



# The Professional Educational Program (P3K) as an Arena for the Formation of Professional Identity for Prospective Accounting Teachers

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the professional identity transformation of prospective Accounting teachers during their participation in Indonesia's Professional Educational Program (P3K). Using positioning theory, the research explores how and why these teachers' self-perception and professional attitudes evolve. A qualitative case study design was conducted with six participants from vocational schools, with data gathered from reflective journals, interviews, classroom observations, and teaching materials. The findings reveal that professional identity transformation occurs through deliberate self-positioning, where teachers shape their roles consciously, and forced self-positioning, where external pressures lead to adaptation. This process is analyzed through the willingness, competence, and power (WCP) framework, highlighting the shift from uncertainty to confidence in self-perception and from a task-oriented to a more proactive, student-centered professional attitude. This research underscores the importance of teacher education programs that provide reflective practice and real-world teaching experiences to support professional identity formation.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Research on teacher professional identity has undergone significant development, where teachers are guided to reflect on their professional lives and the impact on decision-making both inside and outside the classroom (Astuti et al., 2018; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard & Meijer, 2017; Izadinia, 2013). To enhance their career professionalism, both prospective and experienced teachers experience an identity transformation process that is intertwined with their personal and professional lives. Teacher professional identity is defined as a process in which teachers see themselves in the role of a professional educator, encompassing their self-perception, beliefs, values, and practices (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017). Teacher professional identity transformation is rather a dynamic process that is always related to relationships and context (Beijaard et al., 2004; Buchanan, 2015). This process of identity transformation is influenced by various internal and external factors. Previous research found that teacher professional identity can be influenced by supportive factors such as teacher education and training, teaching experience, support from the work environment, involvement in teacher communities, and efforts to participate in professional development activities (Arlinda et al., 2024). The research suggests that teaching experience is one of significant factors for teachers in shaping their professional identity. Teaching experience is often gained through involvement in teaching programs designed by the institutions where prospective teachers received their education. At the institution where the research was conducted, prospective teachers are required to participate in a one-semester teaching experience program known as the Professional Educational Program (P3K) as part of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) initiative, and the results can be converted into grades for several related courses.

The Professional Educational Program (P3K) is a program designed by one of Indonesia's Teacher Education Institutions (LPTK) to prepare prospective teachers with the professional competencies needed in the field of education. This program typically involves a series of activities including training, teaching practice, and evaluation, with the primary goal of equipping prospective teachers with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to become effective and professional educators. Through involvement in P3K, prospective teachers are expected to develop their professional identity, including a strong understanding of their roles and responsibilities as educators. Previous research shows that prospective teachers' involvement in teaching experiences influences the formation of their professional identity (Afrianto, 2015; Arlinda et al., 2024). However, the results only indicate that P3K is one of the factors in the process of transforming a teacher's professional identity. The research was conducted on teachers of subjects other than Accounting. Methodologically, quantitative studies have been widely conducted to identify the factors influencing the readiness of Accounting student teachers to become teachers (Masrotin & Wahjudi, 2021).

Previous research categorized the identity of prospective teachers into two categories: personal and professional (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The personal identity of prospective teachers includes factors such as age and gender (Izquierdo et al., 2023); life history (Gray et al., n.d.); role models (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009); personal psychological state, including agency (Buchanan, 2015); self-efficacy (Masrotin & Wahjudi, 2021) and emotions (Schelhorn et al., 2023), which can significantly influence their identity. Teacher training programs are considered essential professional factors, and university learning

