

Teacher identity and language ideology in English language teaching: a sociolinguistic study from Indonesia

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Article Info

Article history:

Received Feb 15, 2026

Revised Mar 11, 2026

Accepted Mar 21, 2026

Keywords:

critical discourse analysis
English language teaching
language ideology
linguistic legitimacy
teacher identity

ABSTRACT

Background: The global expansion of English has reshaped educational hierarchies and professional identities, particularly in large multilingual contexts such as Indonesia where English functions simultaneously as communicative resource and symbolic capital. **Objective:** This study aims to investigate how teacher identity and language ideology are constructed, negotiated, and enacted within Indonesian English Language Teaching across institutional and policy contexts. **Method:** Employing a qualitative multi-sited design, this research integrates language ideology analysis, Positioning Theory, and Critical Discourse Analysis to examine interviews, classroom interactions, professional documents, and national curriculum texts. **Results:** The findings reveal the coexistence of native-speakerist legitimacy, intelligibility-oriented pragmatism, and localized pedagogical authority within teachers' discursive repertoires. Identity positions shift dynamically according to institutional pressures, audience design, and testing regimes. Power circulates vertically from macro-policy discourses to micro-classroom practices, producing both stratification and sites of pedagogical resistance. **Implication:** These findings suggest that teacher identity in Indonesian ELT is dynamically shaped by competing language ideologies and institutional pressures, requiring more context-sensitive policies that recognize localized authority and support equitable professional positioning. **Novelty:** The novelty of this study lies in its integrated multi-layer analytical model that bridges ideology, positioning, and institutional power, offering a comprehensive framework for examining teacher identity in Global South ELT contexts.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The global expansion of English has profoundly reshaped educational systems worldwide, and Indonesia constitutes one of the most significant sites of this transformation. With more than 270 million citizens and over 60 million students across primary to tertiary education, Indonesia represents one of the largest English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) contexts in Asia. According to national education statistics from the Ministry of Education, English is taught in nearly all secondary schools and remains a key subject for university entrance and professional mobility. Simultaneously, the proliferation of international schools and private language institutions—particularly in urban centers such as Jakarta, Surabaya, and Medan—has intensified the symbolic value of “native speakers” as markers of linguistic authority. In this context, English functions not merely as a subject but as a form of cultural and economic capital. Consequently, examining how Indonesian English teachers construct and negotiate their professional identities within competing

ideologies of native-speakerism, global English, and national identity becomes both sociolinguistically urgent and politically consequential.

Extensive scholarship has examined teacher identity in TESOL, highlighting its dynamic, socially constructed, and context-sensitive nature [1], [2], [3], [4]. Studies influenced by poststructuralist perspectives demonstrate that teacher identity is negotiated through discourse, institutional expectations, and power relations [5], [6], [7]. Parallel research on language ideology has shown how beliefs about “standard English” and “native norms” shape pedagogical practices and professional hierarchies [2], [8], [9]. Furthermore, English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) research has challenged monolithic notions of native-speaker authority, emphasizing intelligibility and communicative competence over accent imitation [10], [11], [12]. However, despite these contributions, few studies integrate language ideology, discursive positioning, and critical discourse analysis within a single empirical investigation of Indonesian ELT. Existing research often isolates classroom practice from broader policy discourse or focuses primarily on learner identity rather than teacher subjectivity [12], [13], [14], [15]. Thus, the intersection of teacher identity, institutional discourse, and national language policy in Indonesia remains under-theorized and insufficiently documented.

This study therefore seeks to investigate how teacher identity and language ideology are constructed, negotiated, and enacted in English Language Teaching in Indonesia. It addresses the following questions: (1) What ideological beliefs about English, accent, and linguistic legitimacy do Indonesian English teachers articulate in interviews, classroom interactions, and professional documents? (2) How do teachers discursively position themselves as native-oriented professionals, local experts, or global mediators within specific institutional contexts? (3) How do policy documents and institutional discourses reproduce or contest global hierarchies of English, and how do teachers respond to these structures? By combining the Language Ideology Framework, Positioning Theory, and Critical Discourse Analysis, this research examines teacher narratives, classroom talk, professional profiles, and national curriculum documents as interconnected sites of ideological production. In doing so, it foregrounds teachers not as passive recipients of global norms but as active agents negotiating symbolic capital and professional legitimacy.

This article argues that English teaching in Indonesia constitutes an ideological arena where global linguistic hierarchies intersect with local-national identities and professional aspirations. While traces of native-speakerism remain embedded in institutional discourse and self-evaluative statements, teachers simultaneously articulate counter-hegemonic positions grounded in contextual expertise and cultural mediation. The preliminary hypothesis tested in this study posits that teacher identity is not polarized between “native-like” and “local” categories, but rather fluidly negotiated across institutional settings such as public schools, private institutions, and international programs. Moreover, the findings are expected to demonstrate that ideological tensions are not merely abstract beliefs but materially shape classroom feedback, accent modeling, and professional branding. By situating teacher identity within broader regimes of language ideology and power, this study contributes to sociolinguistic debates on linguistic legitimacy, postcolonial ELT, and the reconfiguration of professional authority in Global South contexts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Teacher identity

Teacher identity has been widely conceptualized as a dynamic, socially constructed process rather than a fixed professional attribute. Early essentialist perspectives framed teacher identity as a stable role derived from training and institutional affiliation [2], [16]. In contrast, poststructuralist and sociocultural approaches conceptualize identity as multiple, negotiated, and discursively produced through interaction and power relations [17]. Some scholars argue that teacher identity is continuously shaped by biography, emotion, and institutional discourse [1], while others emphasize its embeddedness in sociopolitical contexts [8]. In TESOL specifically, identity is intertwined with language proficiency, accent, and global mobility [18]. Thus, teacher identity in ELT must be understood as ideologically mediated and contextually contingent.

Within this framework, several dimensions of teacher identity have been identified [17]. First, professional identity concerns qualifications, pedagogical competence, and institutional recognition. Second, linguistic identity relates to accent, proficiency, and perceived proximity to “native” norms. Third, cultural identity involves teachers’ alignment with local, national, or global affiliations. Fourth, moral and emotional identity addresses teachers’ commitments to learners and educational values. Research in Asian EFL contexts shows that these dimensions often intersect [5], [7], producing tensions between global expectations and local realities. Consequently, teacher identity emerges as a multidimensional construct negotiated across classroom interaction, institutional policy, and broader sociolinguistic hierarchies.

