

Relationship between Professional Identity and Reflectivity: A Case of Iranian EFL Teachers

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Abstract

EFL teachers' professional identity is a multi-dimensional and complicated concept. It is influenced by many other issues in the educational context such as reflective practice. This study intended to explore the relationship between professional identity and reflectivity of Iranian EFL teachers. It also aimed to examine how high and low reflective teachers perceive the professional identity components. The participants were 89 EFL teachers teaching at three universities in Shiraz, Iran. Their selection was based on convenience sampling. The participants were asked to fill out two questionnaires including teacher professional identity questionnaire (Liou, 2008) and teacher reflectivity questionnaire (Akbari et al., 2010). Pearson product correlation coefficient revealed that there was a positive relationship between EFL teachers' professional identity and reflectivity. Furthermore, the findings of regression analysis indicated that reflectivity could predict EFL teachers' professional identity. Furthermore, the participants were categorized into two high and low reflective groups. Two groups were interviewed to examine the professional identity perceptions used by high and low reflective teachers. The thematic analysis showed that high reflective teachers used and implemented much more professional identity components in their teaching practice in comparison to the low reflective teachers.

Keywords: Teacher professional identity, teacher reflectivity, EFL teachers

Introduction

Teacher identity is an integral part of language teaching education. It has attracted significant attention in the last two decades in the literature (Barcelos, 2017; Martel & Wang, 2014; Miller, 2009). The importance of how the professional identity of language teachers is constructed was accentuated by different researchers in the field. Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, and Johnson (2005) remarked that discovering the multiple aspects of teacher's identity including individual, political, social and professional identities help us to know a teacher better and have a more authentic view regarding who teachers are and how they adopt different identities in different educational context. Teachers' identity directly influences how teachers behave and consequently, how they teach in every educational setting (Danielewicz, 2001). Furthermore, as put by Nunan (2017), the concept of language teacher identity becomes more prominent due to the large number of EFL teachers worldwide as the globalization issue of language teaching. Many factors such as identity and reflective practice might have an effect on the teaching performance. Kumaravadivelu (2002) pointed out that in teacher identity process, teachers' attempt is to figure out the attitudes, beliefs and values within the educational context.

Professional identity helps teachers to shape the professional side of their educational characteristic (Olsen, 2010). Teachers adopt various role identities as well as their professional ones.

Furthermore, after the emergence of post-method era in language teaching in recent years, reflective practice of teaching also has been emphasized by many researchers. Reflective teaching is defined as an innovative approach in which professional EFL teachers try to evaluate and reflect on their own teaching practice and, criticize it and accept the others' criticism (Farrell 2008). Also, reflectivity has a strong and direct correlation with effectiveness in teaching. Reflective teachers are constantly finding their flaws, try to analyze them and diminish them to achieve success in teaching and as a result in learner's learning.

The utmost importance of reflective teaching and how to develop and implement it have been emphasized in the previous research both theoretically and practically (Brandt, 2008, Wallace, 1991). To the best of the researchers' knowledge, most of them have been conducted in English speaking countries. The present study can add new implications to the previous research studies, filling the gaps and also broaden the literature on the development of teacher identity among non-native English-speaking teachers. In addition, giving an eye to the previous related studies, one can find that the relationship among various concepts like teachers' professional identity and reflectivity is not very much scrutinized in an Iranian EFL context. Furthermore, most of previous research studies investigated the professional identity of pre-service teachers not the practicing ones. Moreover, regarding reflective teaching, in spite of its importance and significance in the teacher education and profession, the predictive power of reflectivity regarding teachers' professional identity has not been given enough attention in Iranian educational contexts. Thus, as the questions raised in this study have not been dealt with in the previous literature, this study can pave the way for fostering reflective practice in constructing professionalism in Iranian educational context. Altogether, since professional identity and reflectivity are outstanding concepts in language teaching process, this study intended to gain a clearer picture of the relationship between reflectivity, as one of those influencing variables, and professional identity. Taking into consideration the objectives of the current study, three research questions were posed:

Q1. Is there any relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' professional identity and their reflectivity?

Q2. Does Iranian EFL teachers' reflectivity significantly predict their professional identity?

Q3. How different is professional identity defined and perceived by high and low reflective EFL teachers?

