THE IMPACT OF CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK-BASED JOURNAL WRITING
ON TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Providing feedback has been considered to greatly improve language learners' overall competence in a wide variety of contexts. However, one area that has been least studied is providing feedback to language teachers and investigating the probable positive contributions to improving their professional prospects. Therefore, this study aimed at investigating the impact of constructive feedback-based journal writing on teachers' professional identity development. To this end, twenty-two EFL teachers participated in this study. A standard questionnaire was administered as both the pretest and posttest after the treatment. The analysis of the collected data was carried out through one paired-samples t-test. The results indicated that in spite of revealing slight improvement for the posttest over the pretest, constructive feedback-based journal writing did not significantly developed teachers' professional identity. Although, the reported results were not statistically significant, more investigation is merited to further shed light on the implications of this less-searched sphere of language teaching.

Key Words: Constructive Feedback, Journal Writing, Reflective Teaching, Professional Identity.

INTRODUCTION

The issues of constructive feedback, journal writing and identity have separately been the central focus among many scholars. Amalgamation of these concepts seems worth contemplating upon as appropriate grounds for the investigation of their pedagogical outcomes. Teachers exploit numerous styles whilst teaching in the classroom which may have salient effects on their intrinsic potentials and students' achievements.

Teachers sometimes implement strategies which they have not utilized before. Meanwhile, journal writing seems to shed some light on the professional attributes of teachers. It is also assumed that constant constructive feedback in line with the two concepts addressed in this study seem to play a crucial role in bringing about some positive instructive changes on the profession of teachers at different stages within the time of classroom conduct. Hence, this study is a direction toward these steps to generate a framework in general and to investigate each concept from the operationalized point of view in particular to arrive at a firm conclusion.

Constructive Feedback

Constructive feedback has been of great interest to both Second Language (SL) and Foreign Language (FL) researchers likewise. In the same way, a growing body of research has investigated the potential efficacy of Written Constructive Feedback (WCF) and its roles in language learners' writing development in different ways.

The effectiveness of WCF has been controversial regarding whether error correction is beneficial to the learning process or not. Feedback has proved to be effective in promoting language learning (Sheen, 2007; Lee,

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1997), yet on the other hand, as Truscott (1996) claimed, it could be obstructive or even detrimental. In an extreme view on feedback, Truscott (1996) argued that the application of feedback on the learners' writing should be totally avoided as it hinders and harms writing development. According to Truscott (1996), "grammar correction has no place in writing courses and should be abandoned" (p. 328).

On the contrary, more recent studies support the positive contributions of constructive feedback (CF) tolanguage learning and in particular writing skills (e.g., Bitchener & Knoch, 2008; Sheen, 2007). Appropriate feedback also enables learners to notice the "gap" between their interlanguage and the target language resulting in more focused andaccurate learning. Additionally, in accordance with general research on language learning, CF studies have specifically focused on the ways CF can alter and promote "learning processes" and "linguistic competence" (Sheen, 2010b, p. 204).This, in turn, enables language learners to concentrate their attention on syntactical structures of their language products resulting in better learning of linguistic forms. Lee (2003) and Yates and Kenkel (2002) argue that the main concern nowadays is not to whether provide CF for the learners but rather "when and how to provide feedback on the students' errors" (p. 349). Similarly, Schmidt's (1990, 1995, 2001) Noticing Hypothesis suggests that noticing the gap between interlanguage and the target form is a prerequisite of learning, as long as conscious awareness of the input is present. Thus, CF provides learners with clues indicating what is wrong and draws their attention to erroneous forms resulting in better learning.

Russell and Spada (2006) further stated that CF is helpful for L2 learning. Erel and Bulut (2007) refer to various studies (e.g., Ferris & Roberts, 2001) for"motivating" and "encouraging" effects of WCF on learners and state that, "it isbelieved ... that if a teacher indicates a written grammatical error on a student'spaper and provides the correct form in one or another way, the student will realizethe error and will not repeat it in his/her future writings" (p. 398).

Additionally, Ferris and Roberts's (2001) experiment with different types of WCF substantiated the efficacy of CF on improving learners' writing accuracy.Numerous studies show the effectiveness of CF in promoting writing as well as grammatical accuracy of the learners. Ashwell (2000) also states that teachers believe that correcting the grammar of student writers' work will help them improve the accuracy of subsequent writing.

Research evidence on error correction in L2 writing classes shows that students who receive error feedback from teachers improve in accuracy over time (Ferris &Roberts, 2001). There is also research evidence which proves that students wanterror feedback and think that it helps them improve their writing skill in the target language (Leki, 1991; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Chandler, 2003).

Similarly, Leki (1991) and Zhang (1995) in their studies found out that the learners themselves greatly appreciate teacher-provided CF regarding their writings. This clearly shows that "L2 students have positive attitudes towards written feedback" (Kaweera & Usaha, 2008, p. 86).

