; second, a structural functional approach which sees individuals unconsciously develop their TPI through a process of of professional training, taking on and performing a particular role or profession in society and its responsibility; and third, symbolic interactionism approach that sees TPI as being consciously constructed by individuals in their social interaction and recognises variations in TPI construction (Bargerstock, 2016).

Despite the continuous growth of studies on TPI, scholars (Beijaard et al., 2004; Maclean & White, 2007; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Trent, 2010; Hsieh, 2010) have proposed different understandings of TPI and the ways it has been studied. However, a synthesis of the nature of the construct on which the present study is conceptualised can be outlined. First, TPI refers to how a teacher perceives himself or herself amid the influences of personal perception of self and as a professional in a particular educational context (Pillen,

Beijaard & den Brok, 2013). Second, as a result of the complexity of contexts within which it is constructed, TPI is dynamic. As such, teachers may perceive themselves as having more than one TPI (Mockler, 2011). Third, TPI develops under influences of a web of factors such as personal identity, emotion, self-image, education and training, environment, socio-political contexts, pre-service to in-service induction period, and job and life experience (Karaolis & Philippou, 2019; Prabjandee, 2019; Hsieh, 2010). Fourth, TPI impacts on teachers' development, decision making, and professional performances inside and outside the classroom (Abednia, 2012; Beijaard et al., 2004). In EFL contexts, attempts to conceptualise and research on EFL TPI draws on the general concepts of TPI discussed above.

Metaphor as a window to TPI

Etymologically, the term metaphor comes from a Greek word meaning "to carry across" (Hirsch, 2014). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) conceptualised metaphors as "understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (p.5). They argued that human beings think and talk metaphorically by applying words and phrases to new concepts or objects to extend lexical meaning (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Therefore, metaphor is a norm of communication, not an exception. In fact, metaphor is the usual way in which common concepts are represented (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). They, furthermore, categorised conceptual metaphors into three types: structural, orientational, and ontological. A structural metaphor expresses one concept in terms of another concept (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Hence, the expressions "You are wasting my time" or "How do you spend your time these days?" reflect the basic metaphor of "Time is money" (pp.7-8). An orientational metaphor presents spatial and orientational experiences. Thus, the expressions "I am feeling up today"or "My spirit sank" root in the basic metaphors of "Happy is up; sad is down" and "Conscious is up; unconscious is down" (pp14-17). Ontological metaphors refer to "ways of viewing events, activities, emotions, ideas, etc., as entities and substances" (p.25). Thus, an expression like "Inflation is lowering our standard of living" reflects the view that "Inflation is an entity" (p.25).

A considerable number of studies have used metaphors as a tool for exploring teacher identity and TPI in general as well as EFL TPI. Pre-service and in-service teachers have been found to identify themselves as artists, mothers, trial judges, intercultural promoters, democrats (Nguyen, 2016), overhead projector, whisperer, entertainer, challenger, guide, elevator (Yesilbursa, 2012), knowledge provider, moulder/ craftsperson, curer/ repairer, change agent, counsellor, nurturer, facilitator, and democratic leader (Saban, Kocbeker & Saban, 2007).

Researchers have also studied the educational orientations of TPI metaphors. Chen (2003) suggested five types of orientation: art-oriented (e.g., teaching is entertaining), business-oriented (e.g., teaching is marketing), science-oriented (e.g., teaching is a treasure hunt), power-oriented (e.g., a teacher is a captain), and personal dynamics metaphor (e.g., teaching is a game). Xiong, Li and Qu (2015) identified a typology consisting of three types based on the teachers cognitive model: educational journey (e.g., English teacher as instructor), educational building (e.g., teacher as engineer), and educational conduit (e.g.,

English teacher as envoy). In addition, Oxford et al (1998) proposed a four-part typology based on philosophies of education: social order (e.g., teacher as doctor), cultural transmission (e.g., teacher as conduit), learner-centred growth (e.g., teacher as scaffolder), and social reform metaphors (e.g., teacher as acceptor). The present study uses Oxford et al.'s (1998) framework in analysing the participants' metaphor orientations.

