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Exploring the Integration of Environmental Identity within EFL Teacher's Identity

استكشاف تداخل الهوية البيئية مع هوية معلم اللغة الإنجليزية

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المستخلص

اصبحت فكرة دمج مفاهيم البيئة والحفاظ عليها من الأفكار السائدة. وتظهر هذه الأفكار على نطاق واسع في العديد من مجالات التعليم، وتعليم اللغة أحد هذه المجالات. وبالتالي، فإن هوية معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية (ELT) هي خطوة نحو نقل هذا المفهوم في مواد اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية في أقسام تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. وتأخذ هوية معلم اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية معانٍ مختلفة؛ إذ تعني أحيانًا فقط المدرس الذي يقوم بتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية، وفي أحيان أخرى تعني الجوانب الثقافية والاجتماعية التي يتفاعل بها المعلم والطلاب خلال الفصل الدراسي. وتمثل هذه الجوانب الثقافية والاجتماعية البيئة في هوية المعلم. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف الهوية البيئية في هوية معلم اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية. تم اختيار عينة من ١٠٠ طالب-مدرس بشكل عشوائي من طلاب الصف الرابع في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة بغداد. أداة الدراسة مقتبسة من مقياس الهوية البيئية (كلايتون وآخرون، ٢٠٢١) واستبانة شون وآخرون (٢٠١٤) الخاصة بهوية معلم اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية. بعد التأكد من الصدق الظاهري وثبات الأداة، تم تطبيق الدراسة على عينة الدراسة. وأظهرت النتائج أن ١٦ عنصرًا من المقياس عالية، و ٣١ عنصرًا معتدلًا، وثلاثة منها منخفضة. ومع ذلك، فقد أشارت النتائج النهائية إلى أن تصور الطلاب والمدرسين لهويتهم البيئية معتدل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تداخل الهويات، معلم اللغة الإنجليزية، الهوية البيئية، هوية معلم اللغة الإنجليزية

Abstract

Nowadays, the ideas of integrating the concepts of the environment and saving it are being famous. These ideas are widely seen in many fields of study, and language education is one of them. Thus, the identity of English Language teachers (ELT) is a step toward transferring this concept in EFL materials in ELT departments. The EFL teacher's identity takes different meanings. Sometimes, it only means the teacher who teaches the English language, and other times, it means, the cultural and social aspects that the teacher and students interact during the study course. These cultural and social aspects represent the environment in teacher's identity. This study aims to explore the environmental identity within EFL teacher identity. The sample of 100 student-teachers has been selected randomly from the fourth-grade students in the department of English language in the University of Baghdad. The study tool is adapted from the Environmental Identity Survey (Clayton et al., 2021) and Xun's et al. (2014) EFL teacher identity questionnaire. After ascertaining the face validity and reliability of the tool, the study has been applied to the study sample. The results have shown that 16 items of the scale are high, 31 items are moderate, and three of them are low. However, the final results have indicated that student-teachers' perception of their environmental identity is moderate.

Keywords: EFL teacher, EFL teacher identity, Environmental identity, identities intigration

1.Introuction

Like other collective identities, such as national or ethnic ones, an environmental identity may give us a feeling of connectedness, i.e., being part of a bigger whole, and recognizing the connections between ourselves and others. The term "teacher identity" refers to the social and cultural roles teachers-learners take while interacting with other students or lecturers during their education. This interaction may occur anywhere from the beginning of a teacher-career learner to the end (Richards, 2008). Personal identity, placed identity (also known as socially positioned identity), and professional identity are all possible facets of one's identity (Day & Kington, 2008). The author's Xun, Sun, and Peng (2014) changed these aspects into four: "professional identity, major identity, personal identity, and situational identity" (p.62). Several studies have concluded that an individual's professional identity is not static, but rather an ever-evolving process that integrates one's personal and professional experiences in the pursuit of becoming and functioning as a teacher (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004; and Abbas & Al-Bahrani, 2015). It has been suggested in other contexts that one's identity may be influenced by some factors related to their work life, including job devotion, personal resilience, and professional and personal success (Day, 2011). The problem of the identity of instructors of foreign languages is becoming more important, since it is critical to guarantee that teachers will remain committed to their job and adhere to the standards set for professionals (Hammerness, Darling-hammond, & Bransford, 2005).

Many studies in teacher education have been done concerning different themes. Some of them deal with students and classroom environment indirectly (Saalh, 2014; Saalh & Esmaeel, 2022; and Saalh & Kadhim, 2020); others deal with EFL teacher identity directly by studying the EFL teacher as a mediator and the EFL teacher stereotype (Alsaadi & Mahdi, 2013, & Saalh & Salim, 2020).