According to Lyster and Ranta (1997), different types of CF have been identified including explicit, metalinguistic, elicitation, repetition, recast, translation, and clarification requests. For more information refer to Appendix A.

Feedback to Teachers

It seems that the provision of feedback to teachers, which is one dimension of the present study, can also lead to better and effective education and instructional objectives. Bear on the issue, Scheeler, Ruhl, and McAfee (2004) believe that teacher preparation programs are under scrutiny for their role in the troubled American educational system. Thus, teacher educators must encourage teachers to use effective teaching practices. One technique for increasing the use of effective practices is providing feedback to teachers on both newly acquired and ingrained teaching behaviors. To determine attributes of effective performance feedback, a systematic search for empirical literature was completed. Analysis of some previous studies indicates that attributes of feedback falls into the categories of (a) nature of feedback, (b) temporal dimensions of feedback, and (c) who gives feedback. Through this review, attributes of feedback were classified as either promising or effective

practice in changing specific teaching behaviors. It was found that only immediate feedback was identified as an effective attribute. Promising practices for feedback to teachers included feedback that was specific, positive, and/or corrective. These findings, recommendations and directions for additional research in feedback and teacher preparation are discussed.

Colvin, Flannery, Sugai, and Monegan (2009) state that educators face ongoing pressure to improve student outcomes, especially with regard to academic achievements and social behavior. One viable strategy for supporting and improving instructional practices is to conduct classroom observations and provide performance feedback. Researchers have shown performance feedback to be effective in the workplace, institutions, and educational settings. The present case study on a high school teacher provides preliminary promising information of the relevance and effectiveness of the combination of a classroom observation and a performance feedback process that focused on the relations among 3 key variables: classroom instructional settings, instructional practice, and classroom student behavior. The current investigators used a process based on the observational data that identified when students were off task and pinpointed the corresponding setting categories and the teacher's instructional actions. The authors provided performance feedback to the teachers on the basis of these findings. Then, the teacher made changes in the identified setting categories and teacher actions, resulting in substantial gains in class engagement and a reduction in problem behaviors.

Teacher Education

The issue of teacher education enjoys a multidimensional scope for consideration; however, its programs, selves, standards, and behaviors seem to energize a remarkable degree of professional identity development. Likewise, it can be said from another point of view that the constant provision of feedback on the side of teacher can have profound constructive impact on the behavioral traits of them. Relatively speaking, Hoban (2004) concludes that the quality of existing teacher education programs is currently being debated in many countries and at many educational levels. He examines the nature of teaching and challenges the common mechanistic approach to teacher education design. If teaching is a complex profession, then a more integrated and dynamic approach to designing teacher education programs is needed. In this regard, he proposes a four-dimensional approach for thinking about a conceptual framework to guide teacher education design. These four dimensions include: (a) links across the university-based curriculum; (b) links between schools and university experiences; (c) socio-cultural links between participants; and (d) personal links that shape the identity of teacher educators. It is argued that a conceptual framework based upon the consideration of these four dimensions is likely to ensure quality in a teacher education program. Moreover, According to Cochran-Smith (2005) new teacher education has been emerging with three closely coupled pieces. It is constructed as a public policy problem, based on research and evidence, and driven by outcomes. Illustrating and critiquing each of these pieces, it is said that the new teacher education is both for the better and for the worse. He concludes that education scholars who care about public education must challenge the narrowest aspects of the emerging new teacher education, building on its most promising aspects and working with others to change the terms of the debate.

Journal Writing

According to Esbenshade (2002), journal, diary, or log writing is an ongoing written account of observations, reflections, and other thoughts about teaching, usually in the form of a notebook, book, or electronic mode, which serves as a source of discussion, reflection or evaluation. The journal may be used as a record of incidents, problems, and insights that occur during lessons. Journal writing can be in the form of computer word processing (individual), electronic mail (group), and even through 'talk'- by speaking journal entries into a record for later analysis.

According to Brock et al., (1992), journal writing enables a teacher to keep a record of classroom events and observations, without such records, the teacher often has no substantial recollection of what happened during a lesson and cannot use the experience of successful teaching as a source for further learning .Moreover, according to McDonough (1994), it seems that adult educators write journals for many different reasons prompted by many different purposes. We may want to capture an experience, record an event, explore our feelings, or make sense of what we know. We may want to narrate something of importance so that others can

see what we saw in it. Sometimes we write primarily for ourselves, sometimes for others. Journal writing is as varied as those who engage in it.

