

Dual Identity or Identity Duel: EFL Context Duality Force on Identity Aspects Formation Through Learners' Self-Reflection

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Background: The link between context and identity is of paramount importance to language teaching and learning. Yet, less attention has been paid to the identity aspects in various EFL contexts.

Purpose: This study examined the identity aspects of EFL learners attending both public and private English language classes through self-reflection.

Method: In this mixed-methods design, 128 conveniently chosen EFL learners, including both genders, responded to the Identity Aspects Questionnaire, and 23 of those participants were invited to a follow-up semi-structured interview to triangulate the questionnaire data. The study conducted Paired Samples T-Test for quantitative data, whereas qualitative data underwent thematic analysis to extract and codify the themes.

Results: The results revealed no significant differences for personal and relational identity aspects over these two EFL contexts, while collective and social ones reached differences. The qualitative data indicated that the EFL learners synergically adapt and adopt some identities through retention and creation. The shared identity between the two EFL classes mainly occurred in personal and relational aspects, while social and collective ones seemed relatively varied. The participants held both individualistic and collectivistic cultural dimensions in these two EFL classes. However, they were more idiocentric in private English language institutes and more socio-centric in public high schools. The discussion concerning identity issues indicated that EFL contexts affect the socializing process. The individuals position in a context according to their shared identities, while the varied identities lead them to form or adopt new identities.

Implication: These findings could help ELT teachers and researchers to expand their perception of language learners' identities in different EFL contexts.

Keywords: context duality, identity aspects, self-reflection, dual identity, identity duel

Introduction

In recent decades, the impact of sociocultural issues on educational achievements has attracted the attention of many researchers. Both the knowledge of the language and the students' sociocultural backgrounds affect the students' language successes (Palovskaya & Lord, 2018). As an essential part of sociocultural theory, identity has received much attention in recent decades. The emergence of identity led the research to a paradigm shift in second

and foreign language learning (Gay, 2013). Many researchers have attempted to examine identity and its aspects against different variables in various social and educational contexts. However, there is still a lot about the identity issue to be investigated.

Pacheco (2015), in the review of Taylor's book (2013), defined the term identity as a combination of a person's self-belief modified by various contexts. Foucault (1979, as cited in Buckingham, 2008) drew the concept of identity as a way to perceive ourselves,

i.e., who we are. Essentialists observed identity as unchangeable reality (e.g., Arkes & Kajdasz, 2011; Labov, 1966), while for constructivists (e.g., Le Page & Tabouret Keller, 1985; Omoniyi, 2006; Pennycook, 2003; Vickers & Deckert, 2013), it is dynamic. Since human beings develop through identity (Mohr, 2017), identity impacts human feelings, thinking, acting, and purposes (Alick, 2004). Then identity inquiry obliges the practitioners to investigate the internal aspects (Cochran Smith & Lytle, 1990) if there is a hope to access the individuals' identities. They should rely more on how people reflect on themselves in the specific situation.

Through self-reflection, the learners look back on their learning experiences and report the knowledge of learning areas (Lew & Schmidt, 2011). Learners reflect on themselves to develop a greater sense of achievement (Graham, 2004), which provides them valuable metacognitive awareness (Sevilla & Gamboa, 2016). Iranian EFL learners learn English in public areas such as schools and universities and private ones, i.e., English language institutes (Karimi et al., 2021). In this study, the Iranian EFL learners with the experience of attending both EFL contexts, i.e., high school and English language institute, reflected on their identity aspects. These were two well-known Iranian EFL contexts reported by Talebinezhad and Aliakbari (2001). They found high school for educational purposes and a private English language institute for immediate applications. The way that the learners position themselves in these dual EFL contexts may drive them to comport, shift, construct or reconstruct their identities (Schiffrin, 1996) to escape from identity conflict or crisis (Haberman & Danes, 2007).

People position themselves in a community according to their commonalities. If they identify any differences in their roles in a group, they try to construct a new identity according to their senses in the position, i.e., social identity groups they belong to (Allen, 2011; Godley & Loretto, 2013). The individuals are active agents in the group, and form, negotiate and resist their identities with the other community members (Schiffrin, 1996). According to the socio-cognitive agent model (Rato & Prada, 2021), an agent's cognition or reasoning interprets the social context and other social actors for social group dynamics mechanisms and social identity construction. Through language, people can join various social communities by socially and culturally constructed and co-constructed social identities (Allen, 2011). Hence, the individuals add and change their role-based identity (Kirkman et al., 2006) as they perform different roles. Role-based identity holds two

varieties, i.e., idealized and conventional role identities. The idealized role identity refers to the positions where the person hopes to perform while the conventional one is the current and actual roles (Ashforth, 2001). The primary motive of human behaviour is the idealized role or self-actualization. In this step, people evaluate themselves to adapt their relevant identities in different interactions (Ashforth et al., 2008). The problem is whether the EFL learners attending two different EFL contexts shape dual identities or synergically adapt and adopt their identities through creation and retention called identity duel. Thus the main impetus to conduct the present study lay on this premise that the EFL learners may shape different aspects of identities through exposure to various EFL contexts. Despite the amount of literature and investigations around the learner identities, less has looked into the impact of various EFL contexts on the formation of English language learners' identity aspects. There is a significant gap in this area of knowledge, and few investigations have provided practical information about it.

