A NARRATIVE IDENTITY ANALYSIS OF CHRONOTOPICAL STAGES OF EFL IRANIAN TEACHERS IN DISCOURSE CONSTRUCTION AT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

The present study is a narrative identity analysis of chronotopical stages of EFL Iranian teachers in discourse construction at public schools. As explained by Olson (2008) 'teacher identity is a useful research frame because it treats teachers as whole persons in and across social contexts who continually reconstruct their views of themselves in relation to others, workplace characteristics, professional purposes, and cultures of teaching' (p. 5). Hence, the purpose of this research is to explore different aspects of teachers' identities by using narration as a procedural instrument and Bakhtin's theory as the theoretical framework of the study. Participants of the study are fifty male and female English language teachers aged 22 to 53 from public schools of Mashhad, Iran. The teachers' educational degree varies from Associate Degree and Bachelor of Art to Master of Art and Doctor of Philosophy. Narrative tasks and interviews are the instruments used for data collection in the present study. Through coding and line by line analysis of narratives, salient factors in determining the generic chronotopes are identified. In addition, through running X^2, the significance levels are recognized. Diversity of these factors shows the complexity of reasons constituting discourses which affect teachers to make choices in their profession leading to the cyclic constructing and deconstructing of their identitities. Some pedagogical implications and applications are also proposed.

Keywords: Narrative identity, Chronotope, Discourse construction, Public school teachers.

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Contribution/ Originality

This study is one of very few studies which have investigated the roles of discourse types in an EFL situation by introducing a socio-cultural model of identities construction based on Bakhtin's Dialogic Theory.

1. INTRODUCTION

There has been relatively little research in the field of language teaching in regard to teachers' identity and the way it is formed and reformed in EFL context and in particular in Iran, while as argued by Olson (2008) teacher identity is a pedagogical tool whereby different situated framings of teacher development in practice can be uncovered. . The exploration of identity has a very important place in social constructionism. Social constructionism may be defined as a perspective which believes that a great deal of human life exists as it does due to social and interpersonal influences (Gergen, 1985). Social constructivism is interpretive frameworks whereby individuals seek to understand their world and develop their own particular meanings that correspond to their experience. These meanings are not etched or innate within each individual. Rather, meanings are formed through interaction with others (Cresswell, 2013). Based on the social constructionist theory, identity needs to be discussed in terms of the following two key elements: first, identity is the result of social relations (Berger and Luckmann, 1966), and, second, that this socially constructed identity is dynamic, fluid, and multifaceted (Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2002). The present study aimed at exploring different aspects of teachers' identities by using narration as a procedural instrument. The researchers also tried to identify teachers' beliefs about their current status and whether there was a discrepancy between what they wished to be and what they were at the time of the study. There does not appear to be any other form of mechanism for the structuring of experience that so captures the lived time other than through stories (Ricoeur, 1984). Stories construct meaning. The focus of the present study was on the stories that determine directions in life and in relationships.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of the study was inspired by Bakhtin's diological theory. In Bakhtin (1981), an expression in a living context of exchange--termed a word or utterance is the main unit of meaning and is formed through a speaker's relation to otherness (other people, others' words and expressions, and the lived cultural world in time and place). A word is therefore always already embedded in a history of expressions by others in a chain of ongoing cultural and political moments. Every utterance is related to the previous utterances and this idea is the basis of Bakhtin's dialogism. Bakhtin emphasizes the role of dialogue in the development of the self and other.

Among the various concepts of dialogism, chronotope is a basic concept. Bakhtin (1981) defines chronotope as 'the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature' (p. 84). However, he later comments that chronotopes characterized non-literary texts and contexts as well: 'Every entry into the sphere of meaning is

accomplished only through the gates of the chronotope' (p. 258). In the same way, Morson and Emerson (1990) note that 'the concept has much broader applicability and does not define a strictly literary phenomenon'. They further state that 'all contexts are shaped fundamentally by the kind of time and space that operate within them' (p. 367). Indeed, it is our sense of these two categories that shapes our sense of reality and guides the development of a consciousness of the self and, by implication, the other or nonself. Bakhtin's analysis gives particular significance to the narrative logic of place and we can understand the meaning construction of identity by studying locations and actions.