Ferrell (2007) believes that journal writing can be viewed through many different perspectives: as a form of self-expression, a record of events, or a form of therapy. It can be an amalgamation of these and other purposes. Journal writing can be used to energize what we do and how we do it. As a vehicle for learning, it can be used in formal courses, our professional practice, or any aspect of informal learning. Writing reflective journals is considered to be one of the main procedures for stimulating critical reflection skills of teachers. According to Cole et.al (1998) many different topics from classroom experiences can be explored through journal writing, for example:

- Personal reactions to things that happen in the classroom.
- Questions or observations about problems that occur in teaching.
- Descriptions of significant aspects of lessons or events.
- Ideas for future analysis or reminders of things to take action.

Given these specifications, the researchers see journal writing as a process of recoding ideas, classroom experiences, one's personal reactions, questions and observations about the events, description of events or classroom aspects all for the purpose of responding reflectively and responsively to these issues.

Reflective Teaching

Reflective teaching has been defined as a reflection process that helps teachers to think about what happened, why it happened, and what else could have been done to reach their goals (Cruickshank, 1981). It has been found to be significant because it implies a more systematic process of collecting, recording and analyzing our thoughts and observation as teachers, as well as those of our students, and then going on to making changes.

The simple essence of reflection is stepping back and thinking about one's activities or thoughts. A literature review of reflective teaching supplies us with a display of explanations of what the construct means or involves. Dewey (1933) views reflection as "active, persistent, and particular careful attention of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusion to which it tends" (p.9). Milrood (1999) also conceptualizes reflection as "the process of mirroring the environment non-judgmentally or critically for the purpose of decision-making" (p. 10). Along the same line, Schon (1987), while depicting reflection as an act of displaying, distinguishes between two types of reflection. The first type of reflection is reflection on action which occurs after a teaching occurrence to allow mental remodification and analysis of the actions and occurrences, while the second type of reflection is reflection in action which happens during the act of teaching, interpreting, analyzing, and providing solutions to the intricate situations in the classroom. Scholars reiterate on the importance of reflective teaching. They also envisage the concept of reflectivity from diverse perspectives. Empirical findings of recent studies indicate teachers are positive to enhance reflectivity whilst practicing in their classrooms too. In fact, reflection is a passionate desire on the part of the teachers to modify problematic classroom situations into opportunities for students to learn and develop. In Dewey's (1933) terms, reflection is thought to be a purposive attempt which resolves intricate classroom dilemmas into educative experiences which lead to energize student and even teacher growth and learning. According to him, students, in such a context, become more sensitive and responsive to new and broader educational opportunities. Indeed, effective reflection in teaching takes students out of educational ruts and makes them more impelled towards learning. He also holds that through reflection, teachers can react, examine and assess their teaching to make logical decisions on essential changes to improve attitudes, beliefs and teaching practices which lead to better student performance and achievement. Also, reflective teaching comes to help meaningful thought and discussion among individuals about teaching and learning that will stimulate suitable change in curriculum and pedagogy.

From the discussion posed above, reflection, then, is a kind of self-examination to judge whether things have been carried out in a suitable and realistic way and to go further and make meaning of one's actions by questioning causes and attitudes. In other words, reflection signifies being immersed in deliberation and self-criticism with the purpose of cultivating ones' teaching practices.

Although there is little, if any, empirical research considering the link between this concept and student achievement outcomes (Akbari, 2007), multiple professionals in the field (Schon, 1987; LaBoskey,1994; Zeichner & Liston, 1996; etc.) have examined, mostly at the theoretical level, the advantages of reflective practices for teacher effectiveness; the construct is greatly believed as one of the most essential schooling factors affecting student achievement gains (Sanders, 2000; Ferguson, 1998; Goldhaber, 2002). The importance of the findings of the study by (Akbari, 2008) lies in the fact that almost all the claims referred to the influence of teacher reflectivity on student achievement outcomes have been theoretical and this study casts experimental light on the issue. Thus, the results of the study indicate that teacher education programs should inform pre-service and even in-service teachers with the components of reflective approach to teaching if they want to amend effective teachers, who, in turn amplify student achievements.

According to Farrell (2003), the overall findings of the above mentioned studies propose that reflective practice helps to free teachers from impulsive and ordinary behavior. It aids teachers to generate their daily experiences, allows them to act in a decisive critical and intentional style, and elevates their consciousness about teaching, enables deeper understanding and encourages positive change. These studies additionally indicate some points relating reflection and sense of efficacy. Lowery (2003), for instance, sees reflectivity and sense of efficacy as quite close concepts and believes that reflective teaching increases teachers' confidence, autonomy, and self-efficacy. Likewise, Iran-Nejad and Gregg (2001) maintain that reflection is one type of self-regulation. Thus, they believe, there is a strong likelihood that involving in reflection will strongly affect teacher's self-efficacy since self-efficacy is closely related to self regulation.