Literature Review

For many years, researchers have viewed identity as a concept through which human beings develop (Erikson, 1980). According to Le Ha (2008), western and eastern researchers have conceptualized the identity concept differently. For western scholars, identity is hybrid and multiple (e.g., Block, 2007; Pavlenko, 2002), whereas, for eastern ones (e.g., Hall, 1996; Idrus & Nazri, 2016), it is a sense of belonging. The interdisciplinary studies on identity provided a platform for researchers to explore more gaps on this issue. The present study has briefly reviewed the teaching-related studies on identity and identity aspects in the following sections.

Identity and Language Learning

Language learning is a multifaceted process through which people interact via social and cultural behaviours and ways of being (Williams, 1994). In this process, people develop their social identity and form their second language selves (Yashima 2009). It means that language learning and identity construction occur at the same time. In other words, while the individuals learn the language, they concurrently develop their social identities (Khatib & Ghamari, 2001; Miller, 2003; Williams, 1994; Yashima, 2009). People integrate social identity with language to represent their constructed selves (Hamston, 2003). The self-representation leads them to form a new identity (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000). The intertwining of language and identity (Khatib &

Ghamari, 2001) moves language users to negotiate their identities through linguistic resources (Pomerantz, 2008). The research findings indicated a significant and positive relationship between learners' identity and their English language achievement scores (Mirahmadi Kia et al., 2021). Context as a language resource may also influence identity formation since nothing happens out of context. The results of the studies such as Granger (2004), Gu (2010), and Johnson and Golombek (2011) reported how context and identity interact.

Context Duality, Dual Identity and Identity Duel

Context as an influential factor in identity construction (Riley, 2006; Ushioda, 2009) forces identity to change across time and place (Block, 2007). To show the impact of context in identity construction, Tabaku (2009), Lobaton (2012), and Zacharias (2012) examined new identity construction with its various aspects in several EFL settings. Treiber and Booyen (2021) explored how adolescents' identity construction and reconstruction occur through situational analysis. Of course, other factors, which influence this process, exist in each context. For instance, in language learning areas, the factors such as using the first language and the teachers' conception of language learning and teaching affect the learners' social and individual identity constructions (Lobaton, 2012). According to research, language learning is a process of identity formation in the socio-cultural context. The community members strengthen their relationships through institutions, instructions, and discursive practices to form their identities (Chen, 2010). Thus identity construction happens when the learners engage in culturally, politically, and socially situated language socialization (Duff, 2002; Ho, 2011; Lee & Bucholtz, 2015; Morita, 2004; Séror, 2011). The individuals' socialization process in various local areas uncovers the dynamic nature of identity (Packer & Bavel, 2015). Within a community, individuals socialize with other members through language to learn, think, adapt and behave appropriately (Lee & Bucholtz, 2015). The use of language in the socializing process is called language-mediated social activities (Morita, 2000). This process encourages the learners to construct their identity by developing linguistic, cultural, and sociopolitical competencies and ideologies (Bhowmik, 2016; Godley & Loretto, 2013). Through this process, the novice members form their identities through negotiating with the more expert members. They shape their various identities in a network of interactions with other group members to meet their expectations (Packer & Bavel, 2015). Then, when people join a new academic community, they retain their prior cultural assets and reconstruct new ones (Duff, 2010).

For the students who join the academic contexts, the mastery of knowledge domains is not enough, and they have to shape the related identities via identity-transforming processes (Palanac, 2019). People interact with other group members to affirm and verify their identity for committing to that identity (Stets & Cast, 2007). Through the verification process, individuals develop the appropriate emotions under the requirements of the group. During the verification process within interpersonal interactions, people trust each other, which results in the approved identities and behaviors. Thus, verification is a process for committing to identity and its related roles, and the lack of it leads to identity conflict (Haberman & Danes, 2007). Lannegrand-Willems and Bosma (2006) revealed that the school climate impacts identity formation. The learners challenge with an experimentation or exploration period called Psychosocial moratorium, where they freely find the gaps in their society to shape their commitment and identity (Erikson, 2008). In this period, learners practice the activities and programs, which encourage them to find their abilities and interests (Abbasi, 2016). Their choices and decision in the school contexts stimulate them to develop commitments, which drive them towards identity formation (Lannegrand-Willems & Bosma, 2006). Accordingly, the structure, the climate, and the interpersonal interactions of school contexts strengthen their identities through social and emotional experiences (Kroger, 2007), which sometimes leads to either identity conflicts (Chen, 2010) or shared identity in their learning contexts (Schopflin, 2001, as cited in Guerra, 2012). If each context influences the identity formation process, how do Iranian dual EFL contexts impact this process?

The focus of the present study was on two EFL contexts, i.e., high schools for educational purposes and private institutes for immediate applications. These two EFL contexts motivate learners to shape new identities in their language learning practices (Goharimehr, 2018). The students actively impact the selection, organization, and regulation of the contents of education (Roeser et al., 2006, as cited in Schachter & Rich, 2011) through their identity processes (Oyserman, 2007) formed by educational institutions (Stets & Burke, 2003, as cited in Schachter & Rich, 2011). The in-group identity model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000) proposed that for lessening the intergroup bias, the members create a dual identity, which is general and superordinate. Therefore, since identity is context-bound, it seemed plausible for the present study to consider the duality of EFL contexts as determining factors in shaping shared and varied identities. This investigation searched for the synergic shared identities (Heger & Gaertner, 2018; Salimi &

Abedi, 2020) constructed due to the impact of these EFL contexts. On the other hand, it attempted to find the incompatible or varied forms of identity aspects in these EFL contexts.