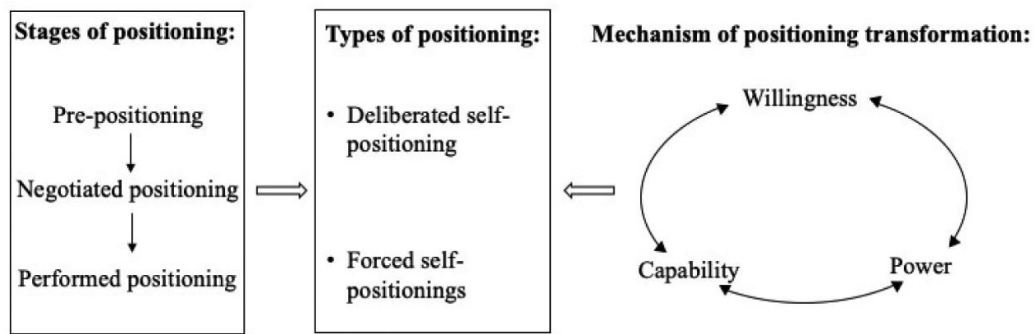
experiences and teaching practicums (Yuan & Mak, 2016) are the most crucial factors for the identity transformation of prospective teachers. During their studies, prospective teachers acquire educational knowledge and skills that can strengthen their confidence in forming their professional identity as teachers (Rodrigues & Mogarro, 2019). Through teaching practicums, the real school and classroom contexts can increase the motivation of prospective teachers to reflect on their beliefs and actions, helping to shape their professional identity (Yuan & Mak, 2016). However, the impact of teaching practicums (school context) on teacher identity is often inconsistent or even contradictory, leading to challenges and dilemmas for prospective teachers in their professional identity transformation process. Most research has focused on the 'what' questions, describing the challenges and dilemmas faced by prospective teachers in relation to identity transformation, with fewer studies focusing on the 'how' and 'why' questions to investigate the influence of various factors on the identity transformation of prospective teachers. Furthermore, research focusing on the identity transformation process of Accounting prospective teachers, particularly through the P3K program, remains limited. This study, thus, is expected to make a meaningful contribution to the development of the P3K program and the improvement of the quality of Accounting teacher education.

Harré & Van Langenhove (1991) state that individuals go through three stages of positioning: pre-positioning, positioning, and performing. Before social interaction begins, individuals start positioning themselves within the interaction (Harré & Moghaddam, 2003). Pre-positioning relates to an individual's character, intellectuality, and temperament, influenced by their past life experiences (Harré & Moghaddam, 2003). During interaction with others, individuals undergo positioning, where their pre-positioning may be affirmed or refused, reinforced, or revised based on the influence of others (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1991). This process involves negotiating between the individual and others concerning the rights, obligations, and power associated with the position. After negotiating, individuals perform their positions according to the expectations and demands of the environment in which they interact.

Harré & Moghaddam (2003) identified four forms of positioning: deliberated self- and other-positioning, and forced self- and other-positioning. Deliberated self-positioning refers to what one wishes to convey about their personal identity, while deliberated other-positioning describes how one deliberately positions themselves because of others. Forced self-positioning occurs when one is asked or expected to position themselves by others or institutions, while forced other-positioning happens when one imposes a specific position on others. In a social environment, positioning is usually the result of negotiation among these four types of positioning, where deliberate self-positioning and forced self-positioning are particularly important, especially for new employees.

Harré & Van Langenhove (1991) proposed positioning theory to analyze the identity transformation process through the observation of individual interactions in different positions or phases. This research framework integrates willingness, capability, and power (WCP; Davies and Harré 1999) in individual transformation. This theory can be used to identify the professional identity transformation process through analyzing how subjects accept, reject, and act in different positions (Harré & Moghaddam, 2003; Van Langenhove L et al., 2016). Therefore, this study will use positioning theory (Figure 1) to explore how and why the

professional identity of Accounting prospective teachers transforms by analyzing the various negotiation processes in different positions, considering WCP.



**Figure 1. Conceptual Model**

The participants of this research were prospective Accounting teachers who participated in the Professional Educational Program (P3K) for one semester. During conducting this program, prospective teachers are given the opportunity to implement their learning outcomes through observing the teaching and learning process in schools, preparing teaching materials, and directly experiencing the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The success of this program is evaluated by how well the prospective teachers develop professional competencies, knowledge, skills, and attitudes as teachers, as well as their increased interest in becoming Accounting teachers. Therefore, detailed research on the process of forming the professional identity of prospective teachers through field teaching practice is crucial. To address the issue, the research attempted to answer these following research questions:

1. How does the professional identity of prospective Accounting teachers transform through the P3K program?
2. Why do the self-perception and professional attitudes of prospective Accounting teachers change during the P3K program?

## 2. METHODS

To gain an in-depth understanding of the process of professional identity transformation among Accounting teachers, this research adopts a qualitative approach with a case study design conducted over six months (Saldaña, 2003; Yin, 2017). The research spanned six months, beginning from the preparation stage to the reporting phase of the P3K program. Data collection was carried out at partner schools where the prospective teachers were placed to implement the P3K program. Six prospective Accounting teachers participating in the P3K program were the subjects of this study. Information about the participants is presented in Table 1, with pseudonyms used to protect their privacy.

