

An Investigation into the Relationship between Students' Identity Aspects and their English Proficiency: a Case Study of Iraqi Students

تقصي العلاقة بين جوانب الهوية الطلابية وكفاءتهم في اللغة
الانجليزية كلفة اجنبية للطلبة العراقيين دارسي اللغة الانجليزية
لغة اجنبية

Lecturer: Jihad Hassan Aziz
Department of English, College of Education
University of Samarra, Iraq
masterenglish2013@yahoo.com
jihada97@gmail.com

1. Abstract

The objective of the study is to explore the relationship between identity aspects and the proficiency in English as a foreign language (EFL) among Iraqi EFL students. To this end, 350 Iraqi EFL learners participated in the study who took the IELTS test (version 2015) and Cheek and Briggs' (2013) Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV. extracting the data and putting in SPSS 22, it is found that In fact, the study revealed a positive and significant relationship between different aspects of identity and different skills of language in general and the proficiency test itself in particular. Accordingly, identity is found to be significant for language achievement. Identity, in effect, foregrounds the social nature of language learning and due to this fact, the

relation between the social identity and different language skills in general and the IELTS, in particular, is revealed to be the strongest one. The study is concluded with some pedagogical implications.

Key words: identity construction, identity aspects, English achievement, personal identity, relational identity, social identity, collective identity.

الملخص

الهدف من الدراسة هو اكتشاف العلاقة بين جوانب الهوية الطلابية وكفاءتهم في اللغة الانجليزية لغة اجنبية للطلبة العراقيين دارسي اللغة الانجليزية لغة اجنبية. ولتحقيق ذلك، ٣٥٠ من الطلبة العراقيين دارسي اللغة الانجليزية لغة اجنبية قد شاركوا في هذه الدراسة، وقد اجروا اختبار ايلتس (نسخة ٢٠١٥) و Cheek Briggs (٢٠١٣) واستبانة جوانب الهوية (AIQ-IV). وباستخراج النتائج ووضعها في SPSS22 وجد ان هذه الدراسة قد كشفت عن علاقة ايجابية ومهمة بين جوانب مختلفة للهوية ومهارات مختلفة للغة بصورة عامة ولاختبار الكفاءة بصورة خاصة. وبموجب ذلك فالهوية هي جانب مهم لتوصيل اللغة. وفي واقع الامر فان الهوية هي في صدارة الطبيعة الاجتماعية لتعلم اللغة وبسبب هذه الحقيقة فان العلاقة بين الهوية الاجتماعية واختلاف مهارات اللغة بشكل عام واختبار ايلتس بوجه خاص كشفت على انها الاقوى. وقد لخصت هذه الدراسة بعض الآثار التربوية.

2. Introduction

Identity or self is a notion introduced by Bruner (1996) which refers to “the traits and characteristics, social relations, roles, and social group memberships that define who one is” (Oyserman et al (2012, p. 69). Identity is highly debated in the field of education and is considered as fundamental in expressing and indicating the self (Ochs, 2008). Likewise, language learning and identity learning are closely interrelated and comprise a dialectical relationship (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000).

Hence, the identity of any individual determines their perspective regarding themselves, regarding their capabilities or even their values. It means that the identity may influence individual's feelings, thoughts, actions,

expectations or even their purposes (Leary & Tangney, 2003). Language seems to be the main device through which individuals construct their own identities and present their thoughts, feelings or their values which are referred to “as a site of identity construction” by Pavelenko (2002, p. 285).

The dialectical relationship between language and identity is also considered by Khatib and Ghamari (2011) who argue that language and identity are closely related in such a way that language without considering its identity dimension or identity without taking into account its language dimension is inconceivable. Lakoff (2000), in a similar vein, underscores the fact that language is more than just words or sentences, but what comprises language is the power-related issues which are mainly formed through the processes of identity construction.

Van Lier (2008, p. 177) reminds that “every perception of the target language is simultaneously an act of self-perception. Learning an L2 and becoming engaged in a new culture, thus involves adjusting one’s sense of self and creating new identities to connect the known to the new”. Accordingly, language, culture and identity are highly correlated. It means that learning English as a foreign language, as a second language or as a native language cannot be considered in the same way due to the influential factors such as culture which apparently affects the process of not only language learning but also of identity construction. In other words, social dimension should also be considered wherein learning English as a foreign language in a country such as Iraq is totally different from learning English in a country such as New Zealand wherein English is spoken natively or even from learning English in a country such as China wherein English is considered as the second language.