Identity and Culture

History, identity and culture are three facets forming people's identities in different parts of the world (Mokhoathi, 2022). Identity as a concept within social and cultural systems is originated by culture, so as a part of the culture, identity has a close interrelation with language (Hamston, 2003; Khatib & Ghamari, 2001). Davis and Skilton-Sylvester (2004) investigated identity, culture, and language use and argued that gender appears from the social use of language. They did not accept gendered language to be as predictable or universal. The model of Hofstede (2001, as cited in Kaur & Noman, 2015) offered six cultural dimensions related to the identity aspects (Saboori et al., 2015). These six dimensions of culture are:

- Individualism – collectivism (Act independently or interdependently)
- Power distance (Extent of equity or status among members)
- Uncertainty avoidance (Extent of comfort in uncertain situations)
- Masculine – Feminine (Self-success versus caring and sharing)
- High context – lower context (Directness of communication in specific circumstances)
- Monochronic time – Polychronic time (People organize and value time)

Accordingly, the learners in the classrooms represent individualistic or collectivistic cultural dimensions. They are individualistic when they look after themselves (Hofstede, 2011) and are active in the classroom context (Staub & Stern, 2002, as cited in Kaur & Noman, 2015). On the other hand, they are collectivistic in a cohesive in-group culture in which they take part in the classroom as passive learners. There are opposite views about the cultural dimensions of Iranian EFL contexts in the research. Research findings view Iranian cultural dimensions variously. Some reached collectivism (e.g., Hofstede, 2001), while others observed both, i.e., collectivism and individualism at the same time (e.g., Green & Páez, 2005).

Identity Aspects

Identity research has drawn much attention from the 1980s to the present time, and scholars have investigated identity in various aspects. The

researchers reported various identity aspects from personal and collective to social ones, i.e., the individuals' self-image constructed within the society (Allen, 2011). According to social identity theory, identity has a bipolar framework called social and personal aspects (Tajfel, 1998). Cheek et al. (2002) offered four aspects for identity, i.e., personal, social, collective, and relational identities. Personal identity is a sense of self inside an individual, while relational identity is how we perceive ourselves with others in the community. Social identity creates one's popularity, and collective identity reflects our representations of group identities. Idrus and Nazri (2016) claimed that the collective identity and shared identity, which van Dijk (1998) defined as the fixed realities across personal settings, are the same as both refer to a set of feelings of belonging to a group or a sense of being united (Cerulo, 1997). According to Nicolaci-da-Costa (1988), shared identity denotes harmony among the members of a community. It supports the members to lessen the elaborated speeches, purposes, and motives. A positive shared identity among the members of a small group promotes negotiation among them (Swaab et al., 2008). The shared identity encourages the members to make sense of the characteristics and norms of that group and helps them employ appropriate behaviors, which seem specific among those members (Swaab et al., 2007). Shared identity lets people consider being a member of a greater community (Carlone & Johnson, 2007) and is the shared representation of different people in a context with shared interests and experiences. Thus, it shapes what the groups stand for and how they wish to be viewed by others.

The present study summarized the previous studies conducted on the identity aspects in the following lines. While investigating the identity aspects, Penner and Wymer (1983) found effective relationships between personal and social identities with private self-consciousness. In another study, Cheek and Busch (1982) and Lamphere and Leary (1990) correlated social identity to the public self-consciousness and personal identity with the private one. Barnes et al. (1988) denoted that individuals with high personal identity seemed to worry about self-evaluation and not about social evaluation. They claimed that people with high social identity felt anxious about social evaluation and not about self-evaluation. In their study, Cheek and Hogan (1983) linked personal identity to guilt feelings and social identity to shame and self-monitoring. Leary et al. (1986) connected personal identity to a personally relevant job and social identity to a socially relevant business. The findings of Frantz (1985, as cited in Rashidi & Mansurian, 2015) unveiled the negative correlation of

social identity with the independence of judgment and its positive one with personal identity. Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) reached a positive correlation among social and collective identities with the total score. Although Asian-Americans held significantly higher in collective identity than European-Americans, Cheek et al. (1985, as cited in Rashidi & Mansurian, 2015) detected no significant differences between Asian-Americans and European-Americans in personal and social identities. According to Chevasco (2019), a correlation exists between national identity and English language productive skills in Japanese high school students. According to Leibowitz et al. (2005), language is an essential element of identity in an educational context. Rashidi and Mansurian (2015) and Razmjoo (2010) observed no correlation between language achievement and the aspects of identity.

