



The efforts of English teachers in implementing their personality competence in ELT

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Abstract

Personality competence is a crucial aspect of teacher professionalism that affects teaching effectiveness, interaction with students, and adaptation to various dynamics of the educational environment. This study aimed to investigate the strategies applied by English teachers in ELT to implement their personality competence, as well as to identify the challenges faced and the solutions employed. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, this research involved English teachers at a junior high school in West Java as participants. Data were collected through interviews and document analysis, which focused on exploring teachers' perceptions and experiences related to their personality competence. The findings indicate that English teachers apply various strategies in the classroom including acting according to religious, legal, social, and national cultural norms; being honest and noble figure and serving as a role model; demonstrating stability, maturity, wisdom, and authority; and demonstrating a work ethic, high responsibility, pride in being a teacher, and confidence. The challenges encountered include balancing professional and personal duties; maintaining emotional demands in diverse classrooms; sustaining motivation; and dealing with excessive workload and expanding professional duties. Solutions applied by the teachers include adapting professional expectations to personal circumstances; regulating emotions; restoring motivation through personal and professional renewal; and embracing continuous learning and collaborative problem-solving. The implications emphasize the importance of institutional support in developing teacher personality competence.

Keywords: English Teacher; Personality Competence; Teacher Challenges; Teacher Solutions; Teacher Strategies

Introduction

Teacher competence plays a crucial role in ensuring the quality of the teaching and learning process. Badger (2024) in his book entitled “Teaching and Learning the English Language” divides into what is language learning, and what is language teaching. The book explains that language learning is an activity that involves the process by which students gain knowledge and skills in English. It is not just about memorizing vocabulary or grammar, but also about how to use language in context and with support. Language teaching is described as a dynamic process that involves understanding the needs and goals of students. A teacher must understand what the class wants to achieve and how students learn before they can contribute effectively to the learning process. Another opinion was expressed by Ghafoor & Ashraf (2023). English language teaching is a comprehensive process that aims to provide knowledge, skills, and competencies related to English, whose main goal is to develop proficiency in the language, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking, by using several approaches that can be used in the process of teaching English. The target of this activity is individuals whose first language is not English or commonly referred to as English Language Learners (ELL). It is also important to mention that the development of subtle skills acquired by students in English classes, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, should be considered in the process of English language learning and teaching.

Since learning and teaching English is a comprehensive process, and there are a lot of skills that students who are not native speakers must achieve in English. In this case, the role of English teachers is crucial. English teachers must be very qualified in carrying out their duties. Shammari (2022) states that a good English teacher must have several skills, including: the ability to communicate and collaborate, creative and critical thinking, intercultural competence, emotional self-regulation, and well-being. In realizing this goal, the availability of English teachers with high skills and competencies in all aspects of teaching and the role of stakeholders are needed.

In English Language Teaching (ELT), teachers play diverse and evolving roles that extend far beyond content delivery. According to Umar (2021), teachers are not only expected to act as educators, but also as guides, facilitators, mentors, evaluators, and agents of change within the learning environment. The effectiveness of English learning heavily relies on how teachers fulfill these roles in response to learners’ academic, emotional, and social needs. Teachers are seen as central figures who shape classroom culture, set the tone for communication, and cultivate learners’ motivation and engagement. They help students develop interest in the subject, build confidence, and become independent learners through meaningful interaction and support. He also highlights multiple roles such as teacher as a controller managing classroom instruction; teacher as a prompter encouraging participation and creativity; and teacher as a resource providing learners with needed support while promoting autonomy. Additionally, teachers act as organizers ensuring that classroom activities are clearly structured and purposeful; as tutors, offering individualized guidance; and as participants actively engaged in learning activities alongside students.

These roles are reinforced by theorists such as Brown (2007), Harmer (2007), and Dörnyei & Murphey (2003), who assert that successful language learning is tied closely to classroom dynamics, teacher-student relationships, and the teacher’s ability to facilitate interaction and collaboration. Furthermore, the 21st-century learning paradigm demands that teachers act as agents of transformation. They must help students acquire not only linguistic competence but also critical thinking, creativity, and cultural

awareness — skills essential for global communication. In this light, teachers are facilitators of student-centered, task-based, and project-oriented learning, aligning with constructivist and socio-interactionist views that view learners as active participants in constructing knowledge. Experts argue that teacher competence is a multidimensional construct that contains cognitive and affection-motivational aspects (Jentsch & Ko'nig, 2022). Furthermore, Fakhruddin et al., (2023) revealed that teacher competence refers to a comprehensive set of skills, knowledge, and attributes that must be possessed by educators to carry out their roles effectively in the field of education. Kengwee (2017) also states that teacher competence is defined as a complex interaction between knowledge, beliefs, and practices that can be understood only in the specific context in which the teacher works. This theoretical understanding emphasizes that teacher roles in ELT are dynamic, multifaceted, and instrumental in ensuring both language proficiency and holistic student development.