Thus, if, as Bakhtin (1981) maintains, 'every entry into the sphere of meaning is accomplished only through the gates of the chronotope'; This 'gate' is, from the ontogenetic perspective, interpersonal in nature and dialogic in character. Indeed, it is through the backdrop of discourse and meaning that 'the self and its agency emerge in and through the self's engagement with others' (Thibault, 2004).

Another layer or sub-category of Bakhtin's theory which was central to our study is the two types of discourse which Bakhtin's puts forward as authoritative/persuasive discourse. For Bakhtin (1981), discourses can be divided into the almost, but not entirely, mutually exclusive categories of authoritative and internally persuasive discourse. He posits authoritative discourse in conflict with internally persuasive discourse. Authoritative discourse can be seen in situations where language use comes with accepted belief, setting up a position which is not open to challenge. As Bakhtin (1981) notes, authoritative discourse 'demands our unconditional allegiance'. Authority is incontrovertible, undeniable, and unchanging. Bakhtin believes that authority is considered a forbidden area, a kind of taboo which is enclosed by an impassable zone (Dentith, 1995). Authority is the tone of history. It is in one direction and does not follow the chain of events which leads to dialogue.

As we develop our idea systems or ideologies, besides struggling with the official authoritative discourses in our world, we also come into contact with and struggle with the everyday discourse of the common people we encounter. This everyday discourse is what Bakhtin calls internally persuasive discourse. Internally persuasive discourse has an almost opposite set of properties to those authoritative discourses. In fact, Bakhtin (1981) juxtaposes to the authoritative word the word or discourse of tensions and contradictions, the internally persuasive discourse. In the later case a conversation with the other's voice resists this voice but it simultaneously allows the other consciousness to penetrate the initial utterance.

The present study aimed at investigating different aspects of Iranian EFL teachers' identity analyzing their narration. The theory of narrative identity postulates that individuals form an identity by integrating their life experiences into an internalized, evolving story of the self, which provides the individual with a sense of unity and purpose in life (McAdams, 2001). This life integrates one's reconstructed past, perceived present, and imagined future. Furthermore, this narrative is a story - it has characters, episodes, imagery, a setting, plots, themes, and often follows

the traditional model of a story, having a beginning (initiating event), middle, and an end. Narrative identity is the focus of interdisciplinary research, with deep roots in psychology.

The formation of one's identity occurs through one's interaction with others. In the words of Evans (2002), 'Who I am and how I feel is not just about me in a vacuum. It is about me in relationship to others, and them in relationship to me'. This point is also addressed by Buckingham (2008), as he explains that 'I am the product of my unique personal biography. Yet who I am (or who I think I am) varies according to who I am with, the social situations in which I find myself, and the motivations I may have at the time, although I am by no means entirely free to choose how I am defined' (p. 1). This concept of human recognizes internal and interlinked dimensions in human that construct the personality and leads to the emergence of the concept of narrative identity.

The theory of narrative identity (Ricoeur, 1984; 1992) suggests that we make sense of ourselves and our lives by stories we can (or cannot) tell. Thus, we come to know ourselves by the narratives we construct to situate ourselves in time and place. Prince (1982) tries to describe narrative as 'the representation of at least two real or fictive events or situations in a time sequence, neither of which presupposes or entails the other' (p. 4) and it is through weaving of events in time that narratives realize their meaning making and interpretive functions (Brockmeyer, 2000). The process of constructing life stories occurs in everyday life, as people participate in activities, talk about them with others, think about other's perspectives on them, and reflect on how all these things fit together-on and on, appropriating new experiences and revising old stories slowly over time (Pasupathi, 2001). Narrative studies have been conducted by researchers in almost every discipline and profession in the human sciences (Carr, 1986; White, 1987; Cronon, 1992), anthropology and folklore (Behar, 1993), psychology (Sarbin, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1995), sociolinguistics (Gee, 1986; 1991; Capps and Ochs, 1995), and sociology (Bell, 1988; 1999; Boje, 1991; DeVault, 1991; Chase, 1995; Holstein and Gubrium, 2000) medicine (Kleinman, 1988; Hunter, 1991; Greenhalgh and Hurwitz, 1998), nursing (Sandelowski, 1991), occupational therapy (Mattingly, 1998), and social work (Dean, 1995). However, there have been few studies which reflect on the roles of discourse in Bakhtin's sense and narratives concurrently. Some researchers have discovered the relationship between narrations and revealing identities (Pavlenko, 2002; Schiffrin, 2006). In the same way, some studies have been done in the field of narrative identities (Johnston, 1997; Tsui, 2007; Norton and Early, 2011; Razfar, 2012).