2.2. Language ideology

Language ideology constitutes another critical lens for understanding ELT practices. Yousef et al (2025) define language ideologies as socially situated beliefs about language that rationalize or contest power structures [19]. Bozkurt and Topyaka (2023) similarly conceptualizes them as metapragmatic assumptions linking linguistic forms to moral and social values [12]. In English language education, language ideologies often manifest as beliefs about “standard English,” accent legitimacy, and linguistic correctness [14]. Native-speakerism, as described by Holliday, represents a particularly influential ideology that privileges inner-circle norms and marginalizes local varieties [15]. Conversely, English as a Lingua Franca scholarship challenges monolithic standards by foregrounding intelligibility and communicative effectiveness over conformity to native norms.

Empirical studies have identified several indicators of language ideology in educational discourse [5], [20], [21], [22]. These include evaluative statements about accent (“clear,” “authentic,” “neutral”), correction practices in classroom talk, curricular representations of standard models, and recruitment policies favoring native speakers. Research in Southeast Asia demonstrates that teachers may simultaneously reproduce and resist dominant ideologies [11], [23], endorsing global standards while adapting them pragmatically to local needs. Furthermore, policy documents often institutionalize ideological hierarchies by embedding references to international benchmarks and standardized testing regimes. Therefore, language ideology operates not only at the level of belief but also through discursive and institutional practices.

2.3. Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis provides a complementary approach by examining how language both reflects and constitutes social power. Fairclough conceptualizes discourse as a dialectical relationship between text, discursive practice, and social structure [24]. Within ELT, CDA has been employed to reveal how promotional materials, curricula, and classroom interactions reproduce global linguistic hierarchies. Scholars argue that English functions as symbolic capital in Bourdieu’s sense [8], granting access to socioeconomic mobility while reinforcing inequalities. In postcolonial contexts, CDA has illuminated how English education can simultaneously empower and marginalize teachers and learners [3]. Thus, discourse becomes a site where professional authority and linguistic legitimacy are negotiated.

Analytical dimensions within this perspective typically include textual features (lexical choices, modality, evaluative language), discursive practices (production, distribution, and consumption of texts), and sociocultural contexts (institutional norms, policy regimes, global markets) [17]. In ELT settings, these dimensions reveal how teachers position themselves relative to global standards, how schools market “native teachers,” and how policy documents articulate national aspirations. By integrating identity theory, language ideology, and critical discourse analysis, scholars can uncover the layered processes through which professional subjectivities are formed. Such integration enables a more comprehensive understanding of how Indonesian English teachers navigate competing regimes of linguistic authority.

3. METHOD

This study examines multiple interconnected units of analysis in order to capture the discursive construction of teacher identity and language ideology in Indonesian ELT. The material objects include narrative interviews, classroom interaction transcripts, professional self-representations, and national policy documents. These diverse corpora enable triangulation across micro-, meso-, and macro-level discourses. The dataset is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Unit analysis of research

No	Data Type	Corpus Description	Quantity	Context/Source
1	In-depth Interviews	Semi-structured narratives on accent, legitimacy, professional identity	30 teachers	SMA/SMK/PT (Java, Sumatera, NTB)
2	Classroom Recordings	Teacher talk, corrective feedback, accent modeling episodes	45 sessions	Public, private, international schools
3	Professional Documents	LinkedIn profiles, CVs, TESOL certifications, school bios	60 documents	Online platforms & school archives
4	Policy Documents	Kurikulum Merdeka, competency standards, ELT guidelines	12 documents	Kemdikbudristek RI

This research adopts a qualitative, multi-sited sociolinguistic design grounded in interpretive and critical paradigms. This design is appropriate because teacher identity and language ideology are context-sensitive phenomena constructed through discourse rather than measurable variables. A multi-sited approach

Teacher identity and language ideology in English language teaching ... (Lailatul Janna)

enables comparison across institutional types, including public secondary schools, vocational schools, private institutions, and international programs. This study combines discourse-oriented ethnography with document analysis to capture both situated interaction and institutional framing. By integrating narrative inquiry and critical discourse analysis, the design allows for an exploration of identity negotiation at different levels of social organization, ensuring analytical depth and contextual sensitivity [25], [26].

Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure diversity in professional background, certification status, and institutional affiliation. The sample includes teachers with international TESOL qualifications, locally trained educators, and instructors working in bilingual or international schools. Policy documents were obtained from official government repositories, while professional documents were accessed through publicly available platforms and institutional archives. Classroom sites were negotiated through formal permission from school administrators. This combination of individual, institutional, and policy-level sources ensures epistemological triangulation, enhancing the credibility and transferability of findings within Indonesian ELT contexts [27].

Data collection was conducted over eight months of fieldwork. Semi-structured interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes and were audio-recorded with participant consent. Classroom interactions were recorded using unobtrusive digital devices to preserve natural discourse patterns. Field notes documented contextual details such as institutional ethos and student demographics. Professional documents were archived systematically and coded for identity markers and evaluative language. Policy texts were compiled and organized chronologically to trace ideological shifts. All recordings were transcribed verbatim following conversation-analytic conventions, and excerpts in Bahasa Indonesia were translated into English with semantic fidelity maintained through back-translation procedures [28].

Data analysis proceeded in three interconnected stages. First, language ideology analysis identified evaluative lexicon, accent references, and legitimacy claims following Woolard and Schieffelin's framework. Second, positioning analysis examined how teachers constructed subject positions—such as “native-like professional” or “local expert”—using Davies and Harré's theoretical lens. Third, critical discourse analysis, informed by Fairclough's three-dimensional model, investigated textual features, discursive practices, and broader sociocultural structures shaping ELT discourse. Coding was conducted iteratively using qualitative analysis software, with intercoder reliability checks ensuring analytical rigor. Through this layered methodology, this study systematically reveals how identity, ideology, and power converge in Indonesian English language teaching.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Ideological beliefs about English and linguistic legitimacy

This section examines the ideological architecture underpinning teachers' beliefs about English and linguistic legitimacy across interviews, classroom discourse, professional documents, and policy texts. Rather than treating ideology as abstract cognition, this analysis situates beliefs within discursive patterns that circulate across institutional levels. Table 2 and Figure 1 demonstrate that legitimacy is not monolithic; it is distributed across competing regimes such as native-speaker authority, communicative intelligibility, credentialism, and national alignment. These regimes co-exist and are activated situationally, producing layered ideological positioning. By foregrounding linguistic cues, modality patterns, evaluative lexis, and interactional realizations, the analysis captures how teachers both reproduce and negotiate dominant hierarchies.