However, in Indonesia, many teachers are still considered to lack teaching competence, which is a very concerning problem in achieving optimal learning outcomes. Annisa & Hapsari (2020) stated that empirical evidence indicates that Indonesian teachers' proficiency and the quality of their education remain below the norms, including for English teachers. According to Hilmiatussadiah et al. (2024), the average score of the Teacher Competency Test (UKG) in 2022 is still below the minimum standard set, which is 55, with the national average reaching 54.05. Meanwhile, teachers are an important aspect in determining the success or failure of student learning. Sumaryanta et al. (2018) stated that, with the increasing understanding of the importance of education in human growth, teachers are increasingly seen as having an important place and role in the evolution of human life.

According to the Indonesian Ministry of Education Regulation (Permendiknas) No. 16 of 2007, four competencies must be mastered by every teacher, including pedagogic competence, professional competence, personality competence, and social competence. Safira et al., (2024) explain that pedagogical competence is teachers' ability to properly oversee students' learning and create a fun learning environment that encourages creativity. Pedagogical competence includes the abilities to: (1) master students' moral, social, cultural, emotional, and intellectual characteristics, (2) master learning theories and educational learning principles, (3) develop a curriculum related to the field of development taught, (4) organize educational development activities., utilizing ICT for the benefit of organizing educational development activities, (5) facilitate the development of students' potential, (6) communicate effectively, empathetically, and politely with students, (7) organize assessment and evaluation of learning processes and outcomes., (8) utilizing assessment results for the benefit of learning, and (9) take reflective action for quality improvement. Mangalindung & Sastrodiharjo (2024) argue that personality competence means the ability to demonstrate the attitudes, abilities, and knowledge required for successful instruction. This competence includes: (1) acting in accordance with religious, legal, social, and Indonesian national cultural norms, (2) showing oneself as a steady, stable, mature, wise, and authoritative person, (3) demonstrating work ethic, high responsibility, a sense of pride in being a teacher, and self-confidence, and (4) upholding the code of ethics of the teaching profession. Wahira et al., (2023) added that social competence is the ability to resolve problems; adjust to different social situations; and communicate effectively with students, coworkers, and the community. This competence includes: (1) being inclusive, acting objectively, and not discriminating due to considerations of gender, religion, race, physical condition, family background, and social status, (2) communicating effectively, empathetically, and

politely with fellow educators, education personnel, parents, and the community, (3) adapting to the place of duty throughout the territory of the Republic of Indonesia, which has socio-cultural diversity, and (4) communicating with one's professional community and other professions orally and in writing or other forms. Saputro et al., (2023) also stated professional competence refers to an individual's ability to perform their professional duties and responsibilities effectively including: (1) mastering the material, structure, concepts, and scientific patterns that support the subjects taught, (2) mastering the competency standards and basic competencies of the subject/field of development being taught, (3) developing professionalism sustainably by taking reflective action, and utilizing information and communication technology to communicate and develop themselves.

From those four competencies, researchers found that personality competence has a very important impact on the other teacher competencies. Teacher personality competence is the main foundation that must be possessed by teachers to be able to develop other competencies (Lukman et al., 2021). Referring to Djaali (as cited in Abnisa & Zubairi, 2022) the definition of personality comes from the word *persona* or mask, which means a tool used to hide one's identity. Sunyol & Browning (2024) stated that a personality is understood as several traits that coexist within a person, and that influence how they act, how they perform, and is therefore a key aspect of social identity. Furthermore, Daga et al. (2023) explain that a teacher's personality is an important aspect that plays a role in determining how they conduct themselves in most activities in the classroom. Teacher personality competencies practically include accurate insight, good manners (not easily complacent), resilience, creativity, calm, and humor. Arifudin et al., (2022) stated that personality competence is a skill or capability that must be possessed by an individual, especially a teacher. Syahrul et al., (2024) in their research, discuss the personality competence of teachers according to two famous figures in Indonesia, KH Ahmad Dahlan and Ki Hadjar Dewantara. They discovered that, according to KH Ahmad Dahlan, teacher personality competence includes having the right faith; sincerely educating; daring to sacrifice wealth and soul; being humble and not arrogant; daring to firmly hold one's principles; and purifying oneself. Meanwhile, according to Ki Hadjar Dewantara, teacher personality competencies include being a role model; educating sincerely; having firmness of mind; standing firm/resilient; showing a calm attitude; and having high fighting power. Teachers or educators are highly encouraged to master the personality competence of good quality because teachers are an important factor in educational institutions as well as in the learning process, particularly in formal educational institutions. Abnisa & Zubairi (2022) also said that teacher personality covers all the behaviors and actions of a teacher that reveal his/ her character, which can support the success of their duties as a teacher, including being a good educator and coach, and a good trainer for their students. A teacher with strong personality competence also has a positive impact on teaching and learning activities, as well as student achievement. Teachers' personality skills make students feel happy, comfortable, and interested in the lessons; being positive role models; providing support; and increasing student confidence to improve learning objectives achievement (Arifudin et al., 2022; Hapsari & Annisa, 2020; Lukman et al., 2021).

