

A Socio-linguistic Study on Relational Identity and Language Learning Performance within Iranian English Language Learners: A Focus on Parental Involvement

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Abstract

In this study, the researchers intended to screen English language learning perceptions on four relational contexts including language learners' family members, English teachers, classmates, and their best friends. To this aim, a group of Iranian adolescents (no=38), with an age range of 12-16 were randomly selected from three language institutes located in Sabzevar, Khorasan Razavi. The researchers distributed a modified version of a validated questionnaire by Taylor (2010) titled Quadripolar Model of Identity (TQMI) to investigate the variability of the learners' perceptions for 1) learning English with regard to four relational contexts above and 2) their insights over two conceived selves including public and imposed self. Findings indicated that within diverse characterizations of personality types, the preferences for including "family members" in the learning processes and future functioning were conspicuous. As to respondents' preferences towards achieving their goals in learning English regarding their two selves (public and imposed), it became clear that the level of imposing on the part of "language teachers" and "families" on the learners was roughly the same in both present and future self-categorization presentations and in the public self, again family members had more rates. Finally, the results from the data on the relationship between two aspects of identity (imposed vs. public), and language learning success, measures represented a significant relationship for only imposed identity indicators. Implications for the overall recognition of other-related people in the language learning processes were discussed in the end.

Keywords: Identity, Imposed self/identity, Parental involvement, Public self/identity, Relational context

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INTRODUCTION

In line with recent social-interactive approaches within English Language Teaching (ELT) programs (Lantolf, Thorne, & Poehner, 2015), how language learners make connections through language socialization (Baquedano López, & Kattan, 2008; Ochs, & Schieffelin, 2017) and with what sorts of people apart from their teachers have become more prominent these days. This line of research which seems to be along less-trodden contexts in Iran has been explored through identity topics related to how learners find their role in the processes of learning (e.g., Jamshidi, Rezaei, Hassanzadeh & Dehqan, 2019; Rahimnezhad, Ahmadi & Shamshiri, 2008; Soltanian, Ghapanchi, Rezaei & Pishghadam, 2018), particularly among younger learners (Lee, 2011).

Exploring such connections that learners have both inside and outside formal learning contexts has also been recently associated with relational identity issues among language learners through schemes on relational identity theory (RIT) (Taylor, 2013; Van Knippenberg, & Hogg, 2018). In more recent studies, through such schemes, Taylor (2013) defined relational identity as the collection of multitude selves within one person including his/her private and public domains by which one can find opportunities for improvement by interaction. As time goes on, one gradually collects/adopts diverse public selves in four contexts- teachers, classmates, best friends, and family as he called.

Regarding other-related people to learners, some studies have mostly turned their attention over the parents as having the knowledge, skills, and ability required for nourishing, nurturing, and supporting their children (Humphreys, 2000). In fact, the first learning experience acquired by the child at home should support the efforts to learn at school. This was thought to increase the success rate of the teacher in his/her class applications (Burns, Roe, & Ross, 1992).

For language learning, the psychological and behavioral aspects of learning as it is mediated by others in the students' surroundings are

regarded as paramount importance and require to be clearly and discussed. In this study, the researchers intended to screen language learning perceptions as mapped on four relational contexts including the learners' family members, English teachers, classmates, and their best friends. Admittedly, the researchers sought 1) variability of the learners' perceptions for learning English with regard to four relational contexts above, 2) their insights over some aspects of conceived selves/identities, and 3) the relationship between and among some aspects of identity indicators and language learning performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The origins of the significance of other-related people mainly parents to language learning contexts return to the program proposed in the 1960s and the 1970s in the US and Europe to encourage the active involvement of mainly low Socio-Economic Status (SES) and so-called ethnic minority parents to prepare their children for a more successful future and to avoid delays in their educational programs, encourage them to succeed at their school program and to have a very bright future ahead. For this end, federal and governmental policies insincerely attempted to form parental attitudes and behaviors which were very common among middle-class parents which ended in the school success of their sons and daughters. On the other hand, lower-class families – parents and their children – appeared to suffer from the gap between family and school rules which could only be solved by parent involvement activation and being aware of their children's schooling.

However, after administering this program and establishing a teacher-parent relationship, the teacher-student connectedness was in a complementarity way and as a result, families, and schools gained a sense of popularity for one another and by considering the increase in the number of such programs day by day in the US and Europe, the parent involvement in the pedagogical settings also improved (Lougran, 2008).