As a result of engagement in reflection, teachers become better observers of classroom conduct, which arouses a consciousness of their teacherly rulings and the reasons behind their decisions. This makes their practice more and more explicit as they initiate to realize the motivation for their more instinctive decisions (Nolan & Huebner, 1989).This understanding informs the teachers' classroom access and lessens their cognitive dissonance making them less inclined to trust in traditional practices if those practices do not produce the desired educational outcomes (Deutsch, 1996). This lack of reliance on conventional practices leads to the replacement of unproven opinion with grounded belief (LaBoskey, 1994) and makes teachers not only the consumers of knowledge, but also primary producers of new knowledge. It, in turn, leads to progressions in teacher intellectualism, practitioner self-management, an augmentation in practitioners' power to stay current in their field, and a constructivist paradigm of life-long learners (Kelly, 1993; Nolan & Huebner, 1989).

Relatively speaking, reflectivity on the part of the teachers, besides its impacts on practitioners, is thought to have some effects on students, too. It is also argued in the literature that a teacher's engagement in reflective teaching energizes students' ability to be critically reflective (Yost et al., 2000). As teachers become more attentive of reflective practices, they initiate to model this reflective behavior for their students. Therefore, they are more likely to encourage the same behavior in their students (Nolan & Huebner, 1989). Accordingly, writing reflective journals is one of the most famous tools of reflective teaching.

Reflective Journal Writing

Reflective journal, diary, or log writing is an ongoing written account of observations, reflections, and other thoughts about teaching, usually in the form of a notebook, book, or electronic mode, which serves as a source of discussion, reflection or evaluation. The journal may be used as a record of incidents, problems, and insights that occurred during lessons. Journal writing can be in the form of computer word processing (individual), electronic mail (group), and even through 'talk'- by speaking journal entries into a record for later analysis.

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Professional Identity

Teacher professional identity is how teachers define themselves as teachers (Lasky, 2005). In other words, one's answers to such major questions as *who am I?, What kind of teacher do I want to be?,* And *how do I see my role as a teacher? (*Korthagen, 2004) constitute their professional identity.

Questions regarding self and identity have existed almost since the emergence of philosophy. More to say, Vakili (2010) reports that major philosophical figures such as Plato, Descartes, Locke, Hume, and Kant have attempted to answer questions such as *Who am I?, Who could I have been?, Who will I become?, What is it to be a person? and How do we recognize who is who?.* There is not, however, a unique answer for these questions and most answers are illuminated by each philosopher's view about the world and the nature of reality and knowledge (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2007). For example, positivist and post-positivist philosophers would attribute self and identity features to nature and development, meaning that the unfolding of a person's identity is in a way beyond their control or the control of society (Gee, 2000-2001). Modern thinkers, nevertheless, assign a much more basic role to a person's culture, history, and agency in the formation of a self or identity. Finally, postmodern philosophers resist the concept of a unique stable self or identity proclaiming that these are multifaceted and in constant creation/recreation through discourse (Zembylas, 2003). Postmodernists go as far as considering self and identity as continuously varying states of mind and refer to them as *subjectivity* or *intersubjectivity*.

Traditionally, the terms self and identity are not clearly distinguishable from one another. Nevertheless, in this thesis project self is understood as emerging from the incorporation of multiple identities, which are to a great extend intertwined with the social context and morality.

Vakili (2010) sees professional identity as the concept or internal depiction that a person has regarding his or her performance as a language teacher. This depiction is interdependent of the context, culture, live experiences, and individual choices.

Therefore, agency plays a central role in Professional Identity (PI) construction, an agency that is exercised in and out of dialogical interactions with others. Knowledge, language and discourse are the tools that teachers have to recreate their professional identities in different and emancipatory ways. To understanding, personal and student teacher identities emerge in the same way as professional identity and are as significant as professional identity in defining the teacher self.