Several factors can affect a teacher's personality, one of which is the school environment, as an external factor. A good school environment can help teachers to develop their personality competence (Rozi et al., 2021). Factors that can affect the performance of teacher competence from within, which in psychology is also called "The big five model", which includes: a) Neuroticism, which relates to a person's emotional

stability; b) Extraversion, including traits of friendliness, assertiveness, confidence, and enthusiasm; c) Openness to Experience, including traits related to creativity, curiosity, and willingness to accept new ideas; d) Agreeableness, which is easy to agree with, reflecting kindness, caring, cooperation, and empathy; e) Conscientiousness, associated with self-discipline, being organized, conscientious, and responsible (Masruddin & Pratiwi, 2016; Wakano, et al., 2024).

Unfortunately, literature sources that discuss teacher personality competence, especially in the context of English teachers, are still limited (Wicaksono et al., 2021). Personality competence requires particular attention, because most personalities are not established from direct learning through formal education, but mostly result from the accumulation of previous learning experiences formed even in the family scope (Joni, as cited in Wardoyo, 2015). This emphasizes the importance of deepening the development of teachers' personality competencies, especially for English teachers. Teachers with high levels of personality competence are more likely to identify and address the individual needs of their students, tailoring their teaching methods and approaches to ensure optimal learning outcomes (Bardach et al., 2022).

From the research previously reviewed, it can be seen that not many have taken the personality competence area in the context of English language teachers, especially at the junior high school level. This study aimed to scrutinize the efforts made by ELT teachers to implement their personality competence in the classroom and investigate challenges in the implementation and the solutions.

Research Methods

1. Research types

The researchers used a qualitative approach in this study. The qualitative approach is more widely used in the humanities and social sciences, where humans are the subject of research (Thomas, 2017). The research design used was a case study. A case is typically a program, event, activity, process, or one or more people (Creswell, 2023). The researchers used this design to focus research on a particular object in depth.

2. Research Data Sources

The primary data in this study were the results of the interviews. In addition, secondary data in the form of documentation, which included the regulations regarding teacher personality competence indicators and journal articles related to the research topic, also supported the study.

3. Research Participants

The participants of the research were three English teachers, consisting of two male and one female teachers at a junior high school in West Java. Purposive sampling was applied to select the participants meeting the criteria of: (1) being full-time English teacher in the junior high school with a minimum of three years teaching experience; (2) teaching English in a certain grade at the junior high school in the selected academic year; (3) having experience of implementing personality competence in their ELT classrooms referring to the Permendiknas No. 16 of 2007 indicators, and (4) willing to participate in the study voluntarily and providing informed consent. Purposive sampling is used when the researchers used certain criteria to choose their respondents whose experiences and knowledge are considered fruitful and significant in the investigation (Creswell, 2023; Patton, 2015).

4. Data Collection Techniques

The process of collecting data was carried out through interviews, as well as through documentation. The interviews were carried out one-on-one with the teachers.

Interviews are a method for gathering qualitative data in which the researcher interviews participants in person, over the phone, online, or in focus groups with six to eight people per group (Creswell, 2023). This study used semi-structured interviews, which means that the interview process was guided by open-ended questions to enable participants to express themselves honestly without fear, and the researcher can ask follow-up questions to get a deeper exploration of the data based on the participants' responses (Leavy, 2014).