Literature Review

Teacher Professional Identity

As stated by Akkerman and Meijer (2011) the professional identity related studies in the field is called 'acquisition of assets'. In other words, research gave the most attention to knowledge and beliefs which teachers must acquire based on the theoretical and recognized professional standards. Pinnegar (2005) believed that identity shapes the professional development of teachers and how teachers perceive their identity is the key for construction of their actions and behaviors in the educational setting. As noted by Beijaard (2009), both intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence teachers' professional identity growth. Moreover, professional identity is a contextualized issue. In other words, every single teacher has a unique definition of how the professional identity growth is occurred and established. As pointed out by Kogan (2000), the notion of professional identity, is influenced by many factors including social matters

and personal reflectivity. As a result, the construction of professional identity depends not only on one's value system, prior knowledge and social experiences, but also in relation to the possibility of responsibilities that teachers adopt in the educational contexts. It can be inferred from the above-mentioned statement that knowing and defining the professional identity of teachers is not a simple action, since it is not a ready-made, pre-package entity. But rather, it is evolving, ever-changing concept and needs constant participation in social communication (Coldron & Smith, 1999). Furthermore, many researchers in the field, defined professional identity as the process of making a stability between teacher as a person in the society and teacher as a professional who has a keystone role in an educational setting (Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington, & Gu, 2007).

Teacher Reflectivity

Another variable to be studied in the present research is reflection. Schon (1983) proposed introduced the concept of reflection as reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. During the first type of reflection, teachers deal with the emergent problems and difficulties during their teaching in the classroom and they must analyze the situation through an action research and try to find the appropriate solution. In the second phase, teachers stand back, reflect on their teaching and see the situation from a distance. This helps teachers to reshape the teaching style and as a result be a more effective instructor. The action of reflective practice needs constant self-judgment, self-analysis and self-criticism of what happens in the educational context. Concerning the importance of reflection in the professional development of teachers, Bailey (1997) declared that reflective practice is an important effort through which teachers can question the pre-determined clichés in the language teaching profession. Also, other researchers accentuated the role of reflective practice in formulating and constructing of teachers' identity in various ways (Maclean & White, 2007; Vavrus, 2009). As point out by Minott (2009), reflection is a process of taking thought into consideration and highlights the critical thinking over the actions. Lowery (2003) believed that by implementing reflective practice, EFL teachers can promote post-method concepts such as autonomy and critical thinking which are the components of professional identity growth. Through having reflective practice, language teachers can enhance professional development, take the responsibility of teaching process and make better decisions throughout the emergent problems in the classroom setting (Korthagan & Vasalos, 2005; Zeichner & Liston, 1996). Liu and Zhang (2014) proposed that reflective teaching has four main phases. In the first phase, teachers try to recognize the emergent problem during the teaching practice. In the next phase, teachers start to analyze the identified problem through various angles. In third phase, teachers must re-examine their current teaching strategies and find new educational paradigm. And finally, teachers corroborate the plans and actions from previous stages and examine the effect of implementing them on their own teaching practice. Also, they asserted that reflective teaching can be achieved through many ways in techniques such as observation, action research, self-diaries and journal writing (Poulou, 2007; Chitpin & Simon, 2000).

Empirical Studies

Regarding the effective influence of reflective practice on teachers' professional growth, Motallebzadeh, Hosseinnia and Domskey (2016) carried out a mixed method study. A total of 20 Iranian EFL teachers took part in this study. The researchers came to conclusion that peer observation in some ways could positively affect the professional growth of Iranian EFL teachers. The results from interviews also indicated that participants perceived peer observation as a beneficial tool in their teaching process.

To investigate how teachers' professional identities could enhance through reflective practice, Gutiérrez, Adasme and Westmacott (2019) conducted a qualitative research study. Firstly, the researchers introduced the reflective practice issue in a 10-week workshop. Then, through a focused group discussion, 12 participants' perceptions of the workshops were gathered. The results from thematic analysis showed that participants' professional identities were empowered in different ways through reflective practice.

Sheybani and Miri (2019) through a quantitative research study intended to explore the relationship between EFL teachers' professional identity and their critical thinking. The samples were 259 EFL teachers from Iran. The results of correlations demonstrated that critical thinking could predict different sub-scales of professional identity significantly. Furthermore, the findings proved that critical thinking could significantly predict professional identity of teachers.