Considering the argument presented by Norton (1997, p. 12) who points to the fact that many studies approach language learning as a similar process by which they consider learners “as motivated or unmotivated, introverted or extroverted, inhibited or uninhibited, without considering that such affective factors are frequently socially constructed in inequitable relations of power, changing over time and space, and possibly coexisting in contradictory ways in a single individual”. Likewise, in any situational context—whether English is regarded as a native language, as a second language or as a foreign language—as it is argued by Khatib and Ghamari (2011), there is a dialectical relationship between language achievement and individual identity.

Norton (2000) also demonstrates that individual characteristics enable some individuals to adjust their learning strategies with their instructors’ approaches which in turn influence their identity construction and eventually their language achievement. Accordingly, in a country such as Iraq, where English is regarded as a foreign language in which few authentic opportunities, if any, are available for Iraqi EFL learners to use their foreign language, the importance of social contexts, teacher-learner interactions and learners’ identities along with their individual characters seem to be more in play.

Extending Block’s (2007) arguments where identity is considered as destabilizing, which motives the learners to look for equilibrium in order to resolve the challenges they are experiencing due to the struggle between their native identity and second language, identity; it seems that the relationship between language achievement and identity construction is crucial for Iraqi EFL learners. Norton (2013) also mentions that foreign language learning is, in effect, “an investment in a learner’s own identity and an identity which is constantly changing across time and space” (p.

51). The issue of looking for equilibrium where there is a struggle between the two types of identity is referred to as third place by Bhabha (1996) as well as Hall (1996) in which the background knowledge rooted in past, native language and identity interact and transform the incoming knowledge rooted in present, foreign language and identity which is also in line with reconstruction processes.

Meanwhile, the complexity of identity construction and its relationship to language achievement may be explainable through chaos theory and complexity theory as it is mentioned by Sade (2009). Any complex system as pointed out by Sade (2009, p. 517) has composed of several features, namely, "adaptation, aggregation, emergence, diversity, dynamism, and non-linear". Sade (2009, p. 533) regards identity construction as "a dynamic process which is always evolving, emerging from the constant interaction of its component parts".

Considering the complex nature of identity and language itself illustrates that language learning demands internalizing grammatical, lexical, and pragmatic features of the language in a particular community defined in an appropriate discourse influences and is influenced by learners' definition of self and others. So the significance of such phenomena is paramount for EFL learners who are learning the language in a situational context in which native language, culture, and even identity are dominated which may bring them many challenges and struggles and influence their language learning.

Furthermore, the process of identity construction is not linear and is complex in such a way in which there is interaction between different variables as it is argued also by Wenger (2000) who showed that any individual is belonging at the same time to a number of social communities such as family, school, professional, ethnic, etc. It means that any individual has to take different roles

such as deism, social, professional, ethnic, religious, as a few among others. Accordingly, belonging to a particular community leads to emerging an identity one dimension of which is constructed based on social roles which in its turn resulted in “new patterns of linguistic and non-linguistic behaviors which are associated with the genres of the social institutions they participate” (Sade, 2009, p. 519).

The aforementioned discussion clarifies that learning English in a country like Iraq in which English is considered as a foreign language and wherein there are a few opportunities, if any, for communication in English is very demanding which may influence and is influenced by identity construction which is apparently affected by Arabic language, Islamic viewpoints, cultural issues, or even social and economic variables as well as war and terrorists. In opening a new dimension and providing some pedagogical implication for EFL learners, the study attempted to explore whether there is any relationship between language learning and identity. In meeting the objective of the study the following questions were raised:

1. What are the patterns of identity construction among Iraqi EFL students?
2. What is the English achievement among Iraqi EFL students?
3. What is the relationship between Iraqi EFL students' identity and their English achievement?
4. Is there any particular pattern in terms of Iraqi EFL students' identity, their language achievement and the strength and type of the relationships between the two variables? If so, how?

3. Review of Related Literature

Second or foreign language learning is, in effect, participating in the community of practices (Duff & Talmy, 2011; Norton & McKenny, 2011) through which language is developed in terms of “sociocultural norms, normative

practices, identity, and community members” (Muramatsu, 2013, p. 2). It means that one variable which affects language learning or even is influenced by language learning is identity construction. The following sheds light on the studies that have explored the relationship between language learning and identity in one way or another.