The following figure represents the researcher's understanding of how the teacher self is constructed. Due to the multiplicity of identities and the intricacy of self construction processes in current times, the diagram 1 exclusively illustrates the discursive teacher self that emerges as a result of the researcher's interaction with the participants of this study during the interviews. The teacher self that emerges is discursively co-created by the researcher and participants. It is the participants' subjective understanding of who they are as language teachers and how their life experiences have shaped their selves as language teachers.
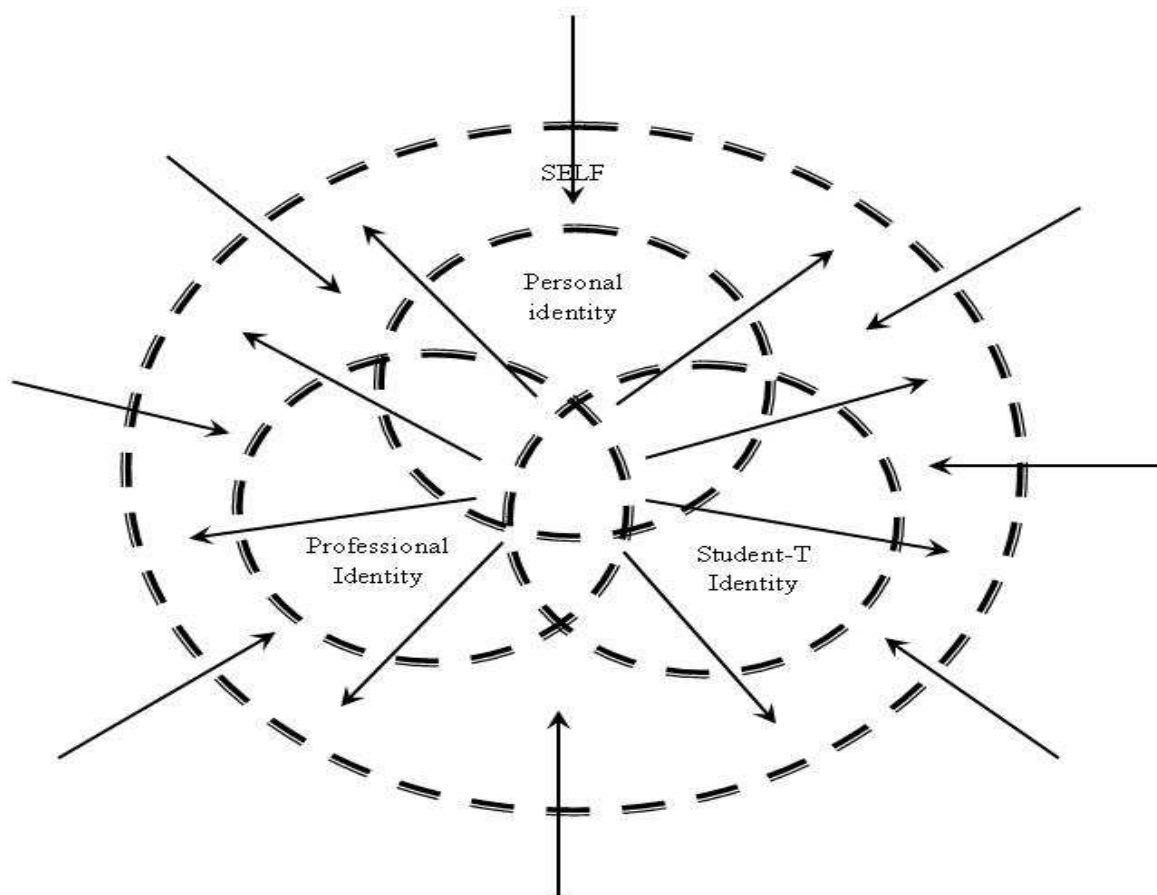
Figur 1: Schematic representation of the teacher Self (Vakili, 2010)

The outer circle of the diagram illustrates the teacher self, the one that emerges as the result of the dialogical interaction between researcher and participants. The three inner circles represent the identities on which the present study is focused: personal, professional, and student-teacher identities. Personal, professional and student teacher identities are interrelated and exert similar influences on the continuous construction of the teacher self. The axiological framework is placed at the centre of the diagram since it can be considered as entailing the core values that nurture our identities and, thus, our selves. It is our axiological frameworks towards which we look when evaluating our selves. The axiological framework likely helps to hold together our multiple identities in order to shape them into a coherent self.

Each of the circles in the diagram is made up of a double line of short dashes to emphasize the dynamic nature of the axiological framework, identities, and the teacher self. He continues that the teachers' axiological frameworks, identities, and selves are continuously being constructed and reconstructed, influencing each other and the social context. This influence is represented by the arrows pointing outwards. The arrows pointing inwards represent the different contextual issues that exert influence on the construction of the teacher self. In many occasions, contextual influences trigger the transformation of certain values that constitute the axiological framework. These contextual issues, such as colleagues, teacher development programs, family life, or children, may be present throughout different moments of participants' narratives.

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Professional Identity Development

Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) reported on their review of a number of studies corresponded to that of teacher professional identity. In this paper, they classified the reviewed studies in three groups, namely studies concentrating on teachers' professional identity construction, studies concentrating on attributes of teachers' professional identity, and studies pertaining to professional identity as represented in teachers' stories. It was found that in these studies the construct of professional identity had been defined in different ways, the role of context in construction of professional identity had been somehow overlooked, and the perspective predominating research in this area was one of cognitive from among their recommendations for future research were more attention to contribution of context to formation of professional identity and adopting perspectives other than cognitive in exploring this construct. Those interested in understanding about what developmental process research on teachers' professional identity has gone through in the last two decades are recommended to study too, to this end.

In another relevant study by Ten Dam and Blom (2006), contributions of school-based teacher education to development of professional identity were investigated. The main research question directing this study by Dam and Blom was whether there was a stimulating context for student teachers to develop their own professional identity, and the theoretical framework underpinning the study was the sociocultural assumption that learning to become a teacher means developing a professional identity. Hsiu-ting (2008) also explored the contributions of reflective practices in teacher education to formation of professional identity. In addition, according to Hsiu-ting (2008), it was asserted that a direct outcome of this process is teachers' becoming pedagogically and theoretically informed.