Oxford et al.'s (1998) typology is based on the nature of control the teacher and the student have in the process of learning, and the focus of education in each of the orientations. The social order philosophy contends that education should be directed toward social reproduction by training and preparing individuals to assume responsibilities in the society based on their abilities. Thus, teachers are viewed as technicians who lead and control the process of learning that focuses on "molding learners for the needs of society" (Oxford et al., 1998, p.7). The cultural transmission philosophy sees education as a medium for transferring culture, knowledge, and values from a generation to the next. Education is viewed as a part of the acculturation process of students, under teachers' control, into a society, focusing on provision of information for the student by the teacher (Oxford et al., 1998). In the learner-centred growth viewpoint, education should seek to facilitate the development and actualisation of learners' innate potential to the fullest and to accommodate their personal uniqueness. Therefore, there should be a shared control of the process of learning by the teacher and the student (Oxford et al., 1998). The social reform philosophy argues that education should ultimately be aimed at creating a better world by promoting diversities in learners and societies. It also calls for a shared control of the process of learning by the teacher and the student (Oxford et al., 1998).

Method

This study used a multiple case study approach (Stake, 2013) involving three individual cases (EFL teachers). The following subsections present the participants, data collection and data analysis techniques.

Participants

The three EFL teachers participating in this study were (all are pseudonyms), first, Wella, (female, 34), lecturer with eleven years of teaching experience, teaching at a state university located in a province's capital. Second, Sony, (male, 33), a senior Islamic high school teacher with eleven years of teaching experience, teaching in a small municipality town. Third, Ani, (female, 28), a junior secondary school teacher with 3 years of teaching experience, teaching in a rural area. All the participants had a bachelor degree in English education. They were purposively selected for the study through a written invitation sent by email asking for their availability for participating in the study. The invitation also included a brief description of the research and a research participant consent form.

Data collection

To obtain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena under question, two types of data were collected. First, the teachers' TPI metaphors, which were collected through an open-ended questionnaire in English, sent by e-mail prompting them to identify a metaphor that best describes their TPI by completing the sentence *"An EFL teacher is a/an....."*. A brief description of what a metaphor is was provided, with some examples. The questionnaire also collected demographic information on educational background, context of teaching, and teaching experience. The teachers were given as much time as they needed to complete and return the questionnaire. All three returned the completed questionnaire within two days. Second, data were also collected through audio recorded, semi-structured, in-depth interviews which were conducted face-to-face in Indonesian, at the time and place agreed by the paticipants. The interviews sought to explore the reasons for the metaphors they constructed in the questionnaire. The collection of the two types of data also helped to ensure that the meanings of the metaphors as understood by the researcher accorded with those of the teachers' themselves (Patchen & Crawford, 2011). This is important as metaphors are essentially personal in nature and their meanings are subject to specific users and contexts (Erickson & Pinnegar, 2017; Patchen & Crawford, 2011).

Data analysis

Data analysis proceeded in three stages. First, the interview transcriptions were analysed using *thematic analysis* (Braun & Clarke, 2020) for the reasons behind the constructed metaphors.

Table 1: Four perspectives on education

Key aspects	Social order	Cultural transmission	Learner-centred growth	Social reform
Control	Teacher control	Teacher control	Shared teacher and student control	Shared teacher and student control
Focus	Shaping learners through external reinforcement	Unidirectional information-giving	Facilitating development of innate potential	Encouraging mult-iple viewpoints in community of learners
Archetype	Moulding	Gate keeping	Gardening	Democratising

Source: Oxford et al. (1998, p.7)