**Table 1.****Demographic Information of the Participants**

Name	Gender	Type of School
Silvia	Female	Public Vocational School
Putri	Female	Private Vocational School
Hilmi	Male	Public Vocational School
Ihsan	Male	Public Vocational School
Elsa	Female	Private Vocational School
Adin	Female	Private Vocational School

The data used in this research include reflective journals, semi-structured interviews with prospective teachers, classroom observations, and teaching documents (including lesson plans, student assignments, and various teaching materials). The interview data were obtained from recorded interviews and their transcriptions. The data were analyzed and coded by the third author and refined by the first author. Thematic analysis will be conducted to analyze the collected data (Guest et al., 2011). First, initial categories and coding schemes were analyzed based on positioning theory and previous research. Using these categories, the data were initially coded. N Vivo coding was also used to identify participants' perceptions of professional positions and the implicit meanings within the data (Manning, 2017). The researchers also conducted open coding analysis, allowing for the observation of recurring data beyond the predefined categories. In the second stage, the codes were compared and grouped into subcategories. Finally, case-by-case analysis was conducted (Miles et al., 2014) based on the participants' negotiation patterns and positions. Data analysis was conducted using N Vivo 12.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study address two research questions. The first section explains how prospective teachers undergo the transformation process by negotiating through three stages: pre-positioning, negotiated positioning, and performed positioning. Secondly, the WCP framework is used to analyze why the professional identity of prospective teachers can transform. The findings of this study address the research questions as follow.

#### Transformation through Positioning

This section is to address the first research question in which to explore on how teacher professional identity of prospective teachers is transformed through deliberated and forced self-positioning (Harré and Van Langenhove, 1999).

#### Deliberated Self- Positioning

Prospective teachers often enter the P3K program with a clear idea of the type of educator they want to become, deliberately positioning themselves as dedicated, proactive,

and communicative professionals, for example, Silvia deliberately positioned herself as an active learner and communicator, eager to improve her teaching methods and avoid misunderstandings. To avoid misunderstandings, she emphasizes effective communication with mentors and peers.

Throughout the P3K program, I always communicated well with the lecturers, supervising teachers, and other participants to avoid misunderstandings and other unwanted issues.

Beside deliberately shaping their role intentionally, prospective teachers also actively shaped their professional identity by embracing roles that align with their values and aspirations. Hilmi, for instance, positioned himself as a responsive educator who adapts to technological changes, thereby crafting an identity as a forward-thinking teacher.

### **Forced Self-Positioning**

Throughout the program, prospective teachers are often compelled to adopt certain roles due to external pressures, such as the need to manage classroom challenges, adapt to limited sources, or meet bureaucratic expectations. These forced positions challenged their initial identity, but also contribute to its transformation as they learn to navigate these pressures. For instance, Elsa was forced to position herself as a cautious observer adapting to the constraints of the education system.

.. has implemented the Kurikulum Merdeka; however, in classroom practice, they are still adapting from the 2013 Curriculum to the Kurikulum Merdeka, so the students often need more guidance in understanding the material.

The experience of navigating these forced positions leads to a reformation of their professional identity making them more resilient, adaptable, and competent. Ihsan's critique of the program's administrative focus shows his transformation into a more critical and reflective educator, advocating for a more practical teaching approach. As Isan stated:

This program does not contribute significantly if its focus is only on assignments from SIPPP and the courses being conferred. It would be more impactful if the program's focus was on education and teaching as a teacher would.

### **WCP Contributions**

Their willingness to engage in the teaching profession, despite challenges, helped the prospective teachers to shape their professional identity. Those with high intrinsic motivation, like Ihsan, often find greater satisfaction and fulfillment in their roles, which reinforces their identity as dedicated educators. As they develop competence through the program, their professional identity also strengthens. Elsa, for example, pointed out that her growing knowledge of accounting and teaching techniques enhances her confidence, leading to a stronger, more assured professional identity. Furthermore, the gradual increase in their power—whether through gaining authority in the classroom or navigating institutional constraints—also shapes their professional identity, moving them from novice teachers to more confident and authoritative professionals.

### **Change in Self-Perception and Attitudes**

This section is to address the second research question pertaining the change of self-perception and attitudes towards participating in P3K program.

### **Exposure to Realities**

As prospective teachers confronted the realities of the classroom, their self-perceptions also shifted. Initial fears and uncertainties (as Silvia's fear of not managing the class well) evolve into confidence as they successfully navigate these challenges. This change reflects a deeper understanding of their capabilities and a more realistic self-assessment.

Forced self-positioning due to external constraints, such as limited resources or institutional demands, leads to a reevaluation of their abilities and attitudes. As in the interview excerpt:

The technology between the school and the campus is not well integrated; therefore, I need to make adjustments to the learning media.