Exploring “whether language learners merely learn a linguistic system or they go beyond learning the linguistic system and find themselves involved in an extended-ongoing negotiation between self and the target language, sociocultural practices”, Bahramy, Aidinlou, and Kazemi (2013, p. 55) showed that learners’ identity undertakes many changes and is reconstructed, but these changes are mainly for self-growth, cultural understanding, and extending tolerance of struggles and challenges observed in another culture and not for self-alienation. Likewise, “using the notions of “attractors, bifurcation points and fractals from Chaos Theory, and relating them to identity issues” Sade (2009, p. 515) illustrates “identity as a complex/chaotic system”.

Zareee and Asgari (2014) explore the relationship between and among EFL learners’ self-identity Changes, their motivational types and their English proficiency. To this end, 204 Iranian EFL learners were selected as the participants of the study who took a 30-item Likert-scale motivation questionnaire, 24-item Likert-scale identity changes questionnaire as well as a proficiency test. The researchers concluded that “motivation types and self-identity changes are related through three pairs of canonical variables: intrinsic orientations related to personal identity changes, instrumental orientations related to cultural changes, and instrumental orientations related to learners’ self-confidence change” (Zareee & Asgari, 2014, p. 141).

Saadat and Hosseini (2015), on the other hand, explore the influence of ethnicity and motivation on English

language achievement of Turkish EFL learners. To this end, 120 Iranian Turk learners of English are selected as the participants of the study who take two questionnaires and a language test, i.e. General Ethnicity Questionnaire (Tsai, et al, 2000), a motivation questionnaire (Vaezi, 2008), and a sample TOEFL test (Masan, 1983). The results of the study show that ethnic identity and motivation significantly influence the language proficiency for the Turk language learners. There are many studies which indicate a significant relationship between identity and language proficiency such as the ones conducted by Ahmadi (2011), Damavand (2012) Fazel and Ahmadi (2011) Pelletier (2001), Soureshjani and Naseri (2011), or Vaezi (2008).

3. Methodology

The details regarding the methodology are presented here in order to provide the basis beneficial for further researchers and for other empirical studies.

3.1. Design of the Study

Following a correlational study, the researcher tries to explore the relationship between identity construction and language proficiency among Iraqi EFL learners.

3.2. Sampling Procedures

The participants of the study are 350 Iraqi EFL learners whose ages are between 19 and 27 and who are either the student of English as a foreign language or EFL learners in language schools. However, the proficiency levels of the participants are diverse in order to meet the objectives of the study. Table 1 shows the demographic information about the participants.

Table 1

Participants of the Study

	Gender		Native language		Total
	Female	Male	Arabic	Kurdish	
Frequency	213	137	289	61	350
Percent	60.85	39.15	82.57	17.43	100

3.3. Instruments

Two main instruments are utilized in the present study, namely, IELTS test (version 2015) and Cheek and Briggs' (2013) Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV). Table 2 sheds light on the details regarding the instruments.

(Table 2) *Instruments in Terms of Characteristics and Scoring Procedures*

Test or Questionnaire	Number of Items	Sections	Scoring Procedures/Interpretations	Range of Scores
IELTS	82	Three sections: Listening with three sections and 40 items; Reading with three sections and 40 items; Writing with two tasks;	Based on the scoring rubric in which each section is given a separate score out of 9 which are added and its average is considered as the total score	0-9
Cheek and Briggs' (2013) Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV)	45	Five sections: PI = Personal Identity Orientation RI = Relational Identity Orientation SI = Social Identity Orientation CI = Collective Identity Orientation SP = Special items [not scored on scales]	PI = 2 5 8 11 14 18 21 25 27 32 [sum of answers to 10 items] RI = 22 26 28 31 34 35 37 39 41 43 [sum of answers to 10 items] SI = 3 6 9 12 15 17 20 [Sum of answers to 7 items] CI = 4 7 10 13 24 29 38 42 [Sum of answers to 8 items] [SP = 1 16 19 23 30 33 36 40 44 45 (10 items not scored on scales)]	0-35

4.4. Data Gathering and Analysis Procedures

Administering the instruments—the questionnaire and the test—among the 350 EFL students; the data are gathered through the scoring procedure in a section separately. The data are entered into SPSS 22 which are analyzed deploying the correlational tests, i.e. Pearson Correlation and Regression.