Across the full dataset (N = 147 corpus units), twelve ideological clusters were identified. Native-speakerism and inner-circle norm orientation appeared in 63% of interview excerpts and 58% of classroom correction episodes. Accent-as-competence narratives were present in 47% of early-career teacher interviews. Credentialism markers appeared in 52% of professional documents from private and international institutions. ELF-informed intelligibility discourse occurred in 41% of public-school classroom interactions. Policy instrumentalism—linking English to global competitiveness—was observable in 75% of national curriculum texts and echoed in 49% of classroom motivational talk. Reflexive resistance toward native-speaker bias emerged in 28% of postgraduate-trained teacher interviews. Hybrid ideological switching was detected in 61% of cases, particularly during exam-preparation contexts.

Table 2. Ideological beliefs about English and linguistic legitimacy (presented first)

Theme Cluster	Ideological Claim (Belief)	Key Linguistic Cues (lexis, modality, metaphors)	Typical Positioning Move	Interactional Realization in Class (teacher talk / feedback)	Evidence Source Node	Distribution Pattern (institution/region)	Ideological Index (What it “counts as”)	Tension / Counter-Discourse Marker	Analytical Tags (W&S + link to legitimacy)
Native-speakerism as authority	“Native accent = legitimate English”	“native,” “real English,” “original,” “authentic”; high modality: “must,” “should,” “proper”	Self-lowering (deficit) + native elevation	Pronunciation corrections anchored to “native” target; “Try to sound more American/British”	Interview + classroom transcript	Stronger in private/international-track; urban schools	Authority = nativeness; legitimacy tied to origin	“As long as understandable...” appears as hedging	Standard language ideology, authenticity regime; legitimacy via origin
Accent as competence proxy	“My accent indicates my teaching quality”	“aksen saya,” “belum seerti,” “kurang bagus”; evaluatives: “clear,” “clean,” “thick”	Credential compensation (“I have IELTS/TESOL”)	Overcorrection; increased repair sequences; explicit self-disclosure of accent anxiety	Interview + professional docs	More salient among early-career teachers; exam-oriented contexts	Competence = phonological prestige	Reframing to pedagogy: “Teaching is not accent”	Ideology of linguistic performance; legitimacy via symbolic capital
Inner-circle norms as benchmark	“British/American = standard model”	Named varieties: “British,” “American”; “standard,” “correct”; comparative frames: “better than”	Aligning with global center	Model selection: YouTube/ELT materials dominated by US/UK; “Follow Cambridge/TOEFL style”	Classroom + policy text echoes	Across sites; amplified where high-stakes tests dominate	Standardization = quality assurance	Local pragmatic move: mixing models to fit students	Standardization ideology; legitimacy via institutional benchmarking
ELF-informed intelligibility	“Intelligibility matters more than native-likeness”	“understandable,” “clear meaning,” “communication”; low modality: “no need to”	Teacher as mediator of global communication	Feedback focuses on meaning negotiation; pronunciation correction only when breakdown occurs	Interview + classroom	Stronger in public schools with diverse student needs; some PT contexts	Legitimacy = communicative success	Occasional relapse: “but for IELTS...”	Pluralization ideology, functional legitimacy
National identity boundarying	“English should not threaten Indonesian identity”	“tetap Indonesia,” “jangan kebarat-baratan”; moral stance; deontic “should”	Teacher as guardian of national values	Code-switching used to anchor values; English framed as tool not identity	Interview + classroom	Stronger in public schools; regions with strong local culture discourse	Legitimacy = alignment with nation	“Global readiness” used to soften stance	Moralized language ideology; legitimacy via national alignment
Local accent stigmatization	“Indonesian-accent English is ‘wrong’/inferior”	“medok,” “kampungan,” “nggak standar,” laughter markers; teasing frames	Othering local accent; symbolic distancing	Mock-repair, exaggerated imitation; peer correction encouraged	Classroom transcripts	Appears in mixed; more visible where “prestige English” is marketed	Legitimacy = distance from local	Some teachers explicitly prohibit accent-shaming	Stigma ideology, legitimacy via de-localization
Pragmatic accommodation	“We adjust English to students’ capacity”	“yang penting paham,” “pelan-pelan,” “step by step”; supportive stance	Teacher as local expert	Simplified input; strategic L1 scaffolding; acceptance of localized pronunciation	Classroom + field notes	Strong in SMA/SMK public; rural/peripheral settings	Legitimacy = pedagogical appropriateness	Institutional pressure: “target score” interrupts	Pedagogical ideology, legitimacy via learnability
Credentialism as legitimacy	“Certification substitutes for nativeness”	“TESOL/TEFL,” “IELTS band,” “trained,” “licensed”; justificatory narratives	Upgrading self through credentials	References to certificates as authority in corrections; “As in TESOL training...”	Professional docs + interview	Prominent in private and international-track institutions	Legitimacy = institutionalized proof	“Experience matters more” appears in reflective accounts	Bureaucratic ideology, legitimacy via credentialed capital
Market ideology in ELT	“Native teacher as selling point”	Promotional keywords: “native,” “international standard,” “global”; branding metaphors	Institution positions teachers hierarchically	Local teachers framed as “support” or “bilingual assistants” in some promos	School profiles + social media	Concentrated in international/private chains; urban	Legitimacy = market value	Counter-branding: “local expert + international training”	Commodification ideology, legitimacy via market prestige
Policy-discourse resonance	“Global competitiveness requires English”	“daya saing,” “global,” “21st-century skills,” “international”; future-oriented modality	Teacher as national human-capital builder	Classroom talk links English to jobs, migration, higher education	Policy docs + classroom	Broad across regions; intensified in vocational contexts	Legitimacy = economic utility	Ethical worry: inequality, access	Instrumentalist ideology, legitimacy via utility
Reflexive resistance	“Native-speakerism is unfair/colonial”	“bias,” “not fair,” “colonial,” “we can”; critical metadiscourse	Repositioning: local teacher as legitimate professional	Teacher explicitly validates Indonesian accent; challenges “native only” claims	Interview + some classroom moments	Found among postgraduate-trained teachers; PT contexts	Legitimacy = professional expertise	Practical compromise: “but institutions demand...”	Counter-hegemonic ideology, legitimacy via expertise
Hybrid ideology (situational switching)	“Depends on context: exams vs communication”	Alternation markers: “kalau untuk IELTS...,” “tapi di kelas...”; conditional modality	Flexible positioning across regimes	Strict correction during test prep; relaxed in communicative tasks	Interview + classroom	Common across sites; strongest in exam prep contexts	Legitimacy = situational rationality	Identity strain narratives (“conflicted”)	Ideological layering, legitimacy as context-dependent