EFL teachers' professional identities are at the core of the teaching profession and may influence their notions about how to conduct, be, and see their job and role in school and society. This helps form the teachers' professional identities (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Therefore, it is becoming more important to do research that assists instructors of English as a foreign language in comprehending their identities. As a result, environmental identity serves as the primary focus of this research topic. These days, the ideas of incorporating the notions of the environment and protecting it are experiencing a meteoric rise to popularity. These ideas have experienced this rise to fame. These concepts are now widely recognized in a variety of academic domains, one of which is the instruction of language learners. As a result, identifying English Language instructors (ELT) is an important step toward integrating this idea into the EFL materials used in ELT departments. Because of the extraordinary status of English in international communications, many countries have made the study of English as a foreign language a central goal of their educational reform efforts. Different contextual contexts have been examined in EFL teachers' identity formation studies.

Environmental identity refers to a person's perspective of themselves in relation to the natural environment. A person's relationship with his or her environment is fundamental to his or her identity. The significance of the research is the notion of environment and how to preserve it for future teachers at the Faculty of Education, who will subsequently teach this concept to their pupils. This research aims to investigate the environmental identity inside the EFL instructor identity.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 1Teacher Identity

In today's world, one's identity is seen as a distinct and separate entity, which is demonstrated in the evaluation techniques used to assess instructors and their growth in accordance with specified professional standards

(Porter, Youngs, & Odden, 2001). In the more recent disciplines, the acquisition of information, efficiencies, or beliefs by instructors served as the basis for professional growth rather than any other factor. Since acquisition focused on the targeted learning outcomes of what is anticipated to be learned by educators (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). The premodern and modern methods of establishing teacher identity shared the assumption of linearity and distinctions in how instructors evolve over their careers were neglected (Wang, Shirvan & Taherian, 2021). Richardson, Rogers, and McCarroll (1998) defined postmodern identity perception as a reaction to both premodern and modern points of view. Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, the concept of identity has been consistently understood to refer to an entity that the individual actively constructs. The formation of an individual's identity may be shaped by several factors, including inherited customs, the outside world's demands, ideological preconceptions, and personal identifiers (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). From a postmodern perspective on linguistic identity, academics have identified additional influential elements that shape teachers' views and instructional practices, which must be included in teacher professional development programs. These factors shape teachers' perceptions of who they are as educators (Capps, Crawford, & Constas 2012). Existing literature on teacher identity in the postmodern era shows a growing interest in the role of educators' perspectives, values, perceived competencies, and efficacy in performing various. In this regard, Barkhuizen (2017) maintained, "teaching activities, and the construction of interests, personal and social aims in the school, and mindsets about the school setting in teachers' learning" and decisions about their practice. According to a common thread in the relevant literature, an educator's identity is not a fixed quality but rather a fluid, evolving, emerging, relational construct in which they confront many shifting and inherently unstable

self-definitions (Wang, Shirvan & Taherian, 2021).

2.2 Environmental Identity

Sustainable actions are encouraged by assuming identities that are inextricably related to the well-being of the planet. Whoever is interested in the environment is more likely to exhibit pro-environmental attitudes and actions (Vess & Arndt, 2008) .

According to Clayton et al. (2021), ecological identity is directly tied to sympathy with sociopolitical groups that seek the global welfare of ecosystems. They added that "self-views such as I have an environmentally-friendly lifestyle" and "I am an environmentally-friendly customer" demonstrate a pro-environmental self-identity. People situate themselves inside a network of social groupings with such identities. Another facet of environmental identity is a person's perception of themselves in relation to the natural world around them, namely how they fit in with it. A person's environmental identity can affect any conduct they see as being ecologically important or having an effect on the environment. In this vein, Milfont and Duckitt, (2010) stated that this form of environmental identity can influence any behavior. An attitude is a psychological predisposition that may be conveyed by appraising the natural environment with some degree of favor or hate. Attitudes toward the natural environment can be positive or negative. Environmental attitudes are multifaceted phenomena.

Clayton (2003) asserted that an environmental identity increases a person's awareness of participation in a communal, interdependent system. This involves understanding one's place within natural ecosystems. With this understanding, one can appreciate the significance of the environment and how human actions impact environmental rights.

Clayton (2003) further mentioned that "environmental identity is a driving factor for people to behave in ways that safeguard the environment, and in turn, individuals' identities

will direct their social, political, and personal conduct" (p. 60).