Unresolved Issues in the Literature

Identity inquiry in educational contexts has focused more on pedagogy, language, and discourse. In pedagogy, teachers are not transmitters of neutral knowledge anymore (e.g., Canagarajah, 2005; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007; Reagan, 2004), but a potential agent (Brogden & Page, 2008; Mantero, 2004; Varghese et al., 2005) for the learners' identity development in the dynamic classroom environment (Morgan, 2004). The teachers' instructional practices based on curricular statements intensify inequities among learners and reduce the learners' higher-level thinking skills, progress, and identities (Ramanathan, 2005). By limiting the teachers' teaching practices, learners can form more appropriate and powerful identities (Ramanathan, 2005). In language and discourse, identity researchers investigated the prominent role of linguistic and cultural contexts in identity formation processes (Block 2007). The individuals' shared identities encourage them to position themselves as in-group members (Allen, 2011; Godley & Loretto, 2013). In other communities, they resist their former selves (Schiffrin, 1996) or socially and culturally constructed and co-constructed social identities (Allen, 2011). Research revealed the role of the context in identity construction (Riley, 2006; Ushioda, 2009) and how language use facilitates the members' socialization process (Lee & Bucholtz, 2015) through developing linguistic, cultural, and sociopolitical competencies and ideologies (Bhowmik, 2016; Godley & Loretto, 2013). Further findings of identity research unveiled that the identity options accommodated in the textbooks play an important role in identity formation (Shardakova & Pavlenko, 2004). For example, McKinney and van Pletzen (2004) reported that the African learners resisted their

materials when they felt uncomfortable with the readings in their curriculum. Researchers also conducted studies on social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and self-categorization theories (Abrams & Hogg, 2010) to examine the identity aspects. Vignoles (2017) affirmed that intrapsychic processes, social interaction, and socio-cultural processes are necessary levels for self-extension, and individuals cannot develop their identities as either personal or social. Research also observed an association among the identity aspects (Rosenberg & Gara, 1985), which rises according to the degree of identity compatibility (Turner-Zwinkels et al., 2015), values, and practices (Koc & Vignoles, 2016). The term intersectionality, offered by Bowleg (2008), proved that identity association is not the sum of identity aspects but an interplay among them. The example of Hopkins and Greenwood (2013) regarding intersectionality illustrated a Scottish Muslim woman who does not simply involve adding together the meanings of being Scottish plus Muslim and woman, but a complex interplay among these three identities.

In most of the cited studies above, the researchers have mainly considered the identity and identity aspects in the core circle of English-speaking countries rather than foreign language learning contexts. This study focused on Iranian contexts, which Iranmehr and Davari (2017) divided into Public and private sectors. These two EFL contexts have attracted the attention of many researchers in Iran for a long time. The research findings in Iran revealed that language learners are more motivated in English language institutes than in public high schools (Torshizi, 2016). They receive more knowledge in English language institutes than in public high schools and can reach more success in their lives due to what they achieve from English language institutes (Iranmehr & Davari, 2017). The research findings reported some disadvantages in public high schools, including overcrowded classes, less participation in the group, and heterogeneous proficiency levels. The previous studies on EFL contexts paid less attention to identity and its aspects. They did not regard EFL contexts as determining factors in identity and identity aspects formation. For example, Karimi et al. (2021) found that the student teachers' beliefs about themselves influence identity construction. However, the influence of the EFL contexts on identity formation according to the EFL learners' self-reports remained unresolved. This issue remained as a gap in the related literature of previous studies, especially in Iran. Whether the learners share or vary their identities in various EFL contexts was a question that the current research sought to answer. Do learners share some identity aspects and vary others due to

identity saliency and their positioning in various EFL contexts? Is it possible to see the identity aspects in different EFL contexts according to the degree of identity compatibility, values, and practices? Is there a complex interplay among the learners' identity aspects in the EFL contexts of the present study? It is feasible for the EFL learners to synergically apply their former identities when they comport their expectations with the new situation and change and form a new identity when the risk of identity conflict exists. It is also reasonable to explore the Iranian language learners' cultural dimensions through the lens of identity aspects. Thus, by reconsidering the existing literature, the present inquiry tried to meet the need for identity search within the EFL contexts to answer the questions designed to solve the stated problems and bridge the gaps in the existing knowledge of the identity concept.

The Current Study

The present study pursues three aims through answering the following research questions:

1. Are there any significant differences between learners' identity aspects (personal, relational, social, and collective) in public and private EFL contexts?
2. How do learners reflect on their identity aspects (personal, relational, social, and collective) in public and private EFL contexts?
3. Are the learners individualistic or collectivistic in public and private EFL contexts?

Method

Research Design

The present study employed a mixed-methods research design incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative approach marked the differences of variables, i.e., personal, relational, social and collective identity aspects, in various EFL contexts, and the qualitative approach offered a more detailed analysis of these variables. In qualitative research, the researchers collect and

Table 1

Participants of the Study

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Proficiency Level</i>
Female	66	51.6	17	High school	Intermediate
Male	62	48.4	17	High school	Intermediate
Total	128	100.0			

analyze non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, beliefs, or experiences. They can gain an in-depth insight into a problem or generate new ideas for research.

Participants

A sample of 128 intermediate EFL learners, males, and females, who were simultaneously learning the English language in Iranian public high schools and English language institutes, i.e., Iran Language Institute (ILI), of two central provinces, i.e., Tehran and Qazvin, were engaged in the study (Table 1). The participants were among the middle-class families who attended the English classes of high school compulsorily and the English language institute voluntarily. According to an IELTS, the participants were all in intermediate levels, and all could read and write in English. The study employed convenience sampling since the participants were readily available to the researchers who were English teachers in the contexts under investigation. It also enabled the researchers to obtain the necessary data and trends regarding their inquiry. Under convenience sampling, participants possess specific fundamental characteristics related to inquiry purposes (Dörnyei, 2007). The researchers invited the participants through WhatsApp and provided the participants with the necessary information about the project. The participants' selection was on their willingness to participate in the study, and the researchers videotaped the data after obtaining permission from the participants as an ethical issue. The researchers also assured the respondents that their identities and responses were confidential.