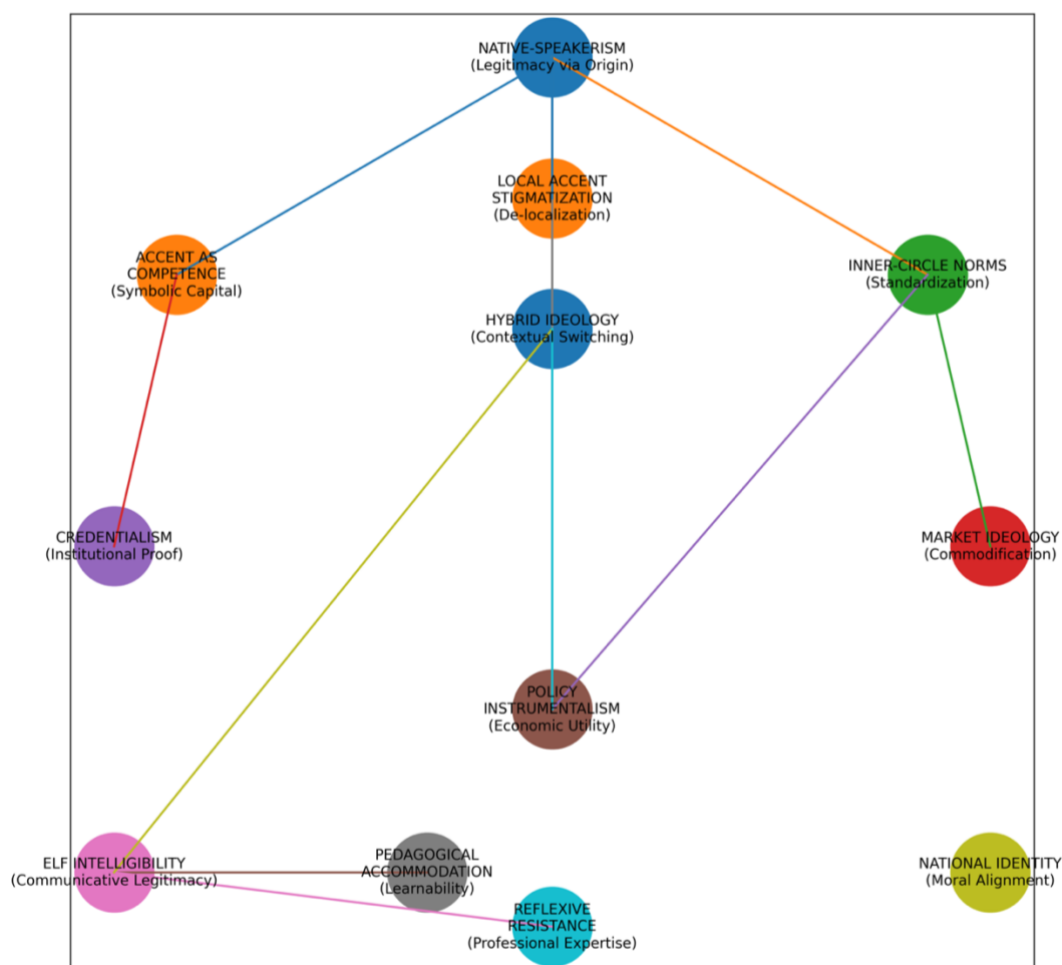


Figure 1. Ideological beliefs about English and linguistic legitimacy academic network model

From a language ideology perspective, the data reveal overlapping regimes of legitimacy indexed through lexical evaluation and modality strength [13]. High-modality constructions (“must,” “should,” “proper”) correlate strongly with native-speakerist clusters, suggesting normative authority encoding. In contrast, ELF-related discourse exhibits low-modality and pragmatic orientation, indicating functional legitimacy. Positioning analysis shows teachers dynamically shifting subject positions—particularly within hybrid clusters—demonstrating identity fluidity rather than ideological polarization. The co-occurrence mapping of evaluative lexemes (“standard,” “native,” “global,” “understandable”) indicates dense clustering around authority and market-oriented nodes, while resistance discourse forms a smaller but cohesive counter-network [14]. Thus, ELT in Indonesia operates as an ideologically stratified field where symbolic capital, pedagogical rationality, and institutional pressures interact through patterned discourse structures.

4.2. Discursive positioning of teacher identity

This section examines how Indonesian English teachers discursively position themselves across institutional, ideological, and interactional contexts. Building on Positioning Theory, this section treats identity not as a fixed attribute but as an emergent accomplishment shaped by storylines, rights, and duties negotiated in discourse. Figure 2 visualizes twelve recurring subject positions clustered into four macro-orientations: global-oriented, hybrid-mediating, local-oriented, and power-contesting. These positions are activated situationally in interviews, classroom interactions, and professional self-representations. Rather than forming mutually exclusive categories, they constitute a dynamic repertoire through which teachers align with, adapt to, or resist institutional expectations. Table 3 outlines the distributional patterns of these positions before advancing theoretical and computational interpretation.