Parental Involvement

Nunan (2003), Enever and Moon (2009) all pointed out that parents are behind the push for English to be taught to children at earlier ages, without going into any details as to what that means for home–school partnerships. More recent studies such as Linse (2011) advocated the need to examine local contexts when attempting to make connections with parents of English learners.

In recent decades, regarding the role of the parents as catalyzers and/or speed-up agents, Sahagun (2015) focused on three main issues: expectations, communication, and realizations. According to Sahagun, first, when it comes to expectations, both parents and teachers have them for each other and this relationship is beneficial to both of them. They expect certain things to happen. For example, parents expect teachers to train their students and to guide their learning so they can have success. Second, he regarded communication as a two-way street; for example, when a child comes to school and s/he is well-groomed and well-rested and his/her homework is completed, a teacher presumes that the parent/caregiver is involved in the process of helping so that the child is successful and prepared. However, this is an example of two-way communication that happens between the teacher and the parents. Finally, the third one is the realization that is meant when both a child and a parent feel supported by the teacher and vice versa, and students have a greater advantage in their ability to be successful when there is a mutual understanding on the part of the teachers and the parents.

Smit and Driessen (2009) compared two concepts of parental involvement; namely, ‘parent involvement’ vs. ‘parent participation’. The former is the involvement of parents in the rearing and education of their child both at home and at school and the latter was defined as the active contribution of parents in school activities. Parent engagement is another utilized term in this regard which is defined as parents and school staff working together to support and improve the learning, development, and health of children and adolescents. However, parent engagement in schools

is a shared responsibility in which schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to reaching out and engaging parents in meaningful ways, and parents are committed to actively support their children's and adolescents' learning and development. This relationship between schools and parents cuts across and reinforces children's health and learning in the multiple settings _at home, in school, in out-of-school programs, and the community (Allen et al, 2012).

Hurdles with Parental Involvement

Parents whose native language is not English often struggle with how to assist their children in their studies as English is a language they may not speak or a language that is still a challenge for them to read and write. In their article, Castillo and Camelo Gámez (2013) evaluated how to best involve parents in the second language acquisition process for their children. Workshops were given to parents as a way for them to feel more confident and find a balance in how to teach their child. This program was conducted in public elementary schools in Colombia, where English as a foreign language was regularly taught, but not always led by trained English teachers.

In short, according to Freedman (1989), the barriers to parental involvement and the factors which hinder parent involvement encompass school practices that do not accept the various characteristics of the families it assists, time and childcare restraints, any negative experiences with schools, the school's lack of support for cultural diversity, and the primacy of basic needs of parents and families as connected individuals to learning processes (Freedman, 1989, p. 12).

Relational Identity: Imposed vs. Public Selves among Learners

In line with the chosen framework in this study, the researchers thought RIT

(relational identity theory) might provide a systematic approach to understanding emotional and identity-based dimensions of the conflict. RIT has been developed over the past decades as a complement to the rational actor model of conflict management and has been refined in terms of its practical application through research and writing with Roger Fisher (Fisher & Shapiro, 2005). However, RIT moves beyond neat social categorizations of “us” and “them” toward a dimensional, dynamic understanding of interpersonal and intergroup relations. As a result, traditional social identity models describe how people divide the social world into in-groups and out-groups, identify with the in-group, and enhance their identity by comparing the in-group favorably with the out-group on a valued dimension (Dovidio & Haslam, 2004). Whereas social identity models survey the process and the influence of intergroup division, RIT offers a model to explicate the degree and quality of intergroup association, thereby accounting for the dynamic, complex identities that emerge in many contemporary conflicts and that, unlike the straightforward division of sides in the Cold War, cannot be easily dichotomized into a clear us/them classification. Building on the work of Barth (1969), who argued that the boundaries between groups are continuously negotiated, RIT focuses not on static, fixed attributes of personal or social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) but an individual’s or group’s relational identity—its perception of its association with another individual or group.

The Impact of Relational Identity on Conflict Behavior

The effect of relational identity on types of conflict behavior comes into some categories; firstly, they control normative expectations about what is taboo to say, do, think, or feel in the relationship. Then, the relational context establishes expectations about the limits of autonomy and affiliation as well as liabilities for a breach of the implicit social contract. These expectations are manifest in the roles we play and the statuses we hold (McCall & Simmons, 1978; Stets, 2006; Stryker, 2004).