Soodmand Afshar and Donyaie (2019) attempted to explore the contribution of reflection interactive workshop to Iranian EFL teachers' professional identity. To this end, 30 EFL teachers were asked to write two reflective journals before and after attending the reflective workshop. Also, the participants took part in several interview sessions. The findings revealed that primary source of professional identity construction were reflection-on, -in, and -for action.

More recently, Parsi and Ashraf (2020) in a study, tried to find out the interrelationship among EFL teachers' critical thinking, professional identity and teaching experience. A total of 120 EFL teachers took part of this study. The results of different correlations revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between EFL teachers' critical thinking and professional identity. Besides, the results from regressions indicated that EFL teachers' teaching experience was a better predictor of their professional identity.

Methodology

Research Design

The researchers employed a mixed method design in order to address all three research questions. A quantitative design was adopted to answer the first two research questions, and a qualitative research design was used to investigate the third research question. In this research study, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and then the data were analyzed separately.

Participants

The samples of the current study were 89 Iranian EFL teachers (including 53 males and 36 females) from three universities in Shiraz, Iran. The participants were chosen based on the convenience sampling procedure. The participants' age range was between 23 and 48 years old. All the participants were native Persian speakers. The participants were PhD candidates and M.A or PhD graduates. The participants had the experience of teaching English for two to 12 years.

Instruments

To gather data about teachers' professional identity and reflectivity, two questionnaires were used in the present study:

Professional Identity Questionnaire

To investigate teachers' professional identity, the Professional Identity Questionnaire developed by Liou (2008) was used. This questionnaire includes two different parts. Part A investigates the teachers' professional identity, and part B asks questions about participants' language proficiency. In the present study, part A was used to gather the data about teachers'

professional identity. This part consists of 8 likert scale questions. The reliability was determined through Cronbach's alpha. The obtained index was 0.88 which represented a satisfactory level of reliability index.

Teacher Reflectivity Questionnaire

To elicit information about EFL teachers' reflectivity, the researchers employed the Teacher Reflectivity Questionnaire constructed by Akbari, Behzadpour and Dadvand (2010). The instrument consists of 29 statements on a 5-point likert response (1 = never to 5 = always). This questionnaire consists of 5 different sub-scales (practical, cognitive, affective, meta-cognitive, and critical). The various subscales allow the questionnaire to investigate teachers' reflectivity from multiple aspects. Concerning the reliability of this questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was found to be .90 which enjoys a high level of reliability.

Data Collection Procedures

After selecting the participants, they were informed about the research aims and objectives. The questionnaires were distributed among the participants in order to gather information about EFL teachers' professional identity and reflectivity. Following the quantitative phase, 18 EFL teachers were selected to take part in the qualitative phase of the study which was semi-structured interviews. The interview questions were based on Kumaravadivelu (2003) professional identity model (See the Appendix). All the interviews were held at the teachers' classrooms. The researchers revised and modified the interview questions by taking two experts' suggestions. The interviews last between 15 and 30 minutes. All the interviews were held in English. The interviews were recorded by the researchers and then transcribed for further analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data gathered from the respondents were submitted to the SPSS software for quantitative analysis. For the first research question, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was run to examine the relationship between EFL teacher's professional identity and their reflectivity. For the second research question, regression analysis was utilized to figure out if reflectivity could predict EFL teachers' professional identity. Regarding the last research question, the gathered data from interviews were analyzed through thematic analysis. As noted by Barkhuizen, Benson and Chick (2014), thematic analysis is based on the repeated reading of the data, coding the emergent data and categorizes them under the main headings, so, the researcher re-read data several times and originated the initial ideas. In the next phase, the researchers stood back and see the data from a distance to reflect on them. After that, the researchers codified the data. Finally, the researchers interpret and report the data. All the participants' answers were typed in Microsoft Word 2010 by the researcher. Also, the codification process were done by hand.

Results

Results for the First Research Question

The first research question of the study was an attempt to explore the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' professional identity and reflectivity. The number of participants means and standards deviation of scores for professional identity and reflectivity is presented in table 1.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics for EFL Teachers' Professional Identity and Reflectivity*

	N	Std. Deviation	Mean
teacher's reflectivity	89	11.32	106.15
Professional identity	89	2.96	25.49

The Pearson correlation was run to probe any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' professional identity and their reflectivity.