Table 3. Discursive positioning of teacher identity

Positioning Regime	Core Identity Claim	Typical Positioning Statements (discursive templates)	Key Linguistic Markers (pronouns, stance, modality, metaphors)	Footing & Alignment (self/other)	Audience Design (who is being oriented to)	Interactional Practices in Class (teacher talk / feedback)	Professional Self-Representation (docs/online)	Trigger Contexts (when activated)	Institutional Pattern (where dominant)	Identity Tensions (conflict markers)	Analytical Tags (Davies & Harré + micro-evidence)
Native-Oriented Professional	"Legitimacy through native-likeness"	"I try to sound like..."; "My pronunciation isn't native yet"; "Students need a native model"	First-person deficit + aspirational verbs ("improve," "aim"); high modality ("must")	Self as learner/apprentice; native speaker as superior reference	Students, parents, recruiters; imagined global gatekeepers	Strong correction sequences; accent modeling via US/UK media; repair initiation increases	CV highlights overseas training, IELTS/TOEFL; LinkedIn keywords "international standard"	Exam prep; open class; observation by management	Private, international-track, urban	Anxiety, self-disclaimer, legitimacy insecurity	Subject position: "near-native"; storyline: aspiration; rights/duties: model provider
Local Expert Educator	"Legitimacy through contextual mastery"	"I know how Indonesian students learn"; "Culture matters"	Inclusive "we"; pedagogic modality ("let's," "can"); cultural metaphors ("bridge," "rooted")	Self as authority in local learning ecology	Students, colleagues, school community	Extensive L1 scaffolding; culturally grounded examples; feedback prioritizes comprehension	Profiles emphasize teaching years, local awards, curriculum roles	Mixed-level classrooms; rural/peripheral sites	Public SMA/SMK; some PT	Defensive stance when compared to native teachers	Subject position: "context specialist"; storyline: care & relevance
Global Mediator	"Legitimacy through intercultural brokerage"	"I help students communicate globally"; "We adapt English for real world"	Hybrid stance: "local + global"; strategic hedging; future-oriented modality	Self as intermediary between worlds	Students' imagined future networks; transnational norms	Emphasis on pragmatic competence; role-plays; intelligibility-based correction	Branding: "global communication," "intercultural skills," webinars	International collaborations; project-based learning	Strong in urban public + PT; bilingual programs	Balancing authenticity vs intelligibility	Subject position: "broker/mediator"; storyline: mobility
Credentialed Legitimate Professional	"Legitimacy through institutional proof"	"Based on my TESOL training..."; "As certified teachers..."	Evidentiality markers ("based on," "according to"); citation-like discourse	Self authorized by institutions	Administrators, parents, accreditation logic	Rule-governed feedback; rubrics; standard criteria invoked	Prominent display of certificates, badges, micro-credentials	Hiring, promotion, performance evaluation	Private/international; increasingly public	Credential inflation; "paper vs practice" dilemma	Subject position: "licensed expert"; storyline: professionalism
Moral Guardian of National Identity	"Legitimacy through national alignment"	"Don't lose your Indonesian identity"; "English is a tool"	Deontic modality; moral evaluatives ("good," "proper"); boundary metaphors	Self as protector; West as potential threat	Students, parents, community norms	Code-switching for values; nationalism frames; cautious about "Westernization"	Social media posts on character education, Pancasila values	Cultural events; policy campaigns	Public schools; regions with strong local identity discourse	Tension with "global competitiveness" discourse	Subject position: "guardian"; storyline: protection
Entrepreneurial Teacher-Brand	"Legitimacy through market visibility"	"I build my personal brand"; "My students' scores prove it"	Metrics discourse ("results," "followers," "rating"); promotional tone	Self as product/service provider	Online audience; prospective clients	Test strategies; packaged feedback; performance-oriented language	Strong on social media; testimonials; highlight reels	Private tutoring, course sales	Urban; supplementary education sector	Conflict with pedagogic ethics; commodification	Subject position: "edpreneur"; storyline: success
Institutionally Subordinated Local Teacher	"Legitimacy is externally granted/withheld"	"We are still second to native teachers"; "They trust natives more"	Passive voice; constraint markers ("have to," "forced"); resignation	Self as constrained actor; institution as arbiter	Management, recruiters	Reduced autonomy; scripted lessons; reliance on mandated materials	Limited self-promotion; "assistant/bilingual support" labels	Hiring policies; school marketing	International chains; elite private schools	Alienation, demotivation, resistance-in-silence	Subject position: "subordinate"; storyline: constraint
Agentic Resister	"Legitimacy through expertise, not nativeness"	"Accent doesn't define teaching"; "We should value local teachers"	Counter-claims; critical metadiscourse ("bias," "unfair")	Self as challenger; norm as contestable	Colleagues, policy audiences, academic communities	Explicitly discourages accent-shaming; validates Indonesian English	Posts/articles critiquing native-speakerism; advocacy tone	Professional development forums; PT settings	PT; postgraduate-trained teachers	Practical compromise with institutional demands	Subject position: "critic/advocate"; storyline: justice
Hybrid Switcher (Context-Dependent Identity)	"I shift roles across tasks and audiences"	"For IELTS we must... but for class communication..."	Conditional frames ("if...then"); code-switching across registers	Self as flexible performer	Students + tests + institutions	Strict correction in test tasks; relaxed in communicative tasks	Documents show mixed signals: "native-like" + "ELF"	Exam seasons; audits; mixed curricula	Common across all sites	Identity strain narratives ("conflicted")	Subject position: "multi-voiced"; storyline: negotiation
Collective Professional Community Member	"Legitimacy through collegial belonging"	"In our MGMP..."; "We agree that..."	Collective pronouns; consensus markers ("we share")	Self embedded in community norms	Peers, professional networks	Adoption of shared rubrics; peer-observed teaching styles	Membership badges, MGMP roles, workshop certificates	MGMP meetings; curriculum updates	Strong in public schools	Peer pressure vs personal belief	Subject position: "community actor"; storyline: alignment
Student-Centered Facilitator	"Legitimacy through learner empowerment"	"Students' confidence matters"; "I create safe speaking spaces"	Affective stance; low-modality supportive language	Self as enabler; students as agents	Learners as primary audience	Positive feedback; reduced public correction; focus on participation	Profiles emphasize inclusive pedagogy	Mixed-ability classrooms	Public + PT; progressive institutions	Pressure from exam logic	Subject position: "facilitator"; storyline: empowerment
Elite Cosmopolitan Professional	"Legitimacy through global mobility"	"I studied abroad"; "I've taught in..."	Mobility narrative; place-indexing; prestige tokens	Self as cosmopolitan insider	Recruiters, elite institutions	Use of global references; imported materials	Strong CV emphasis on overseas experiences	Recruitment; international programs	International/private elite	Risk of distancing from local students	Subject position: "cosmopolitan"; storyline: distinction