In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument of the research itself. Wambaleka (2022) explained that a researcher is an active participant whose opinions, biases, and interactions influence the research findings rather than only being a passive observer. The instrument that is used in this study is the interview guideline. It is a form used by a qualitative researcher for asking questions and recording and writing down information obtained during an interview (Creswell, 2023). The instrument is adapted from the study of Kartowagiran et al. (2020), which developed a set of valid and structured indicators to measure teacher personality competence based on the Indonesian Ministry of Education Regulation (Permendiknas No. 16 of 2007). While their instrument was designed for quantitative use, which is a questionnaire. The instrument is adjusted to the qualitative case study approach of this research. The purpose is to explore the efforts made by English teachers in implementing their personality competence in the ELT context. Then the researchers recorded the conversation and transcribed the information into words for analysis.

5. Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis technique used in this research was the interactive model by Miles and Huberman (1994), which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Each stage was carried out iteratively throughout the research process. To enhance data credibility, triangulation was used by combining interviews and document analysis. Member checking was also conducted to confirm the validity of the interpreted data with the participants involved.

Results and Discussion

Result

This section provides the main findings of the study. It describes teachers' strategies to develop personality competence, challenges faced by teachers to develop personality competence, and solutions to deal with the challenges.

1. Teachers' Strategies to Develop Personality Competence

a. Acting According to Religious, Legal, Social, and National Cultural Norms

The three English teachers integrate various strategies to align with this personality competence indicator, demonstrating an awareness of diversity, a commitment to fairness, and a strong sense of social responsibility as educators in their classroom practices. All three English teachers consistently stated that they *do not discriminate* against students based on their religion. They expressed efforts to value, respect, and care for each other. Teacher 2 emphasized:

"Of course, we realize that diversity is a normal thing, so there is no feeling of favoring students because of their religion." (T2, IT)

Teacher 3 handled this wisely, ensuring no discrimination in the learning process and providing equal facilities. They also maintained fairness towards students from different ethnic, cultural, or regional backgrounds by using inclusive language and avoiding stereotypes. Teacher 2 stated using national language and avoiding derogatory regional

nicknames. Teacher 3 underscored the absence of differential treatment, focusing solely on students' English ability. Regarding gender equality, all teachers agreed that male and female students should be treated and supported equally. These efforts reflect their awareness in avoiding cultural and gender biases and their commitment to inclusive and fair treatment.

Teachers recognize their role as *public figures and role models* within the community. They are fully aware that their actions, even outside the classroom, are subject to public scrutiny and moral expectations. This is evident from Teacher 3's statement about striving to understand and follow prevailing norms and setting a good example through good behavior. Teacher 2 stressed the importance of maintaining an attitude of being "*digugu*" and "*ditiru*" (trusted and imitated) both within the school environment and in society.

Teachers reported *integrating local cultural content* into assignments and school activities. Teacher 2 mentioned regular school or city-level meetings that incorporate English language material with local cultural themes, such as in procedural texts or language competitions. Teacher 3 frequently assigned students narrative or story tasks focusing initially on Indonesian culture.

b. Being Honest and Noble Figure and Serving as a Role Model

All three English teachers demonstrate honesty, noble character, and serve as role models through their work ethics, decision-making processes, internal values, and interactions with students and the community. First, all teachers emphasized *professionalism, honesty, and fairness* in carrying out their duties. Teacher 1 consistently strived to be professional:

"We always try to be professional because it is the teaching profession, and we should do the best for students." (T1, IT)

Teacher 2 graded objectively, based on student performance, regardless of background. Teacher 3 stressed the importance of performing duties ethically as a teacher, thoroughly and on time.

Second, teachers did not rely on emotions or assumptions in making decisions but *involved multiple stages and stakeholders*. Teacher 1 explained that decision-making stages included homeroom teachers, counselors, student affairs, and the principal. Teacher 2 affirmed that decisions, especially regarding discipline, must be data-based, phased, and collaborative. Teacher 3 also checked student attendance data, confirmed with homeroom teachers and counselors, and spoke with parents before acting.

Third, teachers exhibited *self-awareness and sincerity*, reflecting devotion to God and the development of inner character rooted in spiritual and personal motivation. Teacher 2 highlighted:

"Of course, based on data. We cannot make decisions according to emotions, according to our thoughts, but from data on what students have done, especially in terms of discipline, and this decision is also taken together and gradually." (T2, IT)

Teacher 3 emphasized sincerity and happiness in work to make tasks feel lighter and viewed as an act of worship.

Fourth, teachers underscored *availability, empathy, and respect* in their interactions. Teacher 1 spent time chatting with students during breaks to build rapport. Teacher 2 conducted home visits for problematic students to understand their situations.

Teacher 3 provided extra time outside class hours to help students with learning difficulties, demonstrating responsibility to listen and assist diverse learners.