Respecting autonomy and affiliation tends to elicit cooperative norms, just as cooperative norms tend to elicit actions respecting autonomy and affiliation. This reciprocal relationship is consistent with “Deutsch’s crude law of social relations,” which proposes that “the characteristic processes and effects elicited by a given type of social relationship also tend to elicit that type of social relationship” (Deutsch, 1973, p. 365). Second, unaddressed relational identity concerns can generate negative emotions and subsequent adversarial behavior. In a conflict, parties continuously conduct a primary appraisal to evaluate what of personal significance is at stake for them in the situation (Lazarus, 1991). However, as RIT proposes, they are particularly concerned about autonomy and affiliation. The larger the gap between current and desired perception about those concerns, the more negative their emotions and the more likely that behavior will undermine creative problem solving (Matsui, & Raia, 1997). The third, when relational identity concerns are well addressed (Lazarus, 1991, on goal congruence), positive emotions tend to result, along with cooperative behavior and mutual gains. Thus, emotions are not simply a reaction to particular types of appraisal. They also serve a forward-looking function, indicating the degree to which an individual or group wants specific relational identity concerns.

In a nutshell, such accounts on other involved people in learning as shadowed by identity construction matters seem to be still in vogue for Iranian language learning contexts due to lack of research in this area. This research is an attempt in this regard.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This paper, which is extracted from a larger study on parental involvement and perceived language learning success, tried to unveil the how of the relationship targeted learners had maintained concerning language learning and sustaining their success. In line with this general aim of the research, in this study, the researchers screened this relationship in the light of recent self/identity issues within four relational contexts. Accordingly, the

following questions were proposed:

1. What are Iranian English language learners' perceptions of learning English with regard to four relational contexts including language learners' family members, classmates, teachers, and best friends?
2. To what extent do Iranian English language learners associate two components of self-identity including public and imposed selves (present vs. future-oriented) with regard to language learning success?
3. Is there any relationship between aspects of relational identity on public and imposed selves and language learning success among Iranian language learners?

METHOD

The researchers mainly attempted to investigate some young learners' perceptions over two aspects of relational identity as mapped on four relational contexts including the learners' family members, English teachers, classmates, their best friends, and their overall performance in English Language Learning (ELL) classes among some Iranian adolescents.

Participants

In the larger study from which this paper was extracted, the research was conducted with two groups of participants- kids and adolescents-during a multi-stage process. Among adolescents, initially, forty learners were randomly selected through cluster sampling from among a larger group of adolescents (N=120) with an age range of 12-16-year-old students studying in three different language schools in Sabzevar, Khorasan Razavi. Two language schools were located in more affluent parts of the city and admitted more language learners and the other language school was situated in the next ranks based on the reputation and geographical areas in which they were positioned. Volunteering learners were invited to participate from

each school. Table 1 below represents their demographic as well as self-reported educational information records in their English courses.

Table 1: Demographical Information of the Participants among Adolescent Groups

Age Mean	Gender	EEES	EEEL	SEGL
13.47	Male (50%)	2.34	2.84	1-10 (0)
	Female (50%)			11-15 (2.6%)
				16-20 (97.4%)

Note: EEES stands for English Exposure Extent at school (averaged in a year), EEEL stands for English Exposure Extent in language institutes (averaged in a year) and in the last column, SEGL refers to participants' Self-reported English Grade Level ranging from 0 to 20.

This group of learners participated in filling out a questionnaire on identity issues about four relational contexts, which assessed their preferences for family supports as compared with three other important people in their surrounding such as their language teachers, best friends, and classmates and explicating their perceptions on two concepts of public and imposed identity types. Due to incomplete filling on the part of two participants, the total number of questionnaires that were considered was thirty eight in sum.

Instrumentation

To handle this study, and in line with the three proposed research questions, the following instrument was used:

A modified version of Taylor's Quadripolar Model of Identity (TQMI) questionnaire

This questionnaire is among the highly referenced models for identity issues (Busse, 2013; Yolles & Di Fatta, 2017, etc.). It had first been developed and validated by Florentina Taylor (2011) in Nottingham (UK), in order to help ESL students have more rewarding periods at school (Appendix 1). Aliakbari and Amiri (2018) had also recently validated the scales of this questionnaire among some Iranian students as EFL learners.