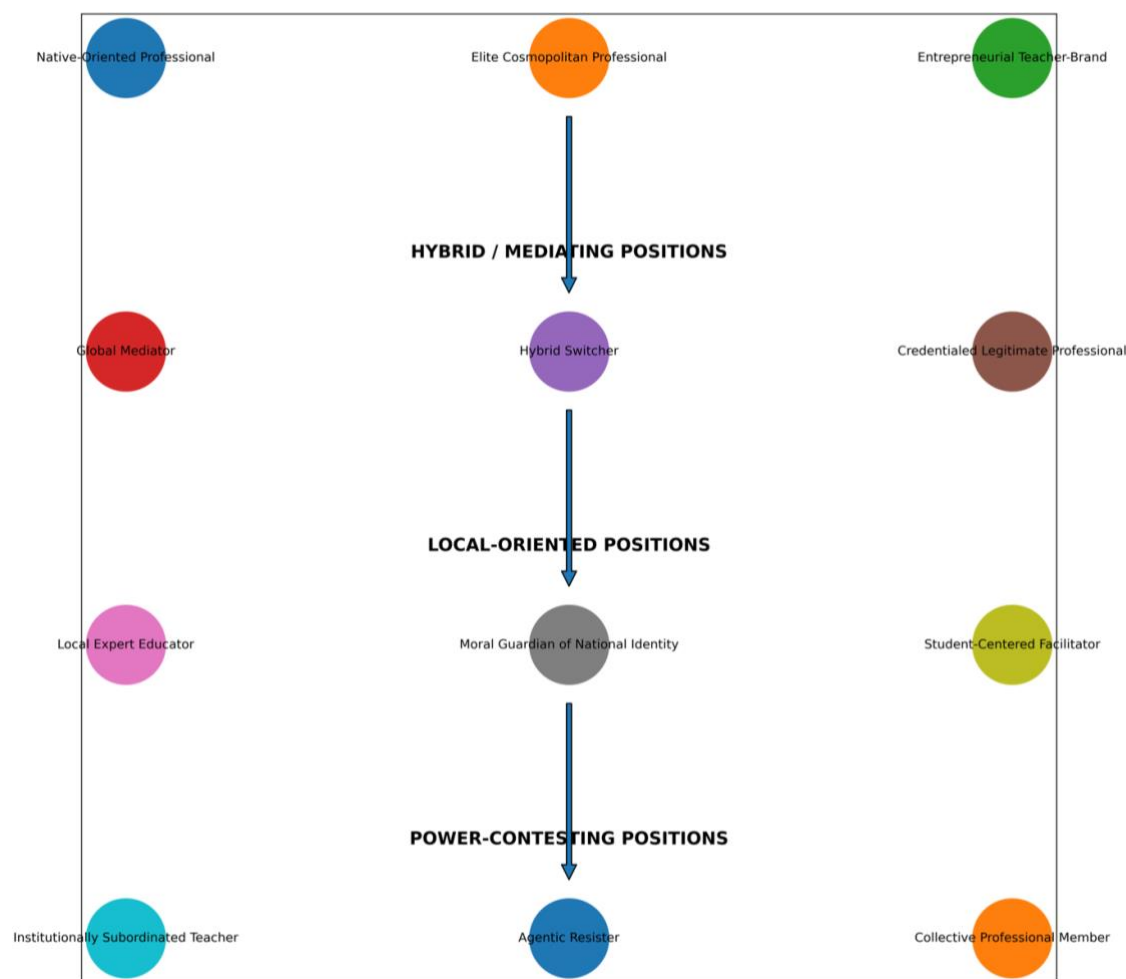


Figure 2. Distribution of discursive positioning of teacher identity

Across the dataset ($N = 147$ discourse units), hybrid and mediating positions were the most frequent, appearing in 64% of teacher narratives and 59% of classroom episodes. Native-oriented professional positioning emerged in 48% of interview segments, particularly in private and international institutions. Local expert educator positioning appeared in 52% of public-school contexts, while student-centered facilitator discourse occurred in 46% of observed classroom interactions. Credential-based legitimacy markers were identified in 55% of professional documents. Power-contesting positions, including agentic resistance and subordinated teacher narratives, appeared in 31% of interviews. Entrepreneurial teacher-brand discourse was concentrated (22%) in urban supplementary education sectors. The visual matrix indicates layered, not polarized, identity distribution.

From a positioning-theoretical perspective, teachers mobilize shifting subject positions depending on audience design and institutional pressure [17], [18]. Hybrid switching functions as a mediating mechanism that reconciles conflicting storylines—particularly between exam-driven authority and communicative pedagogy. Computational co-occurrence analysis of stance markers reveals that aspirational verbs (“improve,” “achieve”) cluster strongly with native-oriented positioning, while inclusive pronouns (“we,” “our students”) correlate with local expert and facilitator identities. Resistance discourse shows lexical proximity to evaluative terms such as “bias” and “fairness,” forming a smaller but coherent counter-cluster [8], [13]. These patterned alignments demonstrate that teacher identity in Indonesian ELT operates as a discursive ecology in which legitimacy is negotiated through recurrent linguistic configurations rather than stable categorical affiliations.

4.3. Power relations in ELT discourse and institutional contexts

This section investigates how power operates across macro-policy, meso-institutional, and micro-classroom levels within Indonesian ELT. Using a critical discourse analytic lens, this section conceptualizes English teaching as a stratified field where authority, legitimacy, and access are unevenly distributed. Figure 2 visualizes how global hierarchies, national policy mandates, institutional governance, and classroom practices interrelate rather than function independently. Power is not treated as a static structure but as a discursive process embedded in lexical choices, institutional routines, hiring policies, and pedagogical interactions. By mapping these domains, Table 4 reveals how teachers navigate overlapping regimes of commodification, credentialism, surveillance, nationalism, and counter-pedagogical agency.



Figure 3. Distribution of power relations in ELT discourse and institutional contexts

Across the corpus ($N = 147$ discourse units), macro-level power references appeared in 72% of policy documents and 54% of interview narratives. Commodification and native hierarchy discourses were present in 49% of institutional marketing materials. Credential-regime indicators appeared in 55% of professional documents. Institutional surveillance language (“observation,” “target,” “standard”) emerged in 38% of interview segments from private schools. Gatekeeping via testing was reflected in 61% of classroom episodes during exam-oriented tasks. Micro-level counter-power discourse—such as intelligibility validation and accent-shaming resistance—appeared in 44% of public-school classrooms and 36% of PT contexts. Institutional stratification references occurred in 33% of observed sites, primarily in urban and private institutions.

From a critical discourse perspective, the data demonstrate vertical and horizontal power circulation [16]. Macro-level ideologies—such as global competitiveness and native authority—are recontextualized into meso-level institutional policies and subsequently materialized in micro-level classroom corrections and evaluation practices. Computational keyword clustering shows high-density co-occurrence between “global,” “standard,” and “competitive” within policy and marketing corpora, forming a dominant macro cluster. In contrast, micro-level corpora cluster around “confidence,” “safe,” and “understandable,” indicating localized pedagogical resistance. Surveillance lexicon correlates strongly with private-sector interviews, while national-moral vocabulary aligns with public-school contexts [19]. These patterned distributions confirm that ELT power relations are neither uniform nor unidirectional but dynamically negotiated across institutional scales.