In a case study, Hosseini Fatemi *et al.* (2013) used two key Bakhtinian concepts, chronotope and authoritative/persuasive discourse to uncover the interrelating nature of identities of six EFL teachers through narrative. Based on the results of this study both discourse type and chronotope were key distinguishing factors in teachers' constructions of multiple identities. In fact, teachers were different both in the discourse type and the kind of chronotopes, though the discourse types and the chronotopes were combined together. Adel *et al.* (2013b) conducted a study on political identity construction of Iranian EFL learners and teachers at private schools. Adel *et al.* (2013a)

also investigated national identities construction of Iranian EFL learners and teachers at private schools. Also, using narrative enquiry and critical ethnography, Pearce and Morrison (2011) elaborated on the story of Norah, one of sixty beginning teachers interviewed for the study as she experienced becoming a teacher. Norah's story revealed the process of engaging teachers in shaping a professional identity and suggested that resilience may be improved when early career teachers engaged consciously and in relationship with others in this process.

In another study, Urzua and Vasquez (2008) examined instances of future-oriented talk produced by novice English as-a-second language (ESL) teachers during mentoring meetings in one North American university setting. Context-specific functions of future-oriented discourse (e.g., planning, prediction) were investigated in relation to reflective thinking and teacher identity. They showed how teacher mentoring meetings represented discursive spaces in which novice teachers had an opportunity to express plans, expect results, think about possibilities, and reflect on their developing educational performance. They argued that teacher mentors should become aware of these important functions, and encourage prospective reflection in novice teachers.

In the present study, the researchers intended to explore different aspects of teachers' identities by using narration as a procedural instrument and to identify teachers' beliefs about their current status and to see whether there is a discrepancy between what they wished to be and what they were at the time of the study. Researchers tried to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the choronotopical stages affecting discourse construction of teachers at public schools?
2. Are there any significant differences between discourse types for teachers of public schools?
3. Are there any significant differences between generic chronotopes for teachers of public schools?
4. What are the factors influencing and shaping teachers' identity at public schools?
5. Are there any differences between factors determining the salient chronotopes for teachers of public schools

3. METHOD

3.1. Participants

Participants of this study were fifty teachers (25 males and 25 females) from Mashhad, Iran. Teachers' age ranged from 22 to 53 years old and their educational degree also varied from Associate Degree and Bachelor of Art to Master of Art and Doctor of Philosophy. These teachers taught in public schools.

3.2. Instruments

3.2.1. Narrative Tasks

In the present study, a narrative task was used as an instrument. The theory of narrative identity postulates that individuals form an identity by integrating their life experiences into an

internalized, evolving story of the self, which provides the individual with a sense of unity and purpose in life (McAdams, 2001). This life integrates one's reconstructed past, perceived present, and imagined future. Furthermore, this narrative is a story - it has characters, episodes, imagery, a setting, plots, themes, and often follows the traditional model of a story, having a beginning (initiating event), middle, and an end. Participants were asked to present their own story as a first person and to write about what concerned them and what made them take a specific action leading to their present position as an EFL teacher. The researcher asked participants to divide their lives into a series of chapters, providing a description of each chapter. They were then asked about a series of key episodes in the life course (e.g., high point, low point, turning point, etc.) and were asked to reflect on key characters in the life story.

3.3. Procedure

All participants were asked to write their narratives. They were asked to write about how they went about their field of the study, their work and how they viewed the nature of their work and their position as a teacher. Participants were allowed to write freely about their English experience, their choices, their thoughts and their feelings and whatever seemed to be related to their profession. They were also asked to present their own story as a first person and to write about what concerned them and what made them take a specific action leading to their present position as an EFL teacher.

The analysis of data collected through narratives of teachers from public schools has been done in several stages. First, data were sorted chronologically from the childhood to the present state of teachers. Second, the data were sorted according to chronotopes identified in the narratives of participants. Third, narratives were analyzed by the researchers in order to identify discourses (authoritative/internally persuasive discourses) which were important and critical in shaping teachers' identities.