Hilmi's experience of adapting his teaching methods due to a lack of technological integration changes his self-perception from a teacher limited by resources to one who can creatively work around constraints.

### **Growth in Competence**

As their competence grows, so does their self-perception. Teachers who initially doubted their abilities begin to see themselves as capable and effective educators. Elsa, who previously struggled with understanding certain materials, gained confidence as she masters the topics, leading to a more positive self-perception.

I'm very happy. Initially, I was confused with some of the material, but because I had to present it to the students, it pushed me to study as well. So, I'm happy that I was able to understand the material that I previously didn't fully grasp.

The growth of competence also influences the prospective teachers' professional attitudes, shifting from a cautious approach to a more assertive and proactive stance. Ihsan's increasing confidence in his practical teaching abilities leads him to advocate for changes in the P3K program, reflecting a more empowered and critical professional attitude.

### **Evolution of Professional Attitudes**

Over time, the focus of these teachers often shifts from simply meeting program requirements to making a meaningful impact of their students. Putri's desire to educate the next generation drives her to continually refine her teaching approach, reflecting a shift from a task-oriented attitude to a student-centered one.

Exposure to the program's limitations, such as a heavy focus on administrative tasks rather than practical experience, prompts critical reflection and a change in professional attitudes. This is evident in Ihsan's critique of the P3K program's structure, leading to a more critical and reflective professional stance.

The transformation of professional identity during the P3K program is a dynamic process, driven by the interplay between deliberate positioning (where teachers intentionally adopt roles that align with their values) and forced positioning (where external pressures compel them to adapt). This process is further influenced by their willingness, growing competence, and the power they accrue throughout the program.

The degree of willingness influences how positively or negatively these changes are perceived. Those with a strong intrinsic motivation, like Sandy, view these challenges as opportunities for growth, leading to positive changes in self-perception and attitudes. As teachers become more competent, their self-perception shifts from self-doubt to self-

assurance, leading to a more confident and proactive professional attitude. The acquisition of power—whether through increased classroom authority or the ability to influence program structure—enhances their professional attitudes, making them more confident and assertive in their roles.

The change in self-perception and professional attitudes among prospective Accounting teachers during the P3K program is driven by their experiences of confronting challenges, developing competence, and gaining power within the educational environment. As they navigate these experiences, their self-perception evolves from uncertainty to confidence, and their professional attitudes shift towards a more proactive, student-centered, and critical approach to teaching.

The findings of this study offer significant insights into the complex process of professional identity transformation (Beijaard et al., 2004) among prospective Accounting teachers within the P3K program. This transformation is not a linear journey but rather a dynamic interplay between personal aspirations, external pressures, and the evolving educational environment. The study underscores the pivotal role of positioning in shaping professional identity (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1991). Deliberated self-positioning, where individuals consciously shape their roles according to personal values and aspirations, highlights the proactive agency of prospective teachers in their professional development. This agency is crucial for fostering a sense of ownership over their professional growth, as seen in the cases of Silvia and Hilmi, who actively crafted their identities as communicative and forward-thinking educators.

However, the process is not solely within their control. Forced self-positioning, driven by external demands and constraints, challenges the initial self-perceptions and often leads to a significant reformation of professional identity. The experiences of Elsa and Ihsan illustrate how navigating these external pressures—whether due to bureaucratic expectations or limited resources—can lead to the development of resilience and adaptability, essential qualities for educators in a rapidly changing educational landscape.

The WCP framework (Harré & Van Langenhove, 1991) offers a nuanced understanding of why professional identity transformation occurs. Willingness, or intrinsic motivation, emerges as a critical factor in how prospective teachers perceive and respond to challenges. Those with high intrinsic motivation, like Ihsan, are more likely to embrace these challenges as opportunities for growth, leading to positive changes in self-perception and professional attitudes.

Competence, developed through the P3K program, plays a dual role. On one hand, it reinforces the self-perception of prospective teachers as capable and effective educators, as seen in Elsa's journey from confusion to mastery of the subject matter. On the other hand, growing competence fosters a shift from a task-oriented to a more student-centered and proactive professional attitude, reflecting a deeper commitment to the teaching profession.

Power, in this context, is not merely about authority but also about the ability to influence and navigate institutional structures. As prospective teachers gain power—whether through classroom authority or through critical engagement with the program's structure—their professional identity solidifies, moving from novice teachers to confident, assertive professionals. This shift is evident in Ihsan's critique of the P3K program, where his increasing competence and critical reflection lead to a more empowered professional stance.