Fifth, all teachers maintained *respectful and professional relationships* with colleagues, students, and parents. Teacher 1 mentioned:

"With all students and student committees, we always have interactions, discussions, and sometimes there are meetings with them". (T1, IT)

Teacher 2 emphasized mutual understanding and respect for differences among fellow teachers. Teacher 3 stressed the importance of maintaining good conduct and communication with all school members (teachers, students, staff, etc.) and students' parents, as without good communication, work would be less optimal.

Sixth, two English teachers *actively participated in community activities*, such as environmental and religious events, while one teacher was not yet active. Teacher 1 was involved in neighborhood (RT/RW) activities and community service. Teacher 2 served as the head of the mosque committee (DKM) in their neighborhood. These contributions demonstrate that teachers possess noble character not only at school but also within their surrounding communities.

c. Demonstrating Stability, Maturity, Wisdom, and Authority

The three English teachers demonstrated emotional stability, maturity, wisdom, and authority through balanced assertiveness, openness to feedback, emotional control, and thoughtful communication. All teachers agreed on the importance of *balancing firmness with approachability*. Teacher 1 declared:

"Sometimes I am strict, sometimes I am there as a friend, as a parent to them." (T1, IT)

Teacher 2 was firm when students made mistakes but did not hold grudges. Teacher 3 explained the importance of knowing when to be firm and when to be friendly, while maintaining authority so students do not become overly casual.

All teachers acknowledged the importance of *being receptive and humble* towards input or criticism from students, parents, and colleagues as a means of continuous learning and development. Teacher 1 valued input from peers for mutual benefit. Teacher 2 considered teacher openness crucial for school information to reach parents, who could then provide feedback for improvement. Teacher 3 emphasized:

"It is very important because even though we are already professional teachers, we are still human beings, right, we still have to learn what is called input, suggestions, criticism, we must accept it well." (T3, IT)

Teachers showed a clear awareness of the importance of *emotional self-regulation and professional conduct*. Teacher 2 mentioned the importance of acting maturely in carrying out duties, not being spoiled, and being ready for assigned tasks. Teacher 3 stressed the importance of demonstrating mature behavior, setting a good example, and being able to control emotions to avoid showing immaturity through anger. Further, teachers emphasized *mastery of material, thorough preparation, and appropriate demeanor*. Teacher 1 strived to be well-prepared in teaching, caring, and professional. Teacher 2 believed teacher authority was evident in the ability to provide correct explanations, maintain composure, and offer positive appreciation to students. Teacher 3 emphasized:

"We have to behave well; we have to set a good example because that attitude reflects our authority, so we also have to adjust our behavior when we are in front of students, a supervisor, or friends. Behavior, attitude, and speech must be maintained." (T3, IT)

d. Demonstrating a Work Ethic, High Responsibility, Pride in Being a Teacher, and Confidence

The three English teachers implemented strategies reflecting a strong work ethic, a high sense of responsibility, pride in the teaching profession, and the confidence necessary to perform their roles effectively. Teachers used agenda books to track teaching activities and maintain *consistency in planning, showing proactive work habits*. Teacher 2 stated that every teacher has an agenda book to document materials, classes, and book pages. Teacher 3 always prepared lesson plans, materials, strategies, facilities, and practice questions, and avoided postponing work. They were also ready to adjust teaching methods according to student needs.

Teachers actively integrated efforts to develop *their competence in information technology (IT) and creative teaching media*. They leveraged institutional support, such as school resources, and collaborative discussions with colleagues. Teacher 1 mentioned school support in using technology and discussions with peers for utilizing the latest technology. Teacher 2 used mobile phones for quizzes (Quizizz), practical exams, and encouraged students to use social media positively for group assignments.

2. Teachers' Challenges to Develop Personality Competence

Thematic analysis of the interview data identified four interrelated challenges that hindered English teachers in developing and sustaining their personality competence. These challenges included (1) balancing professional and personal responsibilities, (2) managing emotional demands in diverse classrooms, (3) sustaining motivation amid routine and fatigue, and (4) coping with excessive workload and expanding professional responsibilities.

a. Balancing Professional and personal responsibilities

A major challenge experienced by participants was balancing professional expectations with personal responsibilities. T3 explained:

"Honestly, I am not active in community activities, because I still have a child who is two and a half years old. Even when I go home from school earlier, I have to go home in hurry, so I cannot be active in the community activities..." (T3, IT)

She also thought that her introverted nature made it harder for her to engage in social activities, which caused conflict between her personal and professional obligations.