In a similar study, Flore and Day (2006) investigated reconstruction of teachers' professional identities in the early years of teaching and the factors affecting the ways in which the participant teachers' identities were shaped and reshaped. The general findings of the analysis were presented in terms of three major influences upon construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of the participants' professional identities. The first theme which emerged from the analysis of the data was teachers' past experiences as pupils. It was seen that the participants' former teachers and their observation of diverse teaching styles when they were students served as a frame of reference based on which they made sense of teaching. Thus, it was concluded that such prior experiences had considerable effects on beliefs and ideas they brought to their teaching. In the conclusion of the article, they provided a brief summary of the way diverse contextual factors impact on teachers' professional identity.

From the findings it is implied that the relatively weak influence of pre-service programs might be energized by a stronger focus upon opportunities to experience and reflect upon personal biography and the cultural contexts of schools. Induction processes, also, need to concentrate on the development of teachers' construction of identity through exploring of links between personal biography, reflective practice in the classroom, student feedback, peer support and increased awareness of continuing professional development within supportive school cultures (Flores & Day, 2006).

Teacher Professional Identity

Basically, it can be simply hypothesized that teachers value the concept of professional identity and have various perceptions of the notion of professional identity. Moreover, they are likely to promote their professional identity development in mainstream education. Empirical findings also support this idea, too. For example, Beijaard, Verloop, Vermunt (2000) investigated secondary school teachers' current and prior perceptions of their professional identity. The teachers currently saw their professional identity as consisting of a combination of the distinct aspects of expertise. Most teachers' current perceptions of their professional identity reportedly differ significantly from their prior perceptions of this identity during their period as beginning teachers. On the basis of their current perceptions of their professional identity, five groups of teachers could be distinguished. These groups have different learning experiences throughout their careers for each aspect of expertise. Also, teachers from different subject areas do not undergo the same changes in their perceptions of their professional identity. They reported the differences among the groups in teachers' current

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perceptions of professional identity were not related to contextual, experiential, and biographical factors that might influence these perceptions.

Likewise, Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004) concluded that the recent research on teachers' professional identity can be divided into three categories: (1) studies in which the focus was on teachers' professional identity formation, (2) studies in which the focus was on the identification of characteristics of teachers' professional identity, and (3) studies in which professional identity was represented by teachers' stories.

The Role of Journal Writing in Identity Development

Francis (1995, p.234) mentions that critical friends can "stimulate, clarify, and extend thinking...and feel accountable for their own growth and their peers' growth". Groups and individuals link critical friendships in some way to observations ofclasses. In this way, they believe the critical friends can have an open dialogue which is grounded in their observations and experiences. Colleagues can make each other engaged in systematic reflection and, therefore, direct each other's professional self- development**.** Practicing teachers are much occupied in their daily teaching and other related duties, and the amount of time any one teacher is willing to devote in his or her professional self-development will naturally vary.

More to say, for practicing teachers to be able to reflect on their work, time is a very important consideration. Time is important for teacher self-development. Golby and Appleby (1995, p.158) point out that "teachers do not readily confront their problems with a reflective approach". Elbaz (1988, p.173) claims that that teachers "have a common concern to reduce the complexity of the situation, to accept neat and obvious accounts of the causes of the problems. Analytical reflection, therefore, takes time and only progresses at, a rate which individual teachers are ready to reflect critically.''

If various groups of teachers readily accept each other's perceptions of their teaching and support these perceptions regardless of what outsiders say, as Nias (1987, p.140) points out, "also inhibit change; by definition there is seldom dissent or creative tension". Furthermore, (Ur, 1993) says individuals and groups in a process of professional self-development need to be challenged by external input for a more enriched reflection.

With respect to professional identity, it can be seen, as Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) believe, that the notion of professional identity has been perceived subjectively among scholars; nevertheless, a thorough understanding of the concept will have a significant effect on the behavioral aspect of teacher's conduct mainly in classrooms and it seems to have gradual amendments in the process of their workshops. Furthermore, Black and Wiliam (2008) and Stiggins (2008b) support provision of constructive feedback to students in general and to teachers in particular.

In the light of the aforementioned studies and the positive contributions of journal writing for teachers and with respect to the fact that so far, most studies on feedback have only been concerned with learners' improvement in different educational contexts, little attention, if any, has been paid to the probable effects of providing feedback on improving teachers and teaching conditions. Therefore, the present study was embarked upon to investigate the impact of constructive feedback via journal writing on teachers' professional identity development through the following research question:

RQ. Does constructive feedback-based journal writing has any significant effects on developing EFL teacher's professional identity?