4. RESULTS

After reading the whole data and extracting the chronotopes and the discourse types, they were classified into four chronotopes and two kinds of discourse. The first chronotope was named first generic chronotope which showed the simultaneity of time and place change from birth to 10. This period was considered as the first division because the aim was to investigate the salient changes in the course of teachers' identity development in regard to the English language. The age of 10 was considered as the final year as it is a transitory stage when the individuals enter the secondary or guidance school. In Iran usually children go to the primary school at the age of 6 and they enter the secondary school at the age of 10. Children may also have pre-elementary schools as kindergarten for 1 or 2 years before going to their first class in the primary school years. The next chronotope was named second generic chronotope from ages 11 to 13 and 14 to 17. This is the time when children usually enter secondary school and at the age of 14 after 3 years, they enter high school. They study four years in the high school and then enter university and choose their favorite majors.

So, the second generic chronotope includes both the secondary school and high school period. Third generic chronotope was the third category extending from the beginning of the University years (18) to the end (21) which extends four years. And the last category was called fourth generic chronotope which is defined as the teaching experience years of these teachers extending from 22 to the time when the participants were interviewed. The result of this classification of chronotopes is shown in Table1.

Table-1. Socio-cultural Model of Identities Construction based on Bakhtin's Dialogic Theory

Numbers	Chronotopes	Discourse Type	Length of Time (Years)
1	First generic chronotope	Authoritative/Persuasive	0-10
2	Second generic chronotope	Authoritative/Persuasive	11-13; 14-17
3	Third generic chronotope	Authoritative/Persuasive	18-21
4	Fourth generic chronotope	Authoritative/Persuasive	22-53

There were 50 teachers of public schools who were asked to narrate their stories. Their narrations were analyzed. Chronotopes and discourse types were identified and classified. Two teachers focused on the places they have worked during the years they taught English and mainly referred to problems of teaching English. Thus, it was not possible for the researcher to identify their chronotopes or discourse types that made them an English teacher. In this group of teachers, it seems that the third generic chronotope had no role in shaping teachers' identity as a teacher. The following table shows the result of classification of chronotope and discourse type in the narrative identity of teachers from public schools.

Table-2. Chronotope and Discourse Types for Teachers of Public Schools

Chronotope	Frequency of Teachers	Discourse Type
First generic chronotope	8	Persuasive
Second generic chronotope	38	Authoritative/27 teachers Persuasive/ 11 teachers
Fourth generic chronotope	2	Persuasive

In order to check the normality of distribution of frequency of discourse types, Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted. The result of Shapiro-Wilk test shows that the significance value is p<.05 and distribution is not normal.

Table-3. Shapiro-Wilk Test for Discourse Types

Statistic	Df	Sig
.631	48	.000

As the assumption of normality is not generally one of the assumptions of a chi-square test, to check if there was any significant difference between the frequency of authoritative discourse and persuasive discourse constructing teachers' identity, a chi-square test was calculated.

Table-4. Chi-Square Test for Frequency of two Discourses for Teachers of Public Schools

Public	
Chi-Square	.750[b]
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.386

As it can be seen from table 4, there was not any significant difference between the frequency of two discourses of authoritative and persuasive for teachers of public schools (χ^2 (1, N = 48) = .750, p = .386). In order to check the normality of distribution of frequency of generic chronotopes, Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted. The result of Shapiro-Wilk test shows that the significance value is p<.05 and distribution is not normal.

Table-5. Shapiro-Wilk Test for Generic Chronotopes

Statistic	Df	Sig
.601	48	.000

As the assumption of normality is not generally one of the assumptions of a chi-square test, to check if there was any significant difference between the frequency of generic chronotopes constructing teachers' identity, another chi-square test was calculated.

Table-6. Chi-Square Test for Frequency of Generic Chronotopes for Teachers of Public Schools

Public	
Chi-Square	46.500[b]
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

The result of Table 6 indicated that there was a significant difference between the frequency of two discourses of generic chronotopes of public schools (χ^2 (2, $N = 48$) = 46.50, $p = .000$).

Factors important in determining the salient generic chronotopes were also identified for teachers of public schools. Based on stories narrated by the teachers of public schools, these factors could include teachers, entrance exam, a member of family, personal interest, language institutes, video games, friends, job, or even English songs. The most frequent factors were teachers and entrance exam of university. The result of this classification is shown in Table 7.

Table-7. Frequency of Factors Determining the Salient Chronotopes of Teachers from Public Schools

Factors	Frequency
Teachers	23
Entrance Exam	9
Family	7
Personal Interests	4
Language Institutes	2
Video Games	1
Friends	1
Job	1
English Songs	1

The Line by line analysis of narrative identities also showed that 17 teachers were satisfied with teaching English and 3 teachers expressed that they were unsatisfied with this job and other teachers didn't refer to such a point in their story.