The results show that because family responsibilities and individual personality features limit opportunities for community engagement, teachers frequently find it difficult to live up to public expectations of exemplary conduct. As a result, sustaining a perfect professional image necessitates juggling several social responsibilities and goes beyond academic achievement.

b. Managing Emotional Demands in Diverse Classrooms

Managing the emotional demands of educating students from a variety of academic, behavioural, and familial backgrounds was another significant problem. Because they had to constantly control their emotions while reacting to various student personalities and actions, participants viewed classroom variety as mentally taxing.

According to T3, instructing a class of thirty-nine kids with different personalities frequently led to psychological exhaustion. Similarly, T2 clarified that excessive parental indulgence or unsupportive family situations were often linked to students' behavioural issues, making classroom management more difficult. Teachers had to put in a lot of emotional effort under these circumstances while yet being patient, authoritative, and professional.

c. Sustaining motivation amid routine and fatigue

Maintaining professional motivation was also noted by educators as a recurring difficulty. Every participant admitted to going through times when their passion for teaching waned. Physical tiredness, worries about oneself or one's family, monotonous teaching methods, extended school breaks, and students' disinterest in class were among the reasons.

While T2 expressed difficulty regaining teaching enthusiasm after extended breaks, T1 linked diminishing motivation to cumulative weariness and boring job routines. In a similar vein, T3 reported that teacher passion was diminished by uninterested students, especially in afternoon classes. She went on to say that finishing all of the lesson plans occasionally led to confusion about what would happen in the classroom next, which decreased motivation.

d. Coping with Excessive Workload and Expanding Professional Responsibilities

Increasing workload beyond instructional obligations was the last difficulty. Participants talked about challenges in handling committee work, unforeseen assignments, administrative tasks, and teaching obligations that went outside their areas of competence.

T2 clarified that extra institutional responsibilities regularly interfered with instruction in the classroom. T3 went on to say that she frequently had to teach unfamiliar subjects while also handling administrative tasks and participating in examination committees throughout her tenure as an honorary teacher. These numerous obligations necessitated constant adjustment and heightened work-related stress. The results show that teachers have a wide range of professional obligations outside of the classroom. As a result, preserving teachers' personality competency and professional efficacy has become a significant issue in handling a variety of institutional expectations.

3. Solutions to Address the Challenges to Develop Teacher Personality Competence

The interview findings revealed four major strategies adopted by English teachers to address the challenges encountered in developing their personality competence. These strategies included (1) adapting professional expectations to personal circumstances, (2) regulating emotions through self-management practices, (3) restoring motivation through personal and professional renewal, and (4) embracing continuous learning and collaborative problem-solving.

a. Adapting Professional Expectations to Personal Circumstances

By modifying their professional practices in accordance with their personal circumstances while upholding their dedication to professional responsibilities, teachers tackled work-life issues. T3 admitted that her introverted nature and family obligations prevented her from participating in community events. Rather than viewing these constraints as obstacles to professionalism, she decided to put more emphasis on setting a good example in the classroom while progressively stepping up her participation in community events whenever she could. She underlined that, as upholding social ties is crucial to the teaching profession, educators should actively engage in society. However, she thought that meeting this expectation may be done gradually based on each person's

unique situation. Teachers' attempts to strike a balance between personal obligations and professional demands without sacrificing their dedication as instructors are exemplified by this flexible approach.

b. Regulating Emotions through Self-Management Practices

To cope with emotional pressure in the classroom, teachers adopted various self-management strategies aimed at maintaining emotional stability and professionalism. T3 explained that she intentionally paused during stressful situations by taking deep breaths, resting briefly, and saying *istighfar* to regain emotional control before continuing classroom activities. She also deliberately separated work-related problems from family life to protect her psychological well-being.

Similarly, T2 emphasized:

"The first thing is obviously we have to understand our position, our position because we as teachers have a responsibility." (T2, IT)

Rather than reacting emotionally, he viewed professional responsibility as the foundation for responding calmly to challenging classroom situations.

c. Restoring Motivation through Personal and Professional Renewal

Teachers also described several strategies for maintaining teaching enthusiasm despite experiencing fatigue and declining motivation. T1 stated:

"Usually we eat first, drink first, and then jog or listen to music to get back in the mood again." (T1, IT)

T2 highlighted the importance of reconnecting with colleagues and students after school holidays, explaining that positive interactions within the school environment naturally revived his teaching enthusiasm.