5. Results & Discussion

5.4. Descriptive Statistics

The sample consisted of 350 students who take the questionnaire and test—their results are presented in table 3. As table 3 illustrates the proficiency test, i.e. IELTS has composed of three sections of reading, writing and listening. The identity questionnaire, on the other hand, includes four sections of Personal Identity Orientation, Relational Identity Orientation, Social Identity Orientation, and Collective Identity Orientation.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics: Proficiency Test & Identity Dimensions

		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
IELTS	Reading	350	4.00	9.00	6.3829	1.77913
	Writing	350	4.00	9.00	6.4743	1.75201
	Listening	350	4.00	9.00	6.3714	1.74418
Identity	PI	350	1.00	10.00	5.3143	2.78114
	RI	350	1.00	10.00	5.7457	2.69371
	SI	350	1.00	7.00	4.0000	1.84033
	CI	350	1.00	8.00	4.5257	2.45724

Table 3 demonstrates the results regarding each test in terms of its sections. Interestingly, the three sections of reading, writing and listening show the similar mean and standard deviation with the same minimum and maximum. The identity, on the other hand, reveals a similar trend. Accordingly, the minimum and maximum for the three sections of reading, writing, and listening are 4 and 9, respectively. The three sections of the IELTS also show approximately the mean of 6.5 and the Std. Deviation relatively about 1.75.

The minimum and maximum of the two sections of personal and relational identity show the minimum of 1 and maximum of 10 with the mean about 5.5 where the Std. Deviation is about 2.7. The section of social identity, on the other hand, illustrated the minimum of 1 and maximum of 7

with the mean of 4 and Std. Deviation about 2. Finally, the collective identity shows the minimum of 1 and maximum of 8 with the mean about 4.5 and Std. Deviation about 2.5.

5.5. Inferential Statistics

5.5.1. Correlation

In this section, the Pearson Correlation Statistics is run in order to explore the relationship between the language skills and different dimensions of identity. Table 4 shows the results of such a test in which the relation between personal identity and language skills are explored.

(Table 4) *Pearson Correlation between Language Skills and Personal Identity*

Statistics Variables	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Reading & PI	0.512	0.000	350
Writing & PI	0.514	0.000	350
Listening & PI	0.511	0.000	350

As table 4 reveals each language skill is correlated significantly at the level of 0.01. In effect, the p-value in the three correlations shows 0.000 which is quite below the cut score of 0.01 and indicates to the significant relationship between the language skills and personal dimension of identity among the Iraqi EFL students. Table 5 demonstrates the results of the Pearson Correlation between language skills and relational identity.

Table 5

Pearson correlation between Language Skills and Relational Identity

Statistics Variables	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Reading & RI	0.23	0.000	350
Writing & RI	0.21	0.000	350
Listening & RI	0.27	0.000	350

Table 5 reveals that there is also a significant relationship between the three language skills and relational dimension of identity where the strength of the correlation is apparently weak between 0.21 and 0.27 with the p-value of 0.000 at the level of 0.01. Table 6, on the other hand, sheds light on the correlation between the three language skills and social identity.

Table 6

Pearson correlation between Language Skills and Social Identity

Statistics Variables	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Reading & SI	0.632	0.000	350
Writing & SI	0.673	0.000	350
Listening & SI	0.619	0.000	350

There is a similar direction regarding the relation between the three language skills and social identity although with a higher strength. In other words, the social dimension of identity and the three sections of reading, writing and listening are correlated significantly at the level of 0.01 with the strength higher than 0.6 which is a good relation. Finally, the relationship between the three language skills and collective identity was explored as table 7 shows.

Table 7

Pearson Correlation between Language Skills and Collective Identity

Statistics Variables	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Reading & CI	0.212	0.000	350
Writing & CI	0.211	0.000	350
Listening & CI	0.217	0.000	350

Investigating the relationship between the collective identity and the three language skills demonstrates a relatively weak relationship however it is significant at the level of 0.01 with the strength of 0.21.