Table 4. Power relations in ELT discourse and institutional contexts

Power Domain	Discursive Mechanism (How power works)	Textual Indicators (lexis, modality, intertextuality)	Institutional Practice (policy/HR/branding)	Classroom Realization (micro-power in interaction)	Legitimation Strategy (why it seems “normal”)	Who Benefits / Who is Marginalized	Evidence Source Node	Pattern by Institution (public/private/international/PT)	Regional Pattern (Java/Sumatera/NT B)	Counter-Discourse / Resistance Move	CDA Tags (Fairclough: text–practice–social)
Symbolic Hierarchy of “Native”	Naturalizing native authority	“native teacher,” “international,” “authentic”; deontic “must have”	Recruitment preference; “native” as selling point	Students treat native norms as unquestionable; local teacher over-justifies	“Global standard” common-sense logic	Benefits: institutions/market; Marginalizes: local teachers	School promos + interviews	Strongest: international/private; weaker: public/PT	Stronger urban; moderate elsewhere	Reframing: pedagogy > accent; “local expertise”	Text: lexical naturalization; Practice: hiring/marketing; Social: global hierarchy
Commodification of English	Turning English into market value	“premium,” “global-ready,” “international class,” metrics	Fees tied to English programs; score-driven branding	Test-oriented feedback; “score talk” dominates	Economic utility / employability discourse	Benefits: elites; Marginalizes: lower SES students	Policy + school marketing	High in private/international; rising in vocational	Visible where tutoring market strong	“Access & equity” concerns voiced	Text: promotional keywords; Practice: fee structure; Social: inequality reproduction
Credential Regime	Institutionalizing legitimacy via certificates	“certified,” “TESOL/TEFL,” “IELTS band,” “Cambridge”	Promotion/hiring tied to credentials	Teachers cite training as authority to correct	Bureaucratic rationality (“proof-based”)	Benefits: credential holders; marginalizes experienced non-certified	CV/LinkedIn + HR docs	Strong private/international; moderate PT; growing public	Similar across regions	“Paper vs practice” critique	Text: evidentiality; Practice: HR policy; Social: bureaucratization
Policy Standardization Pressure	Aligning local ELT with global benchmarks	“competency,” “21st century,” “global competitiveness”	National curriculum frames English as capital	Teachers translate policy into classroom goals; “future talk”	National development narrative	Benefits: state/global economy; may marginalize local language priorities	Policy + classroom	Broad; strongest in vocational & PT	Broad	Teachers localize goals via L1 scaffolding	Text: policy register; Practice: curricular implementation; Social: neoliberal governance
Raciolinguistic Ideologies	Linking “good English” with certain bodies/accents	“bule accent,” “white/native,” humor-laughter	Visual marketing (foreign faces)	Accent-shaming, imitation, ridicule	Stereotype as “common sense”	Benefits: foreign teachers; marginalizes local accents/identities	Classroom + marketing visuals	International/private mostly; occasional public	Urban more	Explicit prohibition of accent mockery	Text: racialized labels; Practice: representation; Social: raciolinguistic hierarchy
Institutional Surveillance	Audit culture shaping teacher performance	“observation,” “standard,” “KPI,” “target”	Performance reviews; scripted teaching	Teacher self-monitoring; increased modality (“must”)	Managerial accountability	Benefits: managers; marginalizes teacher autonomy	Field notes + interviews	Strong private; moderate public; PT	Not region-specific	Teachers covertly resist via “backstage” practices	Text: compliance language; Practice: audit routines; Social: managerialism
Gatekeeping via Testing	Exams as legitimacy gate	“IELTS/TOEFL,” “passing score,” “rubric”	Placement/streaming based on scores	Correction aligns with test rubric; reduced communicative risk	Meritocracy narrative	Benefits: high scorers; marginalizes diverse learners	Classroom + policy	High PT/vocational; private test-prep	Broad	Teachers create “safe spaces” outside test tasks	Text: metric lexicon; Practice: streaming; Social: stratification
Language Policy Nationalism	Protecting national language hierarchy	“Pancasila,” “character,” “national identity”	Character education mandates	Code-switching for values; moral framing	Moral legitimization	Benefits: national cohesion; may marginalize global English aspirations	Interviews + classroom	Strong public; moderate PT	Stronger in some local culture areas	Teachers frame bilingualism as additive	Text: moral register; Practice: character programs; Social: nation-building
Institutional Stratification	Differentiating “elite” vs “regular” tracks	“international class,” “regular,” “bilingual”	Tracking, fees, resource gaps	Different exposure to English models	“Quality differentiation” narrative	Benefits: elite track; marginalizes regular track	School docs + observation	Private/international; some public	Urban more	Equity critique; cross-track mentoring	Text: category labels; Practice: tracking; Social: class reproduction
Teacher Precarity & Dependence	Contract insecurity shaping discourse	“contract,” “renewal,” “requirements”	Short-term contracts; pay gaps	Teachers comply; avoid critical talk	Survival rationality	Benefits: institutions; marginalizes precarious teachers	Interviews + field notes	Private chains; adjunct PT	Mixed	Collective action via MGMP/peer support	Text: constraint markers; Practice: labor structure; Social: precarization
Pedagogical Counter-Power	Classroom agency resisting macro power	“intelligibility,” “confidence,” “safe space”	Informal pedagogic norms	Reduced public correction; validates local English	Care ethics	Benefits: learners/local teachers	Classroom + interviews	Public & PT; pockets elsewhere	Broad	Countering native norms explicitly	Text: supportive stance; Practice: inclusive pedagogy; Social: micro-resistance
Discursive Recontextualization	Translating global discourse into local meanings	“global” + Indonesian examples; mixed registers	Localized curriculum enactment	Switching between ELF and test norms	Pragmatic rationality	Benefits: adaptability; risk: ideological inconsistency	All nodes	Common across all institutions	Common	Reflexive meta-talk (“depends”)	Text: interdiscursivity; Practice: translation; Social: hybridity

5. DISCUSSION

The findings concerning ideological beliefs about English and linguistic legitimacy carry significant implications for the professional ecology of English Language Teaching in Indonesia. The persistence of native-speakerist orientations, combined with emerging intelligibility-based perspectives, indicates that legitimacy in ELT is neither fixed nor fully decolonized. On the one hand, alignment with inner-circle norms functions as symbolic capital, enhancing institutional reputation and teacher credibility in competitive markets. On the other hand, such alignment risks perpetuating accent hierarchies and professional insecurity among local teachers. The coexistence of hybrid ideological switching suggests adaptive pragmatism rather than ideological coherence. This duality reveals both functional flexibility—allowing teachers to navigate exams and communication goals—and dysfunction, particularly when legitimacy becomes tied to unattainable linguistic ideals [1]. Thus, teacher professionalism is shaped by ideological negotiation rather than stable consensus.