T3, on the other hand, believed that maintaining motivation required ongoing introspection and innovative teaching. To increase classroom involvement when pupils were disengaged, she assessed earlier lessons, looked for novel teaching concepts, and investigated more captivating learning activities. These strategies show that to sustain long-term motivation, educators actively renewed both their professional and personal well-being.

d. Embracing Continuous Learning and Collaborative Problem-Solving

Another crucial strategy was to remain receptive to lifelong learning and ask colleagues for assistance when taking on new tasks. T2 stressed that despite new institutional pressures, he should do his best to fulfil fundamental obligations. T3, on the other hand, emphasised the value of always learning new things, especially when she has to teach unfamiliar materials or carry out administrative tasks that are outside of her area of competence.

She also believed that working together with coworkers was a crucial tactic for overcoming obstacles in the workplace. Instead of trying to tackle every issue on her own, she frequently asked other educators for guidance and support when faced with new assignments. T3 claims that seeking assistance made it possible to tackle issues more successfully while also advancing her career.

Discussion

The teachers' efforts to avoid cultural and gender bias and maintain inclusive, fair treatment align with Jackson & Everington (2017) on the importance of impartiality and

cultural sensitivity in teacher-student interactions. These values are essential for creating a respectful and safe classroom environment for all students, consistent with UNESCO (2017)'s promotion of inclusive education, which emphasizes that "every learner matters and matters equally" and requires teachers to eliminate biases and embrace diversity as a strength. The teachers' consistent fairness across student identities demonstrates how this contributes to the development of a respectful, tolerant, and socially responsible classroom culture, as expected from teachers with strong personality competence.

The recognition of teachers as public figures and role models aligns with Syah (2021), who found that teachers are expected not only to perform professionally in the classroom but also to uphold moral values and serve as role models in the community. This is reinforced by Lase et al. (2024), who explain that teacher personality competence positively influences both the school and community environments. The concept of being "*digugu*" and "*ditiru*" reflects the implementation of personality competence in the Indonesian educational context, where teacher behavior is observed both inside and outside school, contributing to orderly social interaction.

Integrating local cultural content into English language learning aligns with Permendiknas No. 16 of 2007, which mandates teachers to uphold national cultural norms and values. This includes the responsibility to preserve and promote Indonesian culture in all aspects of educational practice, even within foreign language instruction. Azhary & Fatimah (2024) further emphasized that integrating local culture in English language teaching not only fosters cultural awareness but also enhances the relevance of learning materials for students. They state that presenting content rooted in students' cultural context, such as traditional narratives and local cultural practices, can make learning more meaningful and strengthen student identity.

The teachers' professional, honest, and ethical practices align with Lase et al. (2024), who stress that honesty, responsibility, and ethical behavior are fundamental elements of teacher personality competence. This study provides concrete evidence of how these values are implemented in the classroom, showing that personality competence is perceivable through teachers' appropriate and fair professional conduct. Teachers' data-based decision-making, involving structured steps and collaboration with various stakeholders, aligns with Prenger & Schildkamp (2018), who explain that teachers who effectively use data tend to have good classroom control and exhibit strong professional attitudes. Their thoughtful and honest approach reflects their personality competence as wise and ethical figures.

The teachers demonstrated self-awareness and sincerity are strongly supported by Wicaksono et al. (2021), who found that sincerity, devotion to God, and moral awareness are core aspects of English teachers' personality competence, leading to higher resilience and commitment. Herawati et al. (2023) and Rozalina (2023) further highlight that spiritual development and inner values like sincerity are crucial for teacher character-building and deepen teacher-learner relationships. Teachers' willingness to dedicate time outside of class, listen to students, and help them overcome difficulties reflects strong personality competencies, as supported by Malayan & Ligan (2024), who emphasize that maintaining professional personal relationships with students, characterized by empathy and respectful interaction, is key to creating a healthy learning environment and is part of a teacher's moral responsibility. These teacher strategies can be understood as concrete manifestations of personality competence in daily practice.

Maintaining professional relationships with all school members and parents aligns with Sabilah & Andini (2024), who underscore the critical role of personality and social competencies in overall teaching performance. Teachers' active participation in

community activities is consistent with Yaumas et al. (2023), who state that teachers' personality and social competencies are observed in their residential environment, including effective community interaction. The teacher's role as a moral example in the community is reinforced by Hasnah (2017). Furthermore, participation in religious activities supports the development of religious character, as detailed by Rachmatudllah et al. (2024).

The balance between firmness and approachability demonstrated by the teachers aligns with Kloo et al. (2023)'s authoritative teaching style, which combines demands for discipline with supportive warmth. The teacher's wise and flexible personality traits significantly impact the quality of learning and students' moral attitudes (Baidowi et al., 2024), contributing to healthy and effective classroom dynamics.