Research on teacher professional identity has seen significant development, focusing on guiding teachers to reflect on their professional lives and the impact on decision-making both inside and outside the classroom (Astuti et al., 2018; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Beijaard & Meijer, 2017; Izadinia, 2013). To enhance their career professionalism, both



prospective and experienced teachers undergo an identity transformation process intertwined with their personal and professional lives. Teacher professional identity is defined as a process in which teachers see themselves in the role of a professional educator, encompassing their self-perception, beliefs, values, and practices (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017). The transformation of teacher professional identity is a dynamic process that is always related to relationships and context (Beijaard et al., 2004; Buchanan, 2015). This transformation process is influenced by various internal and external factors.

Previous research has found that teacher professional identity can be influenced by supportive factors such as teacher education and training, teaching experience, support from the work environment, involvement in teacher communities, and efforts to participate in professional development activities (Arlinda et al., 2024). Teaching experience is one of the significant factors for teachers in shaping their professional identity. This experience is often gained through involvement in teaching programs designed by the institutions where prospective teachers received their education.

At the institution where this research was conducted, prospective teachers are required to participate in a one-semester teaching experience program known as the Professional Educational Program (P3K) as part of the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) initiative, and the results can be converted into grades for several related courses. The P3K program is designed to prepare prospective teachers with the professional competencies needed in the field of education. This program typically involves a series of activities, including training, teaching practice, and evaluation, with the primary goal of equipping prospective teachers with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to become effective and professional educators.

This study found that through involvement in P3K, prospective teachers can develop their professional identity, including a strong understanding of their roles and responsibilities as educators. However, the results indicate that P3K is only one of many factors in the process of transforming a teacher's professional identity. Most research in this area has used quantitative methodologies to identify factors influencing the readiness of Accounting student teachers to become teachers (Masrotin & Wahjudi, 2021). This research contributes significantly to the development of the P3K program and the improvement of the quality of Accounting teacher education.

The study highlights the importance of teacher education programs that provide not only technical training but also opportunities for reflective practice and real-world teaching experiences. The P3K program, by immersing prospective teachers in the complexities of the classroom environment, plays a crucial role in the transformation of professional identity. However, the findings also suggest that the program's impact is mediated by how well it balances the demands of administrative tasks with the need for practical, student-centered teaching experiences. The dynamic process of professional identity transformation suggests that teacher education programs should focus not only on skill development but also on fostering intrinsic motivation and resilience among prospective teachers. Additionally, these programs should encourage critical reflection, allowing prospective teachers to navigate and challenge the constraints they encounter, thereby empowering them to become more confident and proactive educators.

While this study provides valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The small sample size and the focus on a specific educational context may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the qualitative nature of the research may introduce subjectivity, particularly in the interpretation of data. Future research should consider a longitudinal approach to better understand the long-term effects of programs like

P3K on teacher identity development. Exploring how these transformations persist or evolve as teachers enter the workforce would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the professional identity formation process. Moreover, expanding the research to include a more diverse sample of prospective teachers across different subjects and educational contexts would enhance the robustness of the findings. In conclusion, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on teacher professional identity by providing a detailed analysis of how and why this identity transforms within the P3K program. The findings underscore the need for teacher education programs that not only equip prospective teachers with the necessary competencies but also support their personal and professional growth through reflective practice and critical engagement with the challenges of the teaching profession.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the complex and dynamic process of professional identity transformation among prospective Accounting teachers during their participation in the P3K program. The findings reveal that this transformation is significantly influenced by both deliberate self-positioning, where teachers actively shape their professional roles, and forced self-positioning, where external pressures and constraints necessitate adaptation. The interplay between these two forms of positioning, coupled with the teachers' willingness, growing competence, and increasing power within the educational environment, contributes to the evolution of their professional identity.

The prospective teachers' self-perceptions and professional attitudes undergo significant changes throughout the program. Initially marked by uncertainty and self-doubt, their self-perception gradually shifts towards confidence and self-assurance as they gain competence in their teaching abilities. This newfound confidence is reflected in their professional attitudes, which evolve from cautious and task-oriented approach to a more assertive, student-centered, and critical stance. The experience of navigating the challenges and constraints of the P3K program not only enhances their teaching skills but also fosters a deeper commitment to their roles as educators.

Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of the P3K program in shaping the professional identity among prospective Accounting teachers. It suggests that teacher education programs should continue to focus on providing opportunities for reflective practice, real-world teaching experiences, and supportive environments that encourage both deliberate and adaptive positioning. By doing so, these programs can better prepare future teachers to navigate the complexities of the teaching profession and develop a strong, resilient professional identity.

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