In order to check the normality of distribution of frequency of factors determining the salient chronotopes, Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted. The result of Shapiro-Wilk test shows that the significance value is p<.05 and distribution is not normal.

Table-8. Shapiro-Wilk Test for Factors Determining the Salient Chronotopes

Statistic	Df	Sig
.748	49	.000

As the assumption of normality is not generally one of the assumptions of a chi-square test, to check if there was any significant difference between the frequency of factors determining the salient chronotopes for teachers of public schools, another chi-square test was calculated.

Table-9. Chi-Square Test for Frequency of Factors Determining the Salient Chronotopes for Teachers of Public Schools

Public	
Chi-Square	76.449[a]
Df	8
Asymp. Sig.	.000

The result of the table 9 indicates that there was a significant difference between the frequency of factors behind discourses for teachers of public schools (χ^2 (8, N = 49) = 76.44, p = .000).

4.1. Qualitative Analysis

In what follows, some examples are presented from teachers' narratives in order to clarify how chronotopes, factors leading to chronotopes, and discourse types were classified in narrative identities of teachers from public schools.

Teacher 1

Gender: Female

Chronotope: Second Generic Chronotope

Factor: Teacher

Discourse Type: Persuasive Discourse

Teacher 1 was a teacher who had worked for 14 years as an English teacher. She narrated her story in the following way:

For the first time, my English teacher in the second year of high school created in me the interest in English. This interest increased my success in learning English so that I always was a volunteer in all classes and never got a score lower than 19. Thus, I have also studied English teaching at University.

The analysis of the story narrated reveals the important role of teachers and their strong effect on learners. Teacher 1 from public schools considered her teacher as the factor encouraging her to become an English teacher through a persuasive discourse. This occurred when she was a school girl and this happened in the second generic chronotope of her life.

Teacher 2

Gender: Male

A: Chronotope: Second Generic Chronotope

Factor: Teachers

Discourse Type: Persuasive Discourse

B: Chronotope: Second Generic Chronotope

Factor: Entrance Exam of University

Discourse Type: Authoritative Discourse

Teacher 2 was a teacher with 9 years of experience in teaching English at different levels. This teacher narrated his story as follows:

At high school, I had a teacher who was very serious. He rarely encouraged students but I was his best student. After finishing high school, I couldn't be accepted at University entrance exam for the course I liked. Thus, I thought it was better to study English at University. I like to get away from this job and this course but I think it was my destiny to become an English teacher.

Teacher 3

Gender: Female

Chronotope: Second Generic Chronotope

Factor: Family and Entrance Exam of University

Discourse Type: Authoritative

Teacher 3 was a female English teacher who had worked for about 13 years in schools of Mashhad. She also narrated her story:

I never liked English, but my family enforced me to choose teaching English as my field of study at University. In Entrance exam of University, I could choose other courses, but I should go to other provinces and should study at Universities I didn't like. I wanted to study for another year, but my family enforced me to study English. Graduating from University, I wanted to find a job, but I didn't like teaching and becoming a teacher. My parents were teachers and asked me to become a teacher and found a job for me.

She continued her story and wrote about her feeling at the present time.

After a short time, I got interested in teaching. I could interact with my students very well. It made my parents surprised. They are very satisfied when they see that I am successful in my job and I am very satisfied because I respected my parents.

The analysis of the story narrated by teacher 3 from public schools shows that her identity as an English teacher was constructed in an authoritative discourse as she was influenced by her family and entrance exam of University. Although she had chosen this job as the result of external pressures, she was satisfied because she felt she was successful in her profession.

Teacher 4

Gender: Male

Chronotope: Second Generic Chronotope

Factor: Entrance Exam of University

Discourse Type: Authoritative

Teacher 4 was a male English teacher with 20 years of experience in teaching English. He explained that:

I have chosen teaching English because I was accepted in this course in the entrance exam of University and after two years I started teaching English.

The extract chosen from the narration of teacher 4 from public schools also shows that entrance exam of University was an important factor which could affect the future of Iranian learners. Although learners are free in choosing the course and Universities, the educational limitations can make them choose a course or University that they don't like.

Teacher 5

Gender: Female

Chronotope: Second Generic Chronotope

Factor: Teachers and Family

Discourse Type: Persuasive

Teacher 5 was a female teacher who had worked for 8 years as an English teacher in public schools.