2.3 Related Works

There are few studies on the environmental identification of EFL teachers. Nonetheless, certain research will be addressed beforehand. In their study "From EFL to ESL Context: The Impact of Sociocultural Environment on Teachers' Professional Identity Development," Aljuhaish, Senom, and Thman (2020) "intend to track three Saudi EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers who relocated from Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) to Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) to advance their careers." The second purpose is to explore how the sociocultural context influences the formation of professional identities among EFL teachers. Observations and interviews in the classroom are used to collect data.

Wang, Shirvan, and Taherian (2021) conducted a study entitled "An Ecological Study of Identity in Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Light of the Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity" to provide an ecological perspective on "identity role creation and change in L2 teaching". They adopted the "Dynamic Systems Model of Role Identity (DSMRI) metatheoretical framework" in the analysis of their data, shedding light on the significance of social-cultural roles in framing and directing the behaviors of EFL teachers. In a single-case study, the three stages of "a Chinese EFL teacher's dynamic creation of identity (as a single-case design) were examined before the practicum (teacher professional development program), during the practicum, and the first year of teaching." The data that were required were triangulated as a method of assuring that they were sufficient and representative. The information was subjected to qualitative analysis to search for indications of development and progress in the instructor's ontological beliefs, goals, self-perceptions, and action possibilities.

3. The Analytical Part
3.1 Methodology of the Study

This is a descriptive quantitative research that focuses on quantifying and evaluating variables to get findings, utilizing and analyzing numerical data using specific statistical methods. Such a study answers "who, how much, what, where, when, and how" (Aliaga & Gunderson, 2002). Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) added, a descriptive study explains the features of a phenomenon. This study focuses mostly on the outcomes rather than the processes or motivations behind those outcomes. Consequently, the methods of observation and surveying are applied to obtain the data.

Fourth-grade college students from the Department of English- College of Education for Women in the University of Baghdad have been chosen as the population of the present study. Their total number is (174) students, (68) responded to the questionnaires, and they represented the study sample. The study tool is adapted from the Environmental Identity Survey (Clayton, 2003), and the EFL teacher identity questionnaire has been adopted as a study tool. The scale consists of 50 items.

To ensure the face validity of the questionnaire, which means the extent to which the findings may be appropriately understood and broadly applied (Brown & Rodgers, 2002), it has been submitted to the jury members mentioned in Table 1. Members of the jury have concurred that all questionnaire components are legitimate. As for the reliability of the study, "the degree of accuracy with which a given test or a set of scores measures whatever it is measuring" (Verma & Beard, 1981), The Alpha Crombach reliability coefficient has been adopted. It has been found to be 0.934. It represents the level of internal dependability, which has been found to be acceptable.

Table 1
The Academic Ranks, Names, Fields, and Locations of the Jury Members

No.	Academic Rank	Name	College
1.	Prof Dr.	Shatha Alsaadi	College of Education for Women, University of Baghdad
2.	Asst. prof. Dr.	Hanan Dhia Alsalihi	College of Education for Women, University of Baghdad
3.	Asst. prof.	Maysaa Rashed	College of Education for Women, University of Baghdad
4.	Asst. prof.	Narmeen Mohmood	College of Education for Women, University of Baghdad