Table 2. *Pearson Correlation between Teachers' Professional Identity and Reflectivity*

Teacher's Reflectivity	Teacher's professional identity	
	Pearson Correlation	Reflectivity
	1	.468**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	89
Professional Identity	Teacher's professional identity	
	Pearson Correlation	Reflectivity
	.468**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	89

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As represented in Table 2, teacher professional identity had a strong and positive relationship with teachers' reflectivity ($r = .468$, $p < .01$ and $N = 89$).

Results for the Second Research Question

Concerning the second research question, a single regression was to find out whether teachers' professional identity as the dependant variable can be predicted by teacher's reflectivity. Table 3 represents the model summary.

Table 3. *Results of Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.310 ^a	.191	.062		10.95186

a. Predictor: (Constant), teachers' reflectivity

As is evident from Table 3, roughly 19.1 percent of the variation in the predicted variable (EFL teachers' professional identity) can be predicted by independent variable (teachers' reflectivity).

Table 4. *Results of ANOVA for Test of Significance of Regression Model*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
	Regression	1086.623	3	362.208	3.020	.005 ^b
1	Residual	10195.175	85	119.943		
	Total	11281.798	88			

a. Dependent Variable: teacher's professional identity

b. Predictors: (Constant), teachers' reflectivity

At it is demonstrated in Table 4, the observed level of significance is smaller than the identified level of significance ($p < .05$). That is to say, EFL teachers' reflectivity could predict their professional identity.

Table 5. *Coefficients; Predicting EFL Teachers' Professional Identity through Reflectivity*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	79.086	10.874		7.273	.000
	Teacher reflectivity	1.155	.395	.302	2.924	.004

a. Dependent Variable: teacher's professional identity

As shown in Table 5, the results of Coefficient demonstrated that the reflective teaching could significantly predict the dependent variable which was professional identity.

Results for the Third Research Question

After gathering data from the interviews, the participants were categorized to two groups of high and low reflective groups. The questions in interview sessions were based on the theoretical professional identity developed by Kumaravadivalu (2003). The first question focused on the role of a professional teacher and asked if teachers work for achieving the ends determined by authorities or they have the autonomy to make their own decisions.

It is noteworthy that 73 percent of teachers in the high reflective group believed that teachers had the authority and they could make their own decisions about their teaching process. On the other hand, 53 percent of teachers in low reflectivity group thought that teachers did not have any autonomy in decision making process and had to just follow the pre-determined instructions set by authorities in the field.

Here are the statements made by a low reflective teacher;

Every semester, we are given an English textbook by the institute to teach according to the institutes' pre-determined syllabus. Although I sometimes see no points in teaching some parts of the assigned textbook, I have no permission to modify or manipulate the teaching content. Consequently, teacher's views are suppressed and teachers prefer to conceal their suggestions and comments with regard to the teaching materials to save their job. After all, we don't tend to make any big changes to the materials and pre-set methodologies of each course.

The second question was raised to investigate how teachers in high and low reflective groups perceive the role of teachers' prior experience in professional identity construction.

About 59 percent of the high reflective teachers believed that in the construction of professional identity process, just having content knowledge and some pre-determined skills were not sufficient. In contrast, 46 percent of low reflective teachers believed that subject-matter knowledge is satisfactory for a teacher to be an effective one.

The following is one of the high reflective teacher groups' remarks in the interview;

As a pivotal component of my career and since teaching is a complicated and multi-dimensional concept I always try to keep myself well-updated with the latest developments and research

findings regarding the best teaching practices. So, by keeping myself up-to-date, I always try to increase both my general information and specific knowledge.

Further, the teachers were asked about the one responsible for developing the rules and standards in classroom setting, institutional authorities or teachers themselves.

The results revealed that 60 percent of high reflective teachers believed that the teachers should set the rules based on the institutional guidelines. In contrast, the low reflective group believed that it is better to obey the authorities without questioning and challenging them.

The following is an example of the part of interview with one of the low reflective teachers:

Actually, I cannot deal with all these unnecessary chores for which I'm not paid. I'm already overworked and underpaid. I cannot spend time on such stuff like developing standards for my classes. So; I'd rather meet the minimum requirements and draw a paycheck. Hence, as a simple teacher with fixed responsibilities and commitments, I usually don't welcome taking any risks regarding my profession.