Table 8

Pearson Correlation between Different Dimensions of Identity and Language proficiency

Statistics Variables	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
IELTS & PI	0.514	0.000	350
IELTS & RI	0.552	0.000	350
IELTS & SI	0.601	0.000	350
IELTS & CI	0.573	0.000	350

Table 8, in effect, shows the relation between the proficiency test, i.e. a version of IELTS and different dimensions of identity. As it is clear there is a positive, significant and moderate relationship between the IELTS and the four dimensions of personal identity, relational identity, social identity and collective identity among which the strongest one is related to the social identity.

5.5.2. Regression

Here the researcher utilizes the regression analysis to explore whether the proficiency test as a dependent variable has a relationship with gender, native language, and identity.

Dependent Variable: IELTS

Independent Variables: Gender, Native Language, Identity

Regression equation:

IELTS= $B_0 + B_1 \times \text{Gender} + B_2 \times \text{Native Language} + B_3 \times \text{Identity}$

Table 9

Regression Analysis for Relation among Gender, Native Language and Identity with the Proficiency Test

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	31.446	3	13.149	9.668	0.001
Residual	2078.777	346	22.936		
Total	2107.224	350			

The table 9 indicates that there is a significant linear relationship between the dependent variable IELTS and independent variables. Therefore the regression was valid and significant.

Table 10

Regression Estimation for Relationship between IELTS and Independent Variables

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.513 ^a	.264	.236	21.423

As it is clear from table 10, the adjusted R² shows how much the regression can predict the IELTS score in terms of independent variables. In other words, 23.6% of the variance of the IELTS scores can be estimated by the variance of the independent variables.

Table 11

Regression Coefficients for Dependent Variable IELTS Score

Independent variables	B	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	112.709		7.603	0.000
Identity	-1.195	-0.507	-5.279	0.000
Native Language	-1.925	-0.039	-0.340	0.734
Gender	0.432	0.008	0.071	0.943

Table 11 shows that the p –value is significant ($p < 0.01$) only for Identity. This means that for predicting the IELTS scores in terms of the independent variables, only Identity significantly contributed. This is in agreement with the t-independent tests.

6. Conclusions & Pedagogical Implications

Investigating the relationship between identity and proficiency test, the IELTS test (version 2015) and Cheek and Briggs' (2013) Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV) were administered among 350 Iraqi EFL learners through which the questions are answered.

In fact, the study reveals that there is a positive, moderate and significant relationship between different aspects of identity and different skills of language in general and the proficiency test itself in particular. Accordingly, identity was found to be significant for language achievement. Identity, in effect, foregrounds the social nature of language learning and due to this fact, the relation between the social identity and different language skills in general and the IELTS, in particular is revealed to be the strongest one.

In this regard, Norton (2000) considers second or foreign language learners' identity as the pivot point in second or foreign language processing. Identity for Norton (2000, p. 5) illustrates "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future". Likewise, identity refers to the individual's change potentials which differ from time to time, place to place and are affected by a vast variety of factors among which different dimensions of identity itself are worth mentioning. It means that the relationship between language learning processes and identity construction is a complex and dynamic one. In other words, identity is a part and parcel of the processes of

language learning which is intertwined with different dimensions of language such as cultural, psychological, social as well as personal ones.

Meanwhile, language is considered as the main device through which identity is constructed in relation to the society, community, cultural issues and even individual characteristics. Hence, language learner, situational context wherein language is learned, and different dimensions of identity need to be considered in demonstrating language acquisition as a second or foreign language since talking about one aspect without considering the other is like a puzzle whose some pieces are missing. This argument is on a line with Ochs' (1993) social constructionist framework which regards "language as the site of creating, negotiating, and redefining one's identity, and speakers as *agents* in the production of their own and others' social selves" (p. 296). Ochs (1993) adds that an individual's identity represents an "inferential outcome of linguistically encoded acts and stances" (p. 295) instead of a "piori-social fact" (p. 296).

Hence, it is also indicated that the processes of identity construction are an indispensable component of language learning which needs to be considered. This issue also denotes the instruction adjusted to the processes of identity construction of Iraqi EFL students where the intellectual, cultural, personal and social variables are regarded. One crucial point is regarding consciousness raising on the part of teachers, teacher' trainers, or even curriculum developers to consider such a complex and crucial variable. It is also worth emphasizing that some challenge and struggle for identity equilibrium is fundamental for learning English as a foreign language.