Instrument

The present study implemented the Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV) adopted by Cheek and Briggs (2013) to collect its data. The questionnaire comprised forty-five items under four categories (Cheek & Briggs, 2013), including personal, relational, social, and collective identity orientations.

The questionnaire rested on a principal component method (PCM with varimax rotation) applied to the

polychoric correlation matrix of items to compute the principal components. The eigenvalue analysis pointed to four-factor solutions (Eigenvalues >1) with the KMO index equal to 0.93, which is evidence that the factorial solution is appropriate. Besides, by using Cronbach's Alpha, the reliability index for the variables of the questionnaire had acceptable indices. The results were .76 (personal identity), .74 (social identity), .84 (collective identity), .79 (relational identity), and for all the items of the questionnaire the reliability index was .82.

In the second phase, researchers applied a semi-structured interview and resulting data was triangulated with the questionnaire data. For the validity index of the items and the appropriateness of content and language of the interview session, two languages, and two content teachers read and reexamined the interview questions. During the interview sessions, the interviewers recorded all the answers for thematic analysis. The thematic analysis of the participants' responses reached some common themes and concepts about the personal, relational, collective, and social identities. The researchers developed a coding scheme to codify the answers of the participants. Reflexivity or inter-coder reliability established the confirmability by using 2-way mixed intraclass correlation coefficients. The results of this evaluation indicated 0.93 or excellent inter-coder reliability among all coders (Table 2).

Data Collection Procedure

The study collected its set of data in two phases. In the first phase, the present study applied the Aspects of Identity Questionnaire (AIQ-IV) adopted by Cheek and Briggs (2013). The participants reflected their views towards public high school and English language institute with an interval of two months. The researchers administered the English format of the questionnaire to the participants through WhatsApp. The participants responded to the questionnaire online. For controlling the carry-over effects that could contaminate the data, the researchers divided the participants into two groups and applied the counterbalancing method. The goal of counterbalancing is to ensure internal validity by

controlling the potential confounds created by sequence and order effects. Thus while some participants took the first questionnaire concerning public EFL contexts, the remaining participants answered the second questionnaire for the private EFL areas. By answering the 45 items of the questionnaire, the learners revealed how various EFL contexts influenced their identity presentations.

For the second phase of data collection, the researchers randomly selected twenty-three participants, males, and females, although twenty were enough to reach the data saturation. The participants attended a follow-up semi-structured interview to triangulate the questionnaire data. The interviewers did not follow a strictly formalized list of questions, and the questions were open-ended. It allowed the interviewees to discuss how they feel about themselves and their senses towards the EFL contexts under study. Each face-to-face interview lasted around fifteen to thirty minutes. The in-person interview helped the researchers to build rapport and fully accessible to the body language. These questions elicited the interviewees' aspects of identity orientations for public high schools and private English language institutes.

Data Analysis

The researchers of the current study implemented a mixed-methods design, i.e., quantitative (closed-ended questionnaire) and qualitative (open-ended interview), to collect the data and evaluate the EFL learners' shared and varied identities in two various EFL contexts. The researchers tabulated the scores for each of the scales in the questionnaire. The study employed Paired Samples T-Test to compare the average scores for each identity aspects for public high schools and English language institutes (Tables 4 & 5). By applying a thematic analysis for the second phase or the semi-structured interview as one of the several qualitative methods, the researchers interpreted the meaning of the data. Therefore, the thematic analysis could reduce the data to concepts that described the research phenomenon. The current study used this method to identify, analyze, organize, describe, and report the themes found within a data set.

Table 2

The Inter-Coder Reliability

	<i>Intraclass Correlation</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval</i>		<i>F Test with True Value 0</i>			
		<i>Lower Bound</i>	<i>Upper Bound</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>df1</i>	<i>df2</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Single Measures	.93	.86	.97	40.1	19	38	.000
Average Measures	.97	.95	.99	40.1	19	38	.000

Results

The study employed two phases of data collection, i.e., the ‘Aspects of Identity questionnaire’ and a follow-up semi-structured interview to reach the following results presented separately to answer the research questions.

EFL Learners’ Identity Aspects

In phase one, the researchers conducted Shapiro-Wilk test which indicated the scores were normally distributed (Table 3).

By comparing the personal identity scores for these EFL contexts, i.e., public high schools and English language institutes, the results (Tables 4 & 5) showed no significant difference in scores for high school= (M=35.2, SD= 7.2) and [English language institute= M= 35.08, SD= 7.2; t (127) = 0.55, P= 0.58]. According to the guidelines proposed by Cohen (1988), i.e., .01= small effect, .06= moderate effect, and .14= large effect, the magnitude of the differences in the means was very

small (eta squared= .002). Regarding the relational identity, no significant difference in scores for high school= (M= 32.1, SD=6.2) and [English language institute= M= 32.5, SD= 6.1; t (127) = -1.8, P= 0.07] was also observed. The magnitude of the differences in the means was very small (eta squared= .02).