The other question in the interviews, asked about socio-cultural and socio-affective matters in language teaching. Seventy three percent of teachers in high reflective group believed that they should develop a close relationship with their learners. They believed that this intimate relationship can help students to enhance their motivation in the classroom. In contrast, 56 percent of their low reflective counterparts declared that they don't want to establish an intimate relationship with their learners and they just want to focus on educational and pedagogical issues in their class times. One of the high reflective teachers points out that:

I should say that I've always tried to build rapport with my students so that they don't feel alienated and secluded...even sometimes they talk about their personal problems with me. Also, I sometimes engage in heart-to-hearts with my students which, I believe, will improve their learning and build their self-confidence. Meanwhile, I try to raise pupils' awareness through establishing a good rapport in the classroom setting.

The next question concentrated on the role of teacher as a community builder. The participants were asked how they try to play their role in the educational context as the main stakeholder and how do they improve the community.

The results revealed that about 65 percent of reflective teachers believe that they must have the main role in establishing and developing the educational setting. On the other hand, 59 percent of teachers in low reflective group stated that their role in the educational context is much less than the institutional authorities, managers and even learners' families. One of the low reflective teachers mentioned that:

From my point of view, our job is just teaching and nothing more! I frequently get disappointed when I try to discuss scholarly articles and research findings regarding our career with my colleagues since most Iranian EFL teachers are either reluctant or too conservative to share their experiences and provide constructive feedback. Further, I suppose that it is not expected from an English teacher to do any supplementary activities either in or outside of the classroom setting.

Discussion

The first research question was an attempt to investigate the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' professional identity and reflectivity. To address this research question, Pearson product correlation coefficient was used. The findings indicated a positive relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' professional identity and their reflective practice in teaching. Also, the findings of the second research question showed that reflective practice could predict teacher's professional identity. The findings clearly indicated that the more EFL teachers believe in the implementing and creating a reflective paradigm in the education setting, the more they try to know and construct their roles as professional teachers. The previous research studies revealed that reflectivity can enhance the process of professional development of EFL teachers. Also, reflective practice is an important criterion in teacher's preparation throughout shaping the professional identity (Korthagan & Vasalos, 2005; Wallace, 1991; Zeichner & Liston, 1996).

Teachers' professional identities emerge through their social actions, including interactions with all the stakeholders in the educational context in which they try to reflect on their teaching path, evaluate it and use these reflective experiences to inform their future professional growth. In other words, the process of development of teacher's professional identity and their reflection on teaching profession goes hand in hand simultaneously. English teachers have to reflect on their teaching path in order to construct their personal and professional identity. The findings are congruent with the results of previous studies (Cattley, 2007; Maclean & White, 2007; Vavrus, 2009) which highlight the outstanding role of reflective practices in developing and construction of teacher identity. Furthermore, prior research demonstrated that some reflective educational tools such as Autobiographical stories (Vavrus, 2009), reflective journals; (Poulou, 2007) and portfolios (Chitpin & Simon, 2009) help teachers to improve and develop their professional identity. These previous results call attention to the role of such pedagogical tools in EFL teachers' professional identity development.

The findings of the study are in agreement with the statements of Farrell (2008) who declared that reflective teachers can shape a more comprehensive insight regarding their teaching practice, evaluate their professional growth, and become autonomous and more confident in their teaching process. The findings are also in the same line with Zeichner and Liston (1996) who believed that reflective teachers take responsibility in educational decisions as well as their own professional identity development.

The findings are in much accordance with the argumentation of Kumaravadivelu (2002) who believes that reflective teachers constantly find new ways and techniques such as action research in order to enhance their learners' learning. Since as mentioned before, a professional teacher tries to find solutions for emergent problems and difficulties throughout the teaching path.

Regarding the third research question, the findings demonstrated that Iranian EFL teachers in high reflective group tried to implement and perform the professional identity components in their teaching practice. In contrast, their low reflective counterparts still encourage the traditional paradigm of language teaching and ignore some fundamental issues such as autonomy, critical thinking and reflectivity regarding the professional identity. The findings of the present study also accentuate the role of reflective practice paradigm in construction of multidimensional aspects of teacher's professional role identities. As McKay (2005) pointed out, reflective teaching emphasizes the importance of action research in classroom setting. This action research provides teachers a chance to recognize their deficiencies in their teaching practice, reflect on them and find the appropriate solutions. Therefore, reflectivity and professional identity goes in the same way together.