This was done by: (1) conducting data familiarisation by reading the transcripts repeatedly and making familiarisation notes on parts that correspond to the purposes of the study; (2) Applying systematic data coding in the form of colour coding on a computer word processor software for potential themes; (3) generating initial themes from the coded and collated data; (4) developing and reviewing the themes; and (5) refining, defining and naming themes. (Braun & Clarke, 2020). Second, the metaphors and the identified themes were analysed for their orientations using Oxford et al.'s (1998) framework (Table 1). The framework is used in the present study because it provides basic educational concepts to

which the teachers' TPI metaphors can be traced back. Finally, all the findings from the individual cases were assembled for a cross-case analysis (Borman, Clarke, Cotner & Lee, 2006) to identify similarities and differences among them. To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, a *member checking* technique (Candela, 2019) was conducted. The accuracy of the interview transcripts, the findings of the study, and the English translated parts of the transcripts to be quoted in the research report were communicated to the teachers. After some revisions, the teachers agreed on their accuracy.

Findings

This section presents: (1) the metaphors constructed by each of the teachers in the questionnaire; (2) accounts elicited in the semi-structured interviews on the reasons why they perceived their TPI as reflected in the metaphors; (3) the themes for the reasons identified through thematic analysis; (4) the orientation of each of the metaphors within Oxford et al's (1998) typology; and (5) the results of the cross-case analysis.

Wella: An EFL teacher is an artist

Wella saw her professional identity resembled an artist. One factor that had ensured her of the idea of the metaphor was what she perceived as the fact that every single teacher, class and lesson was unique. She described:

> I believe that….. even though, for example…. there are fellow teachers graduating from the same faculty…. I mean I assume that we have the same input of knowledge to be applied as a teacher. But what really happens in the classroom is different. I mean every single class is different. Although, for instance I compare it to my colleagues who graduated from the same faculty, teaching the same level of students, the same students, but what happened in the classroom is different. (Wella)

She believed that teaching is a teacher's individual activity and depends largely on his or her capability and this was like an artist. She saw that there were characteristics of an artist in her job, particularly in creating a conducive learning atmosphere and implied her students' negative attitude to English learning:

> Then there are some characteristics of an artist in a teacher. Especially, in teaching language, you try to make students want to learn the language. They are not afraid of it. It's different from teaching mathematics (laugh) or physics. In teaching language… uhm… I want a comfortable and interesting atmosphere. So, there should also be an entertaining factor. In order to make students interested in learning, they can learn well. I'm aware of these factors. Sometimes I also use songs. The main objective is to make the learning atmosphere interesting. To me this is similar to an artist. (Wella)

She, furthermore, related her view of her artist metaphor to language teachers in general, highlighting the need to address students' interests:

I feel it with the teaching of English. Not only English, but also with other languages. There is an entertaining bit too. We also consider what students' interests are. There are so many things we can create and give in a language class. So it's not strict, it's flexible. (Wella)

Wella's accounts, to a great extent, reflected a shared teacher-and-student control over the learning process, and focused on facilitating the development of her students' innate potential. Thus, her "artist' metaphor fits the learner-centred growth orientation of Oxford et al.'s (1998) typology.

Table 2: Significant meaning statements structured as thematic clusters
in the reasons for the metaphor of "An EFL teacher is an artist"

Meaning statement	Main idea	Theme
Every single class is different; What happened in the classroom is different.	Every single teacher, class and lesson were unique.	Uniqueness of individual English lesson.
They are not afraid of it. You try to make students want to learn the language.	English was not the students' favourite subject.	Negative stigma about learning English.
I want a comfortable and interesting atmosphere. There should also be an entertaining factor.	Learning English should be fun.	Fun learning.