METHOD

Participants

The participants of the study were twenty-two male and female EFL teachers holding either B. A. or M. A. in TEFL teaching at secondary high school and educational centers affiliated to IAU South Tehran Branch.

Instrumentation

To conduct the study, the following instruments were employed:

1. Professional identity questionnaire developed by Beijaard, Verloop, and Vermunt (2000). See Appendix B.
2. Journals developed by the participants.

Procedure

Having selected the participants, the researcher sought their participation in the study. They first received the questionnaire to measure their perceptions of professional identity. Then, they were asked to develop a journal each session on the main issues of the teaching-learning situation following the Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) model, which is a kind of instructional sequence or a model of lesson planning; reporting on classroom management, error correction, on the spot decisions, etc.

Their journals were collected every session; examined by the current researchers. Necessary constructive feedback in the form of recommendations and comments would be offered in the form of written notes at the end of each journal. This process continued for at least ten sessions. Finally, the teachers received the same questionnaire to measure their perceptions of professional identity after the treatment.

Data Analysis

Having collected the data, a paired-samples t-test was run to investigate whether constructive-based journal writing has been effective in developing teachers' professional identity after the treatment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research question to be investigated was:
Does constructive feedback-based journal writing has any significant effects on developing EFL teacher's professional identity?

To answer the question, a paired-samples t-test was run to probe the effect of constructive feedback-based journal writing on the professional identity of the teachers before and after the treatment. As showm in Table 1, the teachers show a higher (M = 21.24, SD = 1.92) professional identity on the posttest compared with the pretest (M = 20.49, SD = 1.72).

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of pretest and posttest of professional identity

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Professional Identity	Posttest	21.24	22	1.923	.410
	Pretest	20.49	22	1.722	.367

The results of the paired-samples t-test presented in Table 2 (t (21) = 1.54, P = .137 > .05; r = .31 representing a moderate effect size) indicate that the differences between the means observed in Table 1 are not statistically significant. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference between the teachers' professional identity before and after receiving constructive feedback on their journal writing.

Table 2: Paired-Samples t-test Pretest and Posttest of Professional Identity

Paired Differences					t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
			Lower	Upper			
.748	2.270	.484	-.259	1.754	1.545	21	.137

The following figure shows the mean scores of the participants in the pretest and posttest of the professional identity questionnaire.
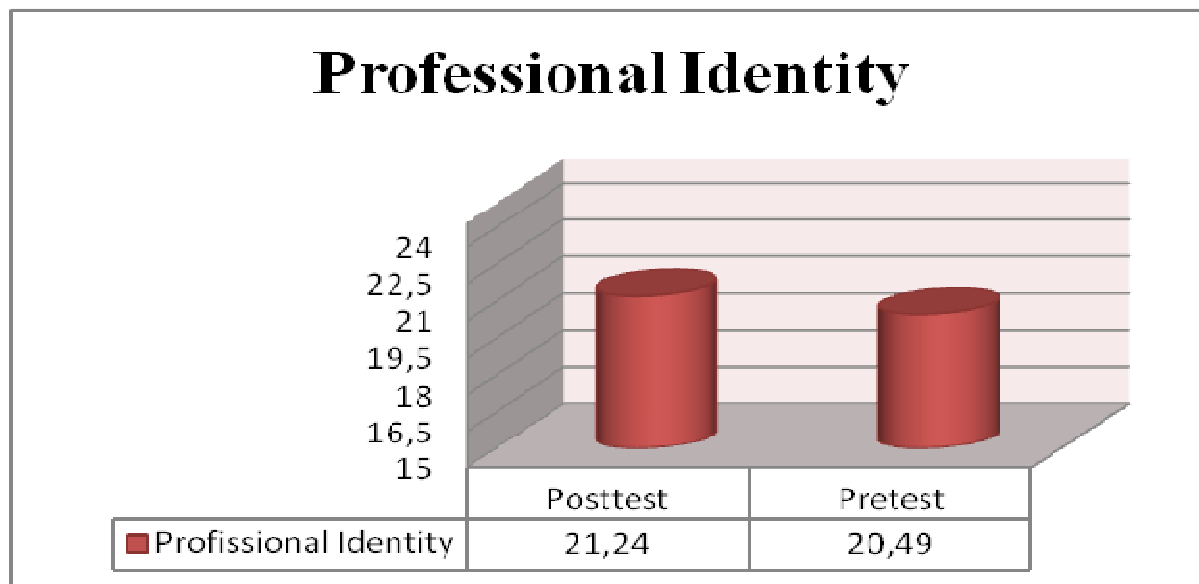
Figur 2: Pretest and posttest of professional identity

The purpose of this study was to investigate the probable effectiveness of constructive-based journal writing on EFL teachers' professional identity development. The results of the paired-samples t-test on the collected data revealed that despite the fact that the participants' posttest results showed slight improvement over their pretest, the difference was not statistically significant.