The teachers' openness to criticism and suggestions strongly aligns with Jeffs et al. (2023)'s "growth mindset," where feedback is viewed as an opportunity for development rather than a threat. This attitude demonstrates "feedback literacy" (Carless & Boud, 2018), which is the ability to understand and utilize criticism or suggestions for improvement. Teachers who can manage their emotions when receiving criticism tend to grow personally and enhance their educational quality.

The teachers' emphasis on emotional maturity and professionalism is consistent with Hidayat (2021)'s research on student perspectives, which indicated that students prefer teachers who exhibit emotional stability and professional maturity. The link between teachers' self-awareness and students' expectations highlights a growing recognition among educators that emotional regulation is a fundamental personality competency essential for professionalism.

Teachers' authority, stemming from pedagogical mastery and the ability to exert moral influence, aligns with Hidayatullah & Aisida (2023). Nurhaliza & Juro (2023) further highlight that personality competence includes the ability to maintain a stable, mature, and respectful attitude. The correlation between personality competence and teacher performance, as shown by Witari & Manuaba (2021), underscores that personal traits such as maturity, discipline, and moral integrity play a crucial role in shaping effective teaching practices.

The teachers' systematic planning and documentation habits, exemplified by using agenda books and proactive work habits, align with Deprizon et al. (2021), who emphasize that systematic planning and documentation in education management are vital for ensuring consistency and quality in the teaching and learning process. Zahrudin (2016) highlighted that teacher professionalism is significantly enhanced through effective instructional planning, which includes careful preparation and adaptability. Thus, their structured habits and adaptability integrate professional competencies and planning skills, contributing to personal growth and quality education.

The teachers' active integration of IT and creative teaching media aligns with Iskandar & Zulela (2021), who emphasize the crucial role of information technology integration in enhancing teacher professionalism and creativity in the digital era. This fosters a proactive learning attitude and adaptive personality traits. Fitriyah et al. (2025) also emphasize the role of teacher personality competence in enhancing TPACK (Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge) and incorporating ethical teaching media. These efforts reflect professional responsibility and the development of personality competencies, demonstrating a strong work ethic, high responsibility, pride in being a teacher, and self-confidence, alongside a willingness to adopt new technologies and adapt to evolving educational practices.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that English teachers consistently strive to implement their personality competencies, including adherence to cultural norms, honesty, and emotional stability. They also demonstrate a strong work ethic through systematic documentation and technology use. However, challenges include balanced professional-personal responsibilities, emotional demands in diverse classrooms, fatigue, and excessive workload. To overcome these, teachers adapt professional expectations to personal circumstances, manage emotions, restore motivation, and embrace professional development and collaboration. The study suggests that personal competencies require individual effort, school support, and a supportive environment.

By offering an empirically based explanation of the difficulties faced by English instructors and the methods they use to overcome them, this study significantly adds to the body of knowledge on teacher personality competence. By presenting personality competence as a dynamic and context-dependent process influenced by instructors' personal circumstances, emotional experiences, workplace expectations, and professional contacts, the study conceptually expands the subject of personality competence beyond normative competency norms. Theoretically, by incorporating viewpoints on emotional control, work-life balance, professional resilience, ongoing learning, and collaborative practice within the larger framework of personality competence, the findings enhance the conversation on teacher professional development. The findings have practical implications for policymakers, teacher education institutions, and school administrators when creating professional development programs that put teachers' psychological health, reflective practice, collegial support, and sustainable competence development ahead of pedagogical performance.

Although this study produces meaningful contributions, it also has some limitations. First, the study only included three junior high school English teachers, which limited the findings' applicability to other educational settings. Second, the results do not account for potential shifts in teachers' professional development over time because they are based on their self-reported experiences at a certain moment in time. It is advised that future studies use mixed-method or longitudinal study designs, include participants from a variety of educational institutions and geographical areas, and draw from a variety of sources of information, including classroom observations, student feedback, and school leadership viewpoints. To provide a more comprehensive understanding of how teachers maintain professionalism in increasingly complex educational settings, future research may also look at how organizational culture, institutional support, teacher well-being, and digital teaching environments affect the development of personality competence.

Author Contribution Statement

The authors' contributions to this article are as follows: Author 1 acted as the initiator and conceptualizer of the article; Author 2 served as the validator of the data and analysis results; and Author 3 served as the validator of the data and analysis results. All authors approved the final content of the article and are responsible for all aspects of this research.

Statement of Interest

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