Reflectivity is an important feature in constructing and establishing of professional growth of language teachers in different ways. Due to the complicated nature of language teaching education, professional teachers must be aware of ways in order to deal with the problems and difficulties throughout their teaching path. They need to have appropriate techniques to question and reflect upon their own professional stance and to critically seek out practical solutions to the questions that will emerge throughout their profession as a language teacher. Schön (1983) who was one of the first pioneers in the field regarding the issue of reflection and reflective practice also accentuated utilizing reflective practice in constructing of teacher's professional identity growth.

As Gallacher (1997) contended, reflection influences the construction of teachers' evolving personal and professional identity development. Reflective practice allows teachers to develop their particular teaching strategy and their own professional development. Moreover, in favor of utilizing reflective practice, Brog (2010) declared that having constant reflection in teaching process might provide an opportunity for teachers to highlight their professional development and be ready for unexpected situations in the classroom. Burton (2009) asserted that teachers who have reflectivity during their pedagogical practice pave the way for construction of professional development. Also, theoretically speaking, through questioning the current teaching paradigm, EFL teachers implement the notion of reflective practice and improve their professional career. Reflective practice can also take place outside the classroom setting. Teachers can share their knowledge and viewpoint in meetings and conferences and try to enhance the community of practice as a professional one.

The results of this study supported the results of an action research study conducted by Gutiérrez, Adasme and Westmacott (2019). In the mentioned research study, during a collaborative workshop, teachers' professional identities were shaped and developed by implementing reflective practice. The findings also accentuated the highly effective role of reflectivity components such as peer collaboration and interaction with colleagues in reshaping the professional identities of teachers.

Conclusion

The present study intended to explore the relationship between EFL teachers' professional identity and reflectivity. The results revealed a positive relationship between two variables. Hence, the higher level of reflectivity might result into higher level of professional identity. Also, the results from semi-structured interviews revealed that high reflective teachers were more familiar with professional identity components and utilized them more in their teaching practice. Teachers, who try to implement reflective practice in their teaching process, pave the way for enhancing the professional growth during their career. Reflective teachers are more aware of teaching process in terms of both their own professional success and learning outcomes of students. In some cases, reflectivity is a victim of some financial restrictions in language classes. The findings from interviews revealed that dealing with a heavy teaching load, some of the Iranian EFL teachers are constantly struggling to just survive financially. Consequently, they ignore fundamental concepts such as reflectivity and critical thinking during their teaching path.

The present study carries outstanding implication for pre-service teacher educators. In order to address the above-mentioned gaps, they should improve their efforts to introduce post-method concepts such as reflectivity, autonomy and critical thinking. Notwithstanding the major concern for implementing reflective practice in teaching, it seems that the issue suffers from institutional, financial and theoretical problems which hinder it from complete actualization in the Iranian educational context.

Furthermore, the predictive power of reflectivity in relation to teachers' professional identity, offer insights for teacher educators to take reflective practice into account. Teacher educators can provide opportunities for EFL teachers to become more familiar with professional development process. Hence, they can bring reflection into their teaching path; and this might help them to know what their roles are as professional teachers and how they can deal with the emergent problems in and outside the classroom setting. As Minnot (2010) argued, all the stakeholders should try to promote reflective practice in the educational context.

It is notable to say that this study had limitations as well. The selection of participants was based on convenience sampling and this could endanger the representativeness. Also due to the small sample size, the generalizability of results should be considered carefully and with cautious. Also, the participants of the study were limited to those who teaching in universities. Further research could be undertaken to investigate the professional identity of language institute teachers. Furthermore, further research could be carried out to explore the significance of other variables that influence the professional identity process, such as cultural aspects or teacher's epistemological beliefs.

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Appendix

Interview Questions

1. Do you work for achieving the ends determined by authorities or do you have the autonomy for decision making?
2. Do you think teacher's prior experience play a role in construction of teacher's professional identity?
3. Are teachers responsible for setting rules and standards in classroom setting or institutional authorities should do that?
4. What is the significance of socio-cultural and socio-affective issues in teacher's identity construction?
5. Do you try to have discussion with your colleagues and other stakeholders in their educational context? In what ways?