Table 2
The Frequencies, Weighting Means, Percentages, and Levels of Items

No	Items	Frequencies					Weighting Means	Percentages	The Level of item
		Highly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Highly agree (5)			
1	4	4	6	8	19	31	3.9853	79.706	High
2	6	4	5	8	27	24	3.8971	77.942	High
3	27	0	6	16	23	23	3.8676	77.352	High
4	30	5	8	8	13	34	3.8676	77.352	High
5	40	2	3	13	32	18	3.8529	77.058	High
6	10	6	5	9	22	26	3.8382	76.764	High
7	1	6	3	10	25	24	3.8382	76.764	High
8	15	3	7	10	27	21	3.8088	76.176	High
9	44	5	6	8	24	25	3.7941	75.882	High
10	7	5	5	9	27	22	3.7794	75.588	High
11	2	5	6	11	20	26	3.7794	75.588	High
12	25	5	6	9	26	22	3.7500	75	High
13	41	3	7	10	28	20	3.7500	75	High
14	13	1	8	20	17	22	3.7353	74.706	High
15	9	6	3	12	27	20	3.7206	74.412	High
16	11	6	5	8	31	18	3.7059	74.118	High
17	43	4	6	15	24	19	3.6765	73.53	Moderate
18	35	4	7	7	34	16	3.6765	73.53	Moderate
19	36	5	8	11	21	23	3.6618	73.236	Moderate
20	12	7	5	14	19	23	3.6471	72.942	Moderate
21	42	4	9	9	24	22	3.6471	72.942	Moderate
22	31	4	8	13	25	18	3.6471	72.942	Moderate
23	3	5	4	14	31	14	3.6324	72.648	Moderate
24	29	4	8	10	28	18	3.6176	72.352	Moderate
25	20	2	7	21	22	16	3.6176	72.352	Moderate
26	39	3	5	17	24	19	3.5882	71.764	Moderate
27	16	4	6	22	17	19	3.5882	71.764	Moderate
28	14	5	7	18	18	20	3.5735	71.47	Moderate
29	34	6	8	11	27	16	3.5294	70.588	Moderate
30	17	7	8	12	21	20	3.5294	70.588	Moderate
31	49	3	6	18	31	10	3.4412	68.824	Moderate
32	46	5	10	17	22	14	3.4118	68.236	Moderate
33	24	6	7	18	27	10	3.3676	67.352	Moderate
34	22	5	10	16	28	9	3.3382	66.764	Moderate
35	21	5	9	20	23	11	3.3088	66.176	Moderate
36	45	6	8	20	23	11	3.2500	65	Moderate
37	48	5	11	23	23	6	3.1912	63.824	Moderate
38	8	7	6	34	10	11	3.1324	62.648	Moderate
39	32	7	10	26	16	9	3.1324	62.648	Moderate
40	26	6	10	30	17	5	3.0588	61.176	Moderate

Table 2.Continued

No	Items	Frequencies					Weighting Means	Percentages	The Level of item
		Highly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Highly agree (5)			
41	50	12	13	15	18	10	2.9706	59.412	Moderate
42	47	8	11	25	18	6	2.9706	59.412	Moderate
43	38	4	15	26	18	5	2.8529	57.058	Moderate
44	5	12	18	21	8	9	2.7647	55.294	Moderate
45	23	12	22	18	8	8	2.6618	53.236	Moderate
46	28	21	12	11	16	8	2.5294	50.588	Moderate
47	37	14	15	23	10	6	2.4265	48.53	Moderate
48	33	22	14	14	14	4	2.3235	46.47	Low
49	18	19	21	13	9	6	2.2941	45.882	Low
50	19	24	17	13	10	4	2.0735	41.47	Low

3.2 Data Analysis

The weighting means and percentages of the items are used for measuring the integration of EFL teacher identity and environmental teacher identity. Table 2 shows that the highest three weighting means and percentages are those of the items (4,6,27,30, 40) with weighting means (3.9, 3.8,3.8, 3.8,3.8), and percentages, respectively (79.7, 77.9, 77. 3, 77.3, 77). On the other hand, the lowest five items are (19,18,33,37,28) with the following weighting means (2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5), and percentages, respectively (41.4, 45.8, 46.4, 48.5, 50.5). However, the environmental teacher identity is moderated within the EFL teacher identity.

4. Conclusions

The finding of this study has shown that the student-teachers perspective of their environmental identity is moderate. This finding supports contemporary global studies in favor of environmental considerations in foreign language education and instruction. Because of the findings, more investigation into this subject may now be carried out in other countries, allowing for a more in-depth comprehension of the predicament in this part of the world. Comparing this result to the results of previous studies reveals that for the first study, four distinct themes emerged: "language-related identity, context-related identity, practiced and responsive teaching skills, and membership in Communities of Practice, the dynamic nature of language teacher identities as participants find themselves in different English language teaching contexts," and the crucial role of professional settings in fostering language teacher identities. In addition, the second study's findings indicate that the "DSMRI-oriented analysis of pre-, mid-, and post-practicum data highlighted the traces of role identities of the teacher trainee in her professional development process." This approach has resulted in both emerging patterns and developing obstacles in teacher's work, which eventually led to the formation of a teacher role identity that was more negotiated, flexible, and realistic. This research demonstrated the DSMRI's value in examining the evolving identities of language educators and their impact on professional growth. This is because a teacher's ontological beliefs, aims, self-perceptions, and action possibilities might be aligned or misaligned depending on a variety of temporal and contextual circumstances

5. Recommendations

It is to be recommended the following:-
1. Focusing on ecology in the classroom by engaging the students in different activities.
2. Emphasizing the importance of ECO-ELT as a Technique for teaching English as a foreign language.

6. Suggestions

It is to be suggested the following:
1. Identifying the use of Eco-ELT identity as a teaching technique in EFL.
2. Studying the significance of Eco-ELT identity techniques on the EFL students' learning.

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