Sony: An EFL teacher is a nurturer

Sony perceived his professional identity as a nurturer. He described that "A nurturer should be a patient one. Should be patient, hardworking, and diligent." He compared his nurturer identity to moral obligation characteristic of baby-sitting activities and related it to the context of the Islamic school (madrasah) where he taught and to the students whom he described as 'low input' ones:

Well……, since I'm teaching in the context of a madrasah, as I have mentioned, where the students…… to be honest, are not so good, as a teacher I'm supposed to be extra patient. So, it's really like a nurturer. Just like nurturing children. Patience is a must. Also, hardworking, careful, as well as diligent. And an important thing of a nurturer, a nurturer nurtures. Just like a nurturer looks after a baby. Not physically, but morally and mentally. How to get them back on the right course when they already went off it. We nurture them. We show them the right path". (Sony)

Sony also related the demand of this TPI to a general assumption among students that English was one of difficult subjects that posed a threat to them. Therefore, the students ought to be led through the process of accepting English:

Just like math, students tend to see English as a threat for them. If as teachers we don't show them our nurturing nature, I'm sure that they will run away even before we can teach them. And they wouldn't be able to avoid this threat. If we are not a nurturer in nature or if we don't have this role, they will see English teachers as a group of teachers

to be scared of. That's why we need to be patient. In order to make some changes on them. To make some changes on the image of English to them. Not a threat, but something they like. I believe that one of the ways to get there is to show that I'm a patient nurturer. So, I'm not only transferring knowledge. (Sony)

Sony stressed that he had already perceived himself as a nurturer since the beginning of his teaching career and it was inseparable from his personality. He said "So, as soon as I became a teacher I could recognise that I already had this nature of a nurturer in me. And it seems that it's already an integral part of me". For him, the job of a nurturer was not only related to academic matters. It reached to other issues such as students' personal problems. He enacted such an extension of his professional task by personally approaching the student who was having problems. He mentioned that he was also teaching at a private English course. However, he did not feel the demand for acting as a nurturer there. He argued that this was because the students of the course were already highly motivated to learn English.

Although Sony's "nurturer" metaphor clearly reflected a learner-centred growth orientation, his accounts indicated that he exercised considerable control of the learning processes. In addition, his accounts also indicated a focus on shaping his students by external enforcements. As such, his metaphor would fit the social order orientation. Pertaining to such inconsistencies, Biao (1996) and Shapiro, Schwartz and Astin (1996) suggested that teachers still exercise some form of control even when they believe in learner-centred learning.

Table 3: Significant meaning statements structured as thematic clusters
in the reasons for the metaphor of "An EFL teacher is a nurturer"

Meaning statement	Main idea	Theme
Where the students ... to be honest, are not so good.	Student input was low.	Low student input.
Students tend to see English as a threat for them.	English was not the students' favourite subject.	Students' negative stigma about
To make some changes on the image of English to them.		English learning.

Ani: An EFL teacher is the sun

Ani, a junior secondary school teacher, described her TPI through the sun metaphor. She explained that it was developed from the nature of the sun that gives light which is motivating and associated with positive things. In her teaching, this role was reflected through motivating her students, creating a lively and enjoyable learning atmosphere, and finding some teaching techniques that would make her students interested in learning English. She suggested that "The classroom should be lively. Should be enjoyable. Then, I find some techniques that could make the kids feel happy".

She found her students were lacking learning sources and exposure to English materials. Therefore, she felt that she was the main source for the students to learn English. She described: "I mean…. well, they can't speak English. Exposure to English is very limited. Difficult. TV, they don't watch it a lot. Not to mention native speakers. No. So, it's me that has to provide it." She also mentioned about allowing her students to consult outside the normal school hours: "I told them…. just come to my place if you have something to talk about… to discuss. They did come… to study."

Ani's TPI metaphor also fell into the learner-centred growth orientation. But, her accounts showed that her control and focus shared those of cultural transmission. Again, this phenomenon could be understood by referring to Biao's (1996) and Shapiro, Schwartz and Astin's (1996) suggestions, as in the case with Sony's control and focus described above.

Table 4: Significant meaning statements structured as thematic clusters
in the reasons for the metaphor of "An EFL teacher is the sun"

Meaning statement	Main idea	Theme
The kids were blank. They can't speak English.	Student input was low	Low student input
Had no resources. Exposure to English setting is very limited.	Sources of learning were limited.	Limited sources of learning.
The classroom should be lively. Should be enjoyable.	Learning English should be fun.	Fun learning.