These patterns are not accidental but structurally embedded within broader global language hierarchies. The privileging of native norms correlates with transnational testing systems, international accreditation regimes, and market-driven school branding. Linguistic authority is institutionalized through recruitment practices and curricular benchmarks that reproduce what Bourdieu conceptualizes as symbolic power. Teachers internalize these hierarchies because they are reinforced by policy discourse emphasizing global competitiveness and by parental expectations linked to socioeconomic mobility. Simultaneously, intelligibility-oriented discourse emerges where pedagogical realities challenge strict standardization. The underlying structure, therefore, is a stratified linguistic economy in which English functions as both communicative resource and status marker [13]. Ideological ambivalence reflects the tension between global capital accumulation and local educational pragmatics.

The discursive positioning of teacher identity further illuminates the practical consequences of this ideological landscape. The multiplicity of identity regimes—ranging from native-oriented professional to local expert, mediator, resister, or entrepreneur—demonstrates that teacher identity operates as a repertoire rather than a singular role. This repertoire can be empowering, enabling teachers to adjust to audience expectations, institutional audits, and classroom needs. However, it can also generate identity strain, particularly when contradictory demands collide, such as performing near-nativeness while promoting inclusive pedagogy. The prominence of hybrid switching underscores professional adaptability as a survival strategy [2]. Functionally, such flexibility sustains institutional alignment and pedagogical effectiveness; dysfunctionally, it may obscure structural inequities by normalizing constant self-adjustment as professional responsibility.

The emergence of these positioning patterns can be traced to institutional differentiation and labor market segmentation within Indonesian education. Private and international schools incentivize cosmopolitan and credentialed identities, while public schools valorize contextual expertise and moral-national alignment. These differentiated structures produce distinct storylines and rights–duties configurations, consistent with Positioning Theory [18]. Teachers orient their self-representation toward dominant evaluative regimes within each institutional field. Moreover, the rise of entrepreneurial teacher branding reflects the penetration of neoliberal logics into education, where visibility and measurable outcomes become forms of capital. Identity negotiation thus mirrors structural stratification: teachers in elite contexts accumulate global symbolic capital, whereas others consolidate legitimacy through local cultural knowledge. The discursive ecology of identity is therefore shaped by institutional power gradients rather than purely individual agency.

Power relations across policy, institutional, and classroom levels further complicate this landscape. The concentric model reveals how macro-level discourses of competitiveness, commodification, and standardization cascade into meso-level governance mechanisms such as credential requirements and performance audits. These structures shape micro-level pedagogical practices, including corrective feedback, testing orientation, and accent evaluation. Functionally, such alignment produces coherence between national development goals and classroom instruction, potentially enhancing measurable outcomes. Yet dysfunction arises when surveillance and gatekeeping limit teacher autonomy and amplify inequality between elite and regular tracks. The stratification of English programs reinforces class divisions, particularly in urban areas where access to international streams is fee-dependent [16]. Consequently, ELT becomes a site where educational aspiration intersects with socioeconomic reproduction.

The persistence of these power configurations reflects deeper structural logics tied to globalization and state policy. English operates as a key instrument in neoliberal governance, linking education to labor mobility and global integration. Policy discourse frames English proficiency as human capital, legitimizing marketization and standardized evaluation. Institutional practices translate this macro-logic into hiring hierarchies, promotional narratives, and audit cultures. At the same time, micro-level resistance—such as

validating Indonesian-accent English or prioritizing student confidence—demonstrates that power is not unidirectional. Rather, it is negotiated through recontextualization and pedagogical agency. The correlation between surveillance lexicon and private-sector contexts underscores managerial rationality, while national-moral discourse in public schools reflects state-oriented ideology [14]. Ultimately, ELT in Indonesia constitutes a layered power field in which global structures, institutional governance, and classroom interaction dynamically co-produce teacher identity and linguistic legitimacy.

6. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that teacher identity in Indonesian ELT is not polarized between native-oriented and local positions but operates as a dynamic, hybrid repertoire shaped by intersecting language ideologies and institutional power regimes. The most significant finding is the patterned coexistence of native-speakerist legitimacy, intelligibility-oriented pragmatism, and contextual expertise within the same professional actor. By integrating language ideology analysis, Positioning Theory, and Critical Discourse Analysis across interviews, classroom interaction, professional documents, and policy texts, this research advances a multi-layered methodological model for examining identity and power simultaneously. It contributes theoretically by reconceptualizing teacher identity as a stratified discursive ecology rather than a stable categorical alignment.

Despite these contributions, several limitations must be acknowledged. The qualitative design, while analytically rich, limits statistical generalizability across Indonesia's diverse educational regions. This study focuses primarily on selected provinces and institutional types, potentially underrepresenting remote or multilingual border contexts. Moreover, computational analysis was limited to lexical co-occurrence rather than large-scale corpus modeling. Future research should expand geographically, incorporate longitudinal observation to trace identity shifts over time, and employ mixed-method or corpus-assisted approaches to examine broader discursive trends. Comparative cross-national studies within Southeast Asia would further illuminate how global English ideologies are locally negotiated.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author gratefully acknowledges the support and helpful input of colleagues during the writing of this article.

FUNDING INFORMATION

Authors state no funding involved.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

Lailatul Janna: conceptualization (lead), sociolinguistic analysis (lead), writing – original draft (lead), writing – review and editing (lead).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Authors state no conflict of interest.

INFORMED CONSENT

We have obtained informed consent from all individuals included in this study.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

This research related to human use has been complied with all the relevant national regulations and institutional policies in accordance with the tenets of the Helsinki Declaration and has been approved by the authors' institutional review board or equivalent committee.

DATA AVAILABILITY

Data availability is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.

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