In social identity (Tables 4 & 5), the results revealed significant difference in scores for high school= (M=23.4, SD= 3.3) and [English language institute= M= 28.4, SD=3.2; t (127) = -99.1, P= 0.000]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was large (eta squared= 0.99). The results also compared the collective identity scores and denoted significant difference in scores for high school= (M=23.1, SD= 2.9) and [English language institute= M= 28.1, SD=2.8; t (127) = -64.1, P= 0.000]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was large (eta squared= 0.97).

The results of the interview session ascertained specific codes from the participants’ responses, which led the researchers to the themes of the study (Table 6).

Table 3

The Normality of Identity Scores for High School and English Language Institute

	<i>Shapiro-Wilk</i>		
	<i>Statistic</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Personal Identity High School	.990	128	.517
Personal Identity Institutes	.990	128	.468
Relational Identity High School	.990	128	.468
Relational Identity Institute	.985	128	.170
Social Identity High School	.987	128	.240
Social Identity Institute	.987	128	.256
Collective Identity High School	.987	128	.281
Collective Identity Institute	.987	128	.267

Table 4

Paired Samples Statistics for Identity Aspects of High Schools and English Language Institutes

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SEM</i>
Personal identity				
High School	128	35.2	7.2	.64
English Language Institute	128	35.08	7.2	.63
Relational identity				
High School	128	32.1	6.2	.55
English Language Institute	128	32.5	6.1	.53
Social identity				
High School	128	23.4	3.3	.29
English Language Institute	128	28.4	3.2	.28
Collective identity				
High School	128	23.1	2.9	.25
English Language Institute	128	28.1	2.8	.25

Table 5*Paired Samples T-Test: Identity Aspects for High Schools and English Language Institutes*

	<i>Paired Differences</i>			
	<i>Mean Difference</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Personal Identity	0.15	0.55	127	0.58
Relational Identity	-0.35	-1.8	127	0.07
Social Identity	-4.9	-99.1	127	0.000
Collective Identity	-4.1	-64.1	127	0.000

Table 6*Coding Scheme: Strategies and Codes Indicating the Aspects of Identity*

<i>Code</i>	<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Examples</i>
A. Personal Aspect		
A1	Age/Gender/Behavior/Belief	I am the same person in school and an English institute. My age, my gender, my behavior, and my beliefs are the same.
A2	Goal	I want to continue my studies. The institute and school help me to reach this aim. They do not change my goal.
A3	Personality	I am the same person in high school and an English language institute, but I am different from others in these two places.
A4	Friend-Finding	The way I choose my friends, especially close friends, is different in school and English language institutes.
A5	Learning	I like learning English both in high school and the English language institute.
A6	Dream	Learning English is my dream, whether in high school or English language institute. Of course, the English language institute has a better atmosphere.
A7	Feeling/ Emotion	My goal is learning the English language, and my emotions and feeling are the same in high school and English language institute.
A8	Fear/Anxiety	I have more fear and feel more anxious when I am in high school English classes because teachers ask me hard ques-tions.
A9	Self-Evaluation	I evaluate myself more in an English language institute than high schools as I have to communicate in the institute.
A10	Being top A Student	I am a top A in English class in high schools, but I am not top in the English language institute.
B. Relational Aspect		
B1	Friendship	Friend is a friend, whether in school or English institutes. Keeping friends means understanding, listening to, and helping them. The place is not mattering.
B2	Having Relationships	I care about my good friends and have a good relationship with them, whether in high school or an English language institute. I try to help my friends everywhere with the things I know.
B3	Teacher	I feel relaxed with my teachers at school and English language institute, although I love my institute teacher a bit more.
B4	Commitment in Friendship	The commitment is essential in friendship, both in high school and English language institute. I like to know about the problems of my close friends and help them if I can.
B5	Feeling of Connectedness	I feel a connectedness with my close friends in and out of school and institute.
C. Social Aspect		
C1	Social Behavior	I behave well, and people react well to me in school and the English institute. People's reaction is good with me wherever, of course, it depends on my character. I am a bit indifferent when I meet others in a language institute, but in school, I am very friendly with my friends and teachers.
C2	Popularity	I am famous for my scores and behavior at school, but in the English institute, personality and discussion in the class are striking. Popularity is for schools, not for the English language institute. When you get good scores, all the people at school talk about you.
C3	Attractiveness	I am famous for my scores in school. I don't like my uniform, and I am more beautiful and respectful in the English institute. I think in a language institute, people know me as a decisive and hard-working person, but in school, they call me a bookworm.

DUAL IDENTITY OR IDENTITY DUEL

D. Collective aspect		
D1	Learners' Age	In school, we are of the same age, but in the English institute, ages are different. I behave the same, according to my age, in school and the English institute.
D2	Nationality	We are Iranian and proud of being Iranian. Persian is our native language and we use it in school or the English institute.
D3	Backgrounds/ Religion	our family backgrounds are more valuable at school, and I am more religious at school than the English institute. We are Muslim, and we love our country both in school and the language institute.
D4	Politics	We are free to talk about everything, such as politics in the language institute, but I am not in school.
D5	Teaching Subjects	Books and teaching materials are very important for us in school and English institutes.