The reported results are in accordance with Vakili's (2010) findings corroborating the effectiveness of certain factors in improving teachers' depiction of self. Additionally, Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) reported a number of studies corresponding the positive attributes of teacher professional identity. In this paper, they classified the reviewed studies in three groups, namely studies concentrating on teachers' professional identity construction, studies concentrating on attributes of teachers' professional identity, and studies pertaining to professional identity as represented in teachers' stories.

Some factors can also be deemed to have contributed to the reported results. First, teachers' educational background might have altered the intended results. Teachers' point of view can be another factor influencing the results. Additionally, cultural and socio-affective factors can be taken into account as affecting teachers' choice of teaching strategies.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of constructive feedback via journal writing on the EFL teachers' professional identity improvement. Twenty-two EFL teachers participated in this study. The results of the analysis on the collected data through one paired-samples t-test showed that the constructive-based feedback through journal writing was not effective in improving teachers' professional identity.

Although the findings of the study were not statistically significant, the major implication of the study was that the teacher education program could act out as a vehicle to establish connections between theory and practice and, in this way, assist teachers to shape their professional identities. Another finding which also postulated positive effects of the program on the student-teachers' professional identities was that the students and teachers were given the space to voice their opinions and make contributions to the school programs and

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activities like teachers or less professional teachers. It can also be mentioned that reflective participation of student-teachers in diverse real-life activities was seen to be a major impetus for teachers' conceptualizing education as a social and cultural practice and, hence, constructing their professional identities.

Based on qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis of the gathered data they, it was concluded that the interaction among participants and the reflective practice they had throughout the course provides a rich opportunity for them to make sense of their teaching profession and co-construct their second language teacher identity.

Additionally, In the studies reviewed, the concept of professional identity was defined differently or not defined at all. According to Beijaard, Meijer, and Verloop (2004), in future research on teachers' professional identity, more attention needs to be paid to the relationship between relevant concepts like *self* and *identity*, the role of the context in professional identity formation, what counts as "professional" in professional identity, and research perspectives other than the cognitive one that may also play a role in designing research on teachers' professional identity.

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Appendix A
Characteristics of Lyster & Ranta's (1997) categories of corrective feedback

Corrective Feedback Type	Definition	Example(s)	Nature of Error Indicated	Target-like Reformulation Provided	Elicited Output
Explicit Error Correction	Explicit provision of the target-like reformulation	You should say visited.	Yes	Provided directly	None or repetition
Metalinguistic Feedback	Comments, information or questions (that may or may not contain metalanguage but do not include the reformulation) related to the ill-formedness of the utterance	There's a mistake.	No	No	Identification of error and/or reformulation
		It's past tense.	Yes	Provided indirectly through metalinguistic hint at correct reformulation	Reformulation
		Did you use the past tense?	Yes	Provided indirectly through metalinguistic question concerning rule governing reformulation	Metalinguistic response, yes/no response, or reformulation
Elicitations	A prompt for the learner to reformulate	Try that again. How do we say that in the past tense? Yesterday we …	No Yes Sometimes	No No No	Reformulation Reformulation Reformulation
Repetitions	Repetition of all or part of the utterance containing the error, often accompanied by a change in intonation	Yesterday we visit my aunt.	Sometimes	No	None or repetition
Recasts	Implicit reformulation of all or part of the learner's utterance	Yesterday we visited my aunt. I visited my aunt last week.	Yes Yes	Reformulation provided Reformulation provided	Repetition Repetition
Translations	Target language translation of unsolicited use of the L1.	***	Yes	Reformulation provided	Repetition
Clarification Requests	An utterance indicating a problem in comprehension, accuracy or both.	Pardon?	No	No	Repetition, reformulation, or meaning elaboration

Appendix B

EFL teacher's professional identity questionnaire

	Always 100%	Often 70-90%	Sometimes 40-60%	Rarely 1-40%	Never 0%
Subject matter field 1.As a teacher, I think about the necessity of keeping pace with new developments					
2. Relevance to students of having a knowledgeable teacher					
3.I think teachers cannot permit themselves to make mistakes					
4.I find out/think subject matter is not the only basis for a teacher					
Didactical field 5. In my teaching, I observe the importance of taking into account the students' level					
6. I think there are many ways to teach and learn the same thing					
7.I think about the importance of students' ways and strategies of learning					
8.I think planning and organization are the basis for teaching					
9. As a teacher, I think to motivate and interest students by changing learning activities are important					
10. I think about the necessity of being alert by listening and observation					
Pedagogical field 11. I think about the Ways of approaching students (positive, open, with respect, etc.)					
12.Carrying out small scale research indicates: Good/safe classroom climate as a necessary condition for teaching					
13. Being alert for signs of students/ showing involvement					
14. I think students' situation/well-being is starting point for the lessons					