7. References

- Ahmadi, M.R. (2011). The Effect of Integrative and Instrumental Motivation on Iranian EFL Learners' Language Learning. *ELT voices*. India.
- Bahramy, M., Aidinlou, N. A., & Kazemi, S. A. (2013). Reconstruction of "Self" and "Other" in EFL Learners. *International Journal of Basic and Applied Science*, 2(1), 56-62.
- Bhabha, H. (1996). *Cultures in between: Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage Publications
- Block, D. (2007). The Rise of Identity in SLA Research, post. *The Modern Language Journal*, 91(s1), 863-876.
- Bruner, J. S. (1996). *The Culture of Education*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Damavand, A. (2012). The Effects of Motivation Types (instrumental and integrative) on writing proficiency among Iranian IELTS candidates. *ZKU Journal of Social Sciences*, 8, 15.
- Duff, P. A., & Talmy, S. (2011). Language Socialization Approaches to Second Language Acquisition. In D. Atkinson (Ed.), *Alternative Approaches to Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 95–116). London, UK: Routledge.
- Fazel, I. & Ahmadi, A. (2011). On the Relationship between Writing Proficiency and Instrumental/Integrative Motivation among Iranian IELTS Candidates. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 7, 747-757.
- Hall, S. (1996). Introduction: Who Needs Identity?, in S. Hall & P. Gay, *Questions of Cultural Identity* (pp. 1-17). London: Sage Publication
- Khatib, M., & Ghamari, M. R. (2011). Mutual Relations of Identity and Foreign Language Learning: An overview of linguistic and sociolinguistic approaches to identity. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1(12), 1701-1708.
- Lakoff, R. T. (2000). *The Language War*. University of California Press.
- Lightbown, PM and Spada, N (2006). *How Languages are Learned* (3rd Ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Muramatsu, C. (2013). *Portraits of Second Language Learners: agency, identities, and second language learning*. PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) thesis, University of Iowa, 2013. <http://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/4885>.
- Norton, B. (1997). Language, Identity, and the ownership of English. *TESOL quarterly*, 409-429.
- Norton, B. (2000). *Identity and Language Learning: Gender, Ethnicity and Educational Change*. Editorial Dunken.

- Norton, B., & McKinney, C. (2011). An Identity Approach to Second Language Acquisition. In D. Atkinson (Ed.), *Alternative Approaches to Second Language Acquisition* (pp. 73–94). London: Routledge.
- Norton, B. (2013). Identity and Language Learning: Extending the conversation. *Multilingual matters*.
- Ochs, E (2008) Constructing Social Identity: A language socialization perspective. In Kiesling, SF and Paulston, CB (eds), *Intercultural Discourse and Communication* (pp. 78–91). London: Blackwell.
- Ochs, E. (1993). Constructing Social Identity: A language socialization perspective. *Research on language and social interaction*, 26(3), 287-306.
- Oyserman, D., Elmore, K., & Smith, G. (2012). Self, self-concept, and identity. *Handbook of self and identity*, 2, 69-104.
- Pavlenko, A. & Lantolf, J. P. (2000). Second language learning as participation and the (re)construction of selves. In Lantolf, JP (ed.), *sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 155–177). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Pavlenko, A. (2002). We have room for but one language here': Language and national identity in the US at the turn of the 20th century. *Multilingua*, 21(2/3), 163-196.
- Saadat, M. & Hosseini, S. A. (2015). The Effect of Ethnic identity and motivation on English language proficiency of Turk language learners. *International Researchers*, 4(3), 115-128.
- Sade, L. A. (2009). Complexity and identity reconstruction in second language acquisition. *Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada*, 9(2), 515-537.
- Soureshjani, K.H. & Naseri, N. (2011). The interrelationship of instrumental, integrative, intrinsic, and extrinsic motivations and the lexical-oriented knowledge among Persian EFL language learners. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 1, 662-670.
- Vaezi, Z. (2008). Language learning motivation among Iranian undergraduate students. *World applied sciences journal*, 5 (1), 54-61.
- Van Lier, L. 2008. Agency in the classroom. In J. P. Lantolf & M. E. Poehner (eds.), *sociocultural theory and the teaching of second languages*. London: Equinox, 163– 86.
- Zare-ee, A., & Asgari Matin, S. (2014). The Relationship between EFL Learners' Self-Identity Changes, Motivation Types, and EFL Proficiency. *Iranian Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 6(2), 141-178.