Results of cross-case analysis

The three EFL teachers identified their professional identity with different metaphors: artist, nurturer, and the sun. Thematic analysis of the interview data on the reasons for the professional identity metaphors identified themes that were unique to a particular teacher and ones that were shared by two teachers. The non-shared themes of "uniqueness of individual English lessons" and "limited sources of learning" were only identified in Wella's and Ani's accounts respectively. The "students' negative stigma about learning English" was shared by Wella and Sony; the "low student input" theme was shared by Sony and Ani; and the "fun learning" theme was shared by Wella and Ani. Despite the differences, all the professional identity metaphors were found to be learner-centred growth oriented.

Overall, the findings of the study are summarised in Table 5.

Table 5: Summary of cross-case analysis

Participant	Context of teaching	PI metaphor	Themes in the reasons for the PI metaphors	PI metaphor orientation
Wella	University	Artist	1. Uniqueness of each English lesson; 2. Students' negative stigma about learning English* 3. Fun learning***	Learner-centred growth
Sony	Senior high school	Nurturer	1. Low student input** 2. Students' negative stigma about learning English*	Learner-centred growth
Ani	Junior secondary school	The Sun	1. Low student input** 2. Limited sources of learning. 3. Fun learning***	Learner-centred growth

Notes: PI - professional identity; *, **, *** - Shared themes in the reasons for the PI metaphors

Discussion

The "nurturer" and "sun" metaphors, which were respectively constructed by Sony and Ani, the related accounts and the identical theme of "low student input" shared by them, reflect an asymmetrical relationship between the teachers and their students (Oxford et al., 1998). Sony viewed his students as individuals who were in the process of growing up and needed to be taken care of. Ani saw her students as individuals who needed to be enlightened and motivated. These are contrary to Wella's "artist" metaphor, accounts and themes that did not refer to "low student input", suggesting her egalitarian view towards her students, although she shared the "fun learning" theme with Ani. In addition, Sony's "nurturer" metaphor supports Qoyyimah et al.'s (2020) and Munarman's (2019) findings that Indonesian Islamic school EFL teachers' professional identities were more concerned with becoming a caregiver and moral guardian rather than as an English teacher. In addition, Sony and Ani's views also reflect their perception of their students' lack of autonomy in learning English as beginners, a problem among Indonesian school students that was also identified by Lengkanawati (2016), Cirocki Anam, and Retnaningdyah (2019), and Khotimah et al. (2019).

Furthermore, the "low student input" theme also reflects the general picture of Indonesian students' English proficiency. The results of the National Final Examination for junior and senior secondary schools for the year of 2019 showed that, on a 0 to 100 scale, the average scores for English were below 54 (Pusat Penilaian Pendidikan, 2019).Similarly, in the regional and global contexts, the English Proficiency Index (EFI) released by *English First* (2020), showed that in 2020 Indonesia ranked 15th among 24 Asian countries, and 74th among 100 countries in the world. In addition, the issue of "limited learning resources" related by Ani, who was teaching a rural school, reflects a lasting problem of education inequality in Indonesia, particularly between urban and rural schools (Malaikosa & Sahayu, 2019; Sulistiyo et al., 2019; Mudra, 2019).

Two of the teachers (Wella and Sony) reflected that their professional identity metaphors of "artist" and "nurturer" are manifestations of their concerns of what in this study was identified under the theme of "students' negative stigma of English learning". This issue has been identified to be pervasive among Indonesian EFL learners (Wirza, 2018; Abrar, Mukminin, Habibi, Asyrafi & Marzulina, 2018; Dja'far, Cahyono & Bashtomi, 2016), but not in relation to Indonesian EFL TPI. Abrar et al. (2018) found that as a foreign language with a very limited use in daily interactions in Indonesia, students saw no immediate necessity to learn English, although studies also found that Indonesian students were actually aware of the importance of English as an international language (Setiyadi, Mahpul & Wicaksono, 2019; Lee, Lee, & Drajati, 2019). The present study shows that such a status for English poses the EFL teachers a challenging task of overcoming the negative stigma, which is arguably related to the "fun learning" theme in the way that creating fun English learning was one of their strategies to motivate students to learn English.