In the first year of high school, I had an English teacher whom I liked very much. My parents were also teachers. I always thought what a good job they have. It was an honor for me. I have chosen teaching English as my field of study at University and I have achieved my childhood dream.

The analysis of the story narrated by teacher 6 showed that her teacher and family had important roles in constructing her identity as an English teacher. The salient chronotope of her life was the second generic chronotope and the discourse type was persuasive. She was content with her job and explained it as the dream of her childhood which could turn into reality.

Teacher 6

Gender: Male

Chronotope: First Generic Chronotope

Factor: Video Games

Discourse Type: Persuasive

Teacher 6 was a male teacher who worked for 6 years as an English teacher in public schools. He narrated his story:

I got familiar with English language from childhood by video games. Playing games and my extreme interest in them made me familiar with English words and structure unconsciously. During guidance school and also high school, these games were the only way I could use English. The need to communicate and interact and my extreme interest in games draw my attention to English language.

The analysis of the story narrated by teacher 5 revealed that there are many factors in our life that can affect our identity and can shape aspects of our identity even if they don't seem very important. This teacher got familiar with the English language from his childhood by video games and as he himself explained these games were the main factors determining and constructing his identity as a teacher in a persuasive discourse and in the first generic chronotope of his life.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the present study, the researchers intended to explore different aspects of teachers' identities by using narration as a procedural instrument and to identify teachers' beliefs about their current status and to see whether there is a discrepancy between what they wished to be and what they are at present. Through line by line analysis of narratives, it was revealed that there was not any significant difference between two authoritative and persuasive discourses for teachers of public schools in regard to their frequencies. However, there was a significant difference between the frequency of generic chronotopes for teachers of public schools. The most frequent chronotopes was the second generic chronotopes. In order to analyze chronotopes, it was necessary to find out factors behind chronotopes and based on stories narrated by the teachers of public schools; these factors included teachers, a member of family, friends, entrance exam of university, language institutes, English songs, video games, jobs, friends, and personal interests. The most frequent factors were entrance exam of university and teachers. Diversity of these factors showed the complexity of reasons constituting discourses which affect individuals to make choices in their jobs. The result of the study was in line with the study conducted by (Hosseini Fatemi *et al.*, 2013; Adel *et al.*, 2013a; 2013b) concluding that both discourse type and chronotopes were key distinguishing factors in teachers' constructions of multiple identities, though the discourse types and the chronotopes were fused together.

In fact, the results of the analysis of data gathered through interviews can be categorized and summarized as follows:

1. The evolving nature of becoming teacher by which teachers are changing and moving toward new identities.
2. Presence of a difference, even in a single factor when it was defined for different persons.
3. The complexity of identity construction and reconstruction and individuality and differences among people even with the same profession or even in the similar situation.
4. Interdependence and lack of a clear boundary between generic chronotopes.

According to Wardekker (2013) 'Everything we say or do is influenced by such factors as our social position and that of the individuals to whom we speak, by our understanding of the situation and its history, by cultural norms, and other such factors' (P. 61). Wardekker explained that such a view leads to a better understanding of human nature. The results of the present research are in line with Wardekker (2013) who asserts that:

> The development over time of this picture of oneself will be influenced by
> the dialogues in which one engages or is engaged. Constructing an identity

is, in this view, an on-going struggle, in which one strives for coherence but

also continually encounters new differences and contradictions, some of

them created by the nature of the identity development itself.

Identity is a complex issue and should be investigated by many researchers in different educational contexts using many quantitative and qualitative methods. Hence, the following directions for further research are suggested.

- A narrative identity analysis of chronotopical stages of EFL Iranian teachers in discourse construction at different educational levels from kindergarten to University.

- A comparative study of chronotopical stages of female and male EFL teachers in regard to discourse construction.

- The investigation of the relation between discourse constructing teachers' identity and discourse chosen by the teachers in teaching context.

- The investigation of authoritative/persuasive discourse practices of Iranian EFL teachers.

Such identity studies, if done properly, are very useful for any educational contexts including EFL and ESL contexts and give awareness to policy makers and syllabus designers to know the salient roles of chronotopes in shaping and reshaping the identities of teachers. It is also useful for the teachers themselves to be conscious of their fluidity in identity construction and the dynamic nature of their becoming, which is a natural process. They should, however, manage this natural process.

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