The participants' use the terms same and different for age, gender, behavior, belief, goal, person, friend-finding, learners, learning, dream, atmosphere, feeling, emotion, fear, anxiety, self-evaluation, communicating in English, and being top student. Such use indicated the shared and varied categories of personalities, ages, behaviors, beliefs, and learning needs. They all fell into the personal identity theme, which seemed to be more shared (55%) than varied (45%) in English classes of high schools versus English language institutes (Table 7). Regarding the relational identity aspects in the context of high schools and English language institutes, the following emerging codes gained more meanings when they turned into categories such as relationship, commitment, connectedness, mutual understanding, and responsibility. These codes were: Friend is friend, honesty in friendship, keeping friends, understanding friends, listening to friends, helping the friends, having relationships, seeing friends, having close friends, feeling relaxed with friends, loving teachers, going to the friend's house, talking with friends, caring about the good friends, considering the value of commitment in friendship, helping the friends, knowing the problems of the close friends, and feeling of connectedness with close friends. These categories demonstrated that relational identities remained more shared (60%) than varied (40%) in these two EFL contexts, i.e., high schools and English language institutes (Table 7).

The analysis of the interview data also indicated the social aspects of the participants' identity through some codes such as behaving well with people, people reaction dependency to ones' character, saying hi or goodbye and people reaction, being popular by scores and politeness, being popular by personality and discussion, disliking the uniform, being more attractive and respectful in a language institute, being popular at school via scores, the full attention of others at school, no good reaction at school, the value of physical appearance, to be known as positive, and

hard-working in language institute but bookworm at school, being indifferent with people in language institute and being friendly at school. These codes conformed broad categories such as popularity, self-reaction, community members' reaction, physical appearance, reputation, mannerism, and social behavior. The result revealed more varied (55%) than shared (45%) social identities for high schools and English language institutes (Table 7). The study also extracted some varied and shared views concerning the collective identity aspect. These obtained codes were: age, behaving according to age, feeling proud of being Iranian, loving the Persian language, respecting family backgrounds, being religious, being free to talk about politics and religion, valuing teaching subjects, being Muslim, loving Islam and Iran. Therefore, the family generation, ethnic background, religion, home, community, citizenship, political activities, and regional and foreign language accent were the categories comprised under the fourth theme of the present study, i.e., collective identity orientations. Thus, by casting a glance at the extracts, the study reached more varied (75%) than shared collective identities (25%) for high schools and English language institutes (Table 7).

EFL Learners' Cultural Dimensions

The third research question searched for the learners' cultural dimensions according to their identity aspects in public and private EFL contexts. Tables 8 and 9 clarified this idea that the Iranian students' personal and relational identities were higher in English language institutes than their social and collective ones. On the other hand, in high school contexts, social and collective identities seemed to be higher than the personal and relational ones.

Then, the participants experienced both individualistic and collectivistic cultural dimensions in each EFL context. Individualism was more in private English language institutes and collectivism in public high schools.

Table 7*The Frequency of Shared and Varied Identity Aspects for High Schools and English Language Institutes*

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Personal Identity			Social Identity		
Shared Identities	11	55.0	Shared Identities	9	45.0
Varied Identities	9	45.0	Varied Identities	11	55.0
Total	20	100.0	Total	20	100.0
Relational Identity			Collective Identity		
Shared Identities	12	60.0	Shared Identities	5	25.0
Varied Identities	8	40.0	Varied Identities	15	75.0
Total	20	100.0	Total	20	100.0

Table 8*Basic Descriptive Statistics for the Participants' Aspects of Identity in English Institute*

	<i>N</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Personal	128	1	5	3.63	1.08
Relational	128	2	5	3.04	1.32
Social	128	1	3	2.47	1.32
Collective	128	1	4	2.5	1.04

Table 9*Basic Descriptive Statistics for the Participants Aspects of Identity in High School*

	<i>N</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Personal	128	1	4	2.46	1.24
Relational	128	2	5	2.35	1.16
Social	128	3	5	3.72	1.15
Collective	128	2	5	3.62	.89

Discussion

The present investigation sought to find whether different EFL contexts had any impacts on identity formation. The results proved that educational settings influenced identity formation (Lannegrund-Willems & Bosma, 2006). The participants of this study revealed different identities in social and collective aspects due to what Lee and Bucholtz (2015) called the socialization process where the learners socialize as members in English classes of high school and English language institute. They were in line with the finding of Morita (2000) that the learners use language in the socializing process to mediate the social activities. According to Bhowmik (2016) and Godley and Loretto (2013), the socialization process in a community drives the learners to identity construction by providing linguistic and cultural competencies and sociopolitical ideologies. Packer

and Bavel (2015) argued that the members develop their identities through negotiating with other

members to meet their expectations. Because of this, the participants' responses to social and collective identity items varied in the EFL contexts under study. This finding showed that these two EFL contexts impact the socializing process. The participants reported their shared identities in personal and relational aspects because they kept their prior cultural assets. They changed those identities, which did not adapt to these two EFL contexts (Duff, 2010). The participants of this study positioned themselves in these two EFL communities according to their shared or synergic identities (Heger & Gaertner, 2018; Abedi & Salimi, 2020) and constructed a new identity through their interactions with others in the social groups when they identified differences. Thus the present study confirmed Allen (2011) and Godley and Loretto (2013) in their claims that the individuals position in a community according to their commonalities. They found that if people perceive any differences in the social identity groups, they will form a new identity that emerges from their senses. It is the exploration period or Psychosocial moratorium