Although the EFL teachers identified their TPIs with different metaphors and reasons, basically all of them were learner-centred growth oriented. This suggests that the teachers saw their students as the main consideration in their thoughts and actions as an EFL teacher, and, hence, a principal factor in their TPI. This finding also accords with the suggestion made by Patchen and Crawford (2011) of the importance of exploring teachers' descriptions of their constructed metaphors. Relying only on an interpretive method of metaphor analysis, in which a researcher uses a theoretical template for analysing teachers' metaphors, or on a narrative inquiry approach, in which a researcher generates metaphors from teachers' narratives, may run the risk of picturing a different meaning and understanding from what was actually perceived by teachers. In the present study, this issue was methodologically anticipated by employing a research procedure that asked the teachers' to construct their TPI metaphors first, followed by elicitation of the reasons for the metaphors.

Conclusions, implications and limitations

This study shows that the teachers identified their TPI as an EFL teacher with metaphors that were closely connected to their beliefs about the nature of EFL learning, their students, and the situation and condition of their contexts of teaching. Despite the differences, the reasons for their TPI were fundamentally similar and interrelated. All were rooted in their mission of facilitating their student's growth.

However, this study also shows that the teachers' TPIs were much more related to larger educational issues in the Indonesian system of education, as reflected in the themes of "low student's input", "students' negative stigma about English learning" and "limited sources of learning", than to those of improving their students' English proficiency *per se*. This finding suggests that solving the issues is a prerequisite for specific efforts on improving the students' English proficiency to be successful. In light of this finding, corrective measures should be taken by the education authority and all related parties, including English teacher training institutions and the teachers themselves. For example,

the problems of "low student's input" could possibly be overcome by introducing English as a school subject from elementary education, rather than secondary as currently practised. This will provide an opportunity for students to learn English at an early age which has been proven more conducive for second language learning. Furthermore, as resorted to by the teachers in present study, awareness of and emphasis on fun English learning should be stressed in both pre and in-service training programs, and by school supervisors in their feedback to teachers, in order to minimise the "students' negative stigma about English learning". As for the problem of "limited sources of learning", it clearly calls for increased investment in school media for learning.

As a multiple case study involving three EFL teachers, the findings of the present study reflect only the cases under question. Further studies with a larger number of participants and ones that combine different methods are suggested for a wider and deeper picture of Indonesian EFL teachers' TPI.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire

Research title: Beyond classroom phenomena: Exploring Indonesian EFL teachers' professional identity metaphors
Researcher: Dairabi Kamil

Before completing the other questionnaire, please provide the following background information about yourself.

Please circle or answer the following questions by writing in the space provided.

1. Gender: Male   Female
2. Age: ………… (in years)
3. Teacher education / training experience (give the name of the program, and if possible, also give the date): …………………………………………..
4. Context of current work:
    a. Level: (Primary   Secondary   Tertiary   other)
    b. Location of current workplace : City/town   Suburb   Rural area

    The following information about metaphor may help you in dealing with the next section of the questionnaire.
    Metaphor : *a figure of speech in which a term or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable, in order to suggest a resemblance.*
    e.g. "an EFL teacher is a repairer" or "an EFL teacher is a gardener"

5. Please supply a metaphor that best describes yourself as an EFL teacher

    ....

Appendix B: Semi-structured interview main questions

(Translated from the original questions in Indonesian)
1. Why did you perceive your professional identity as an EFL teacher by the metaphor of ....?
2. How long have you been perceiving your professional identity as a/an .... ?
3. Do you perceive your professional identity as an EFL teacher is the same across differen contexts of teaching? Why?
4. What factors shape your professional identity as reflected in your metaphor?
5. As a ...., how do you see your students?
6. How is the metaphor reflected in your professional practices as an EFL teacher?
7. What are your duties as a/an .... ?

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