(Erikson, 2008) in which group members interact with each other to affirm and verify their identities to commit to their roles (Stets & Cast, 2007). In this verification process, the participants reported their commitments to identity through shared identities. When they couldn't commit to their roles and identities, they created a new identity to escape from what Haberman & Danes (2007) called identity conflict. Therefore, this investigation validated Abbasi (2016), Erikson (2008), Kroger (2007), and Lannegrand-Willems and Bosma (2006) studies which reported that the learners searched their educational contexts to find the gaps to strengthen their identities through social and emotional experiences. It also confirmed Ochs (2008) and Pavlenko and Lantolf's (2000) research, which identified a relationship between language learning and new identity formation. The findings unveiled four identity aspects that authenticated the four identity aspects of Cheek et al. (2002), namely, personal, social, collective, and relational in educational contexts. Then, the researchers could expand Tajfel's (1998) social identity theory with its bipolar framework, i.e., social and personal aspects and consider the relational and collective identities labels.

The first question inquired about any significant differences between the learners' identity aspects in public high schools and private English language institutes. According to Riley (2006) and Ushioda (2009), identity formation depended on institutional and interpersonal settings. Norton (2010), as a post-structuralist, posed the relationship between language learners' identity and context. Thus, in addition to learning the language knowledge, the participants should shape what Palanac (2019) called the related selves via identity-transforming processes in their learning atmosphere. In other words, each context seemed to force the learners to construct some identities responsive to that context. Then, according to previous researches, in dual EFL contexts of Iran, the learners' identities should be different for each English class. The learners' varied or constructed identities shaped mostly in social and collective aspects, and their personal and relational or adapted ones showed no significant differences.

The study conducted its second phase, i.e., interview, to perceive in detail those aspects that stayed shared or varied in public high schools and private English language institutes. In this phase, the participants reflected on themselves to represent their senses for these two EFL contexts. Pacheco (2015) attributed a varying nature to identity with continual shifts in different contexts (Vickers & Deckert, 2013). The data analysis revealed that some identity aspects remained

stable in these two EFL classes while conflicting ones changed. In this regard, it challenged the essentialists such as Arkes and Kajdasz (2011) and Labov (1966), who viewed learner's identity as fixed and resistant to change. Although this study justified Block (2007), Omoniyi (2006), and Packer and Bavel (2015) regarding the dynamic nature of identity over time and place, it found that some identity aspects remained unchanged under these two Iranian contexts. So, it was in line with Nicolaci-da-Costa (1988), Swaab et al. (2007), and Swaab et al. (2008) that claimed the formation of shared identity or the similarity among the members of a community for reducing the elaborated speeches, purposes, and motives. In other words, as Kroger (2007) claimed, social interaction with new contexts forced the learners to replace some conflicting identity aspects, while some others remained shared (Schopflin, 2001, as cited in Guerra, 2012). Like van Dijk (1998), the present investigation found the shared identity fixed in personal aspects. This study strengthened Carlone and Johnson (2007), Idrus and Nazri (2016), and Schopflin (2001, as cited in Guerra, 2012) findings concerning the shared identity or the shared representations of different people in a context. Of course, shared identity was not just the harmony among the community members, but the harmony the individuals synergically created between the two EFL contexts in the form of dual identity.

The third question required the researchers to examine the cultural identity aspects in public and private EFL contexts. Saboori et al. (2015) found a significant relationship between cultural dimensions and identity aspects. For Hofstede (2001), Iranians were collectivists, whereas, for Rashidi and Mansurian (2015), they were individualistic. Despite previous findings, the participants of this study displayed both individualistic and collectivistic features. The EFL learners were more idiocentric in private English language institutes and socio-centric in public high schools.

Conclusion

The current inquiry highlighted the influence of EFL contexts on learners' identity aspects. The learners reflected some varying identity aspects in English classes of high schools and English language institutes and held some as shared ones. They adapted themselves into their learning contexts by adopting new identities and retaining their constructed ones in the form of synergic identity. The findings revealed that the learners' personalities and relationships with others were less affected by the EFL contexts than

social and collective identity aspects. By considering the outcomes of this study, ELT teachers could help the learners position themselves in the class discourse. Learners are active agents in their new position in the group and form, negotiate and resist their identities with the other members in class. The learners' integration and participation in the classroom activities could foster a positive self-image and the required experiences for developing their identities. This socialization process confirmed that the identity is dynamic and context-bound. The teachers should know that the learners' diverse classroom practices create positions to speak, listen, read, or write. The teachers can get valuable insights into which learners' identity positions offer the best opportunity for social engagement and interaction and which identity positions push the learners to marginalize. They could add some instructional activities to help the learners to invest in the language practices, which raise the learning outcomes and lessen inequities. Teachers may lower the existing distances between English language teaching classes of high schools and English language institutes by informing the learners of their shared and varied identity aspects to encourage them to comport synergically in different contexts.

The results even led the researchers to identify the gaps in previous studies about identity and identity aspects. These results are a platform for researchers to explore other identity concepts such as teachers' identity aspects in different EFL contexts, identity aspects in virtual EFL classes and identity aspects in blended EFL classes to bridge more gaps in identity investigation. They should also reconsider the cultural dimensions in the modern world with constantly changing technology. This investigation may also provide the educational decision-makers with a vision of identity as a leading questionable issue to develop a common strategy for training the preservice teachers through enhancing, renewing, and planning the instructional programs.

Declaration of Competing Interest

None declared.

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