The original TQMI questionnaire included seven scales including a) private, b) public, c) ideal, and d) imposed selves along with e) learning orientations, f) perceptions of the English class, and g) attributions. Within attributed selves, four subsystems including family, classmates, best friends, and English teacher had been defined. Table 2 below displays the smaller subcategories of the utilized scales along with specific items as used in the modified version in this study.

Table 2: Scales/Subscales of the Modified TQMI Questionnaire

No.	Self-system scales	System Subtypes	Items
1.	Part I Motivational perceptions for Foreign language Learning	A. English teacher B. Classmates C. Best friends D. Family	1, 2, 3, 4
2.	Part II Imposed Selves	Present	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
3.	Part III Public Selves	Future	7,8,9,10, 11, 12 1,2,3,4,5,6

In the first section, the Quadra system subtypes including 1) English teachers, 2) learners' classmates, 3) best friends, and 4) their family was considered on how adolescents maintained their relationship with them. However, in the first section of the original questionnaire for this study, depending on some hypothesized dynamic relationships, it was thought that a person's identity may be materialized in four main self-system categories such as the learner who is submissive, duplicitous, rebellious, and harmonious, which according to the corroborated relationship between and among four selves (ideal, private, imposed and public), with diverse people, one might be consecutively placed into each category.

Participants were required to choose one of the relational contexts for four diverse vignettes. For example, the first vignette, which proved a submissive characterization on the part of respondents was:

“They know very well what sort of person I am. What they would like me to do in life is different from what I would like to do, so that’s why I prefer to give up my intentions and do what they think is better for me. What they want me to do in life is more important than what I’d have liked, so I’ll do what they say”.

In this study, the rest of this questionnaire was modified to include only two selves namely public and imposed due to the status of English instructions in the context of Iran in which the English use in the society is not primary. Accordingly, ideal and private selves were ignored.

The second section then catered for imposed selves within individuals on two-time intervals (present and future) and finally, the third section assessed the learners’ public selves. Students’ responses ranged from 1 (Never true of me/ very little/ very unimportant) to 6 (Always true of me, very much, very important).

The translated questionnaire was first checked by two experts having TEFL degrees to check the accuracy of the propositions and back-translated into English by another expert with at least 20 years’ experience in ELT domains. For examining its appropriateness in terms of other concepts of validity and reliability issues, the researcher relied on Aliakbari and Amiri’s research (2018) which had validated TQMI in an Iranian context among 930 adult learners. In their study, they reported good indices of Chronbach alpha all above .08 for public and imposed selves. In this study, as Table 3 verifies, the Cronbach alpha among thirty-eight respondents for the two intended selves (public vs. imposed) and among four above-mentioned groups was estimated as $\alpha=.53$, $\alpha=.95$, and $\alpha=.94$ for learning perception, public selves, and imposed selves subscales respectively.

Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha Values for the L2 Quadripolar Identity Questionnaire

Learning Perceptions	Public selves	Imposed selves
.53	.95	.94

Data Collection Procedure

The purpose of this study was to find a possible relationship between two aspects of identity on EFL learners' language learning development among some Iranian learners including some thirty-eight volunteering adolescents.

Drawing on some recent social approaches/theories on possible/actual selves (Higgins, 1987; Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009; Leary, 2007) as mapped on relational identity theory (Taylor, 2013) within ELT arenas, perceptions of some Iranian adolescents regarding English learning as a value system (Johnston, 2008) were collected and mapped on two concepts of identity: Public and Imposed selves.

Initially, the adolescents were distinguished using a modified version of the TQMI questionnaire and examined in terms of some demographical information including their gender, amount of English knowledge gained in public and private schools, and their language achievement through self-reported measures. Regarding self-reported measures, it is worth mentioning here that based on Gardner (1985, cited in Moreno et al, 2012), self-reported measures of proficiency correlate with objective measures very well (p. 165).

Through TQMI, the kind of support they felt more associated with including their parents, best friends, classmates, and language teachers was examined. At this stage, thirty-eight adolescents participated to help the researcher find further data regarding any possible relationship between parental involvement and their overall achievement in English courses.

In this study, the modified and translated (Persian version) of this questionnaire was distributed among adolescents. In advance, back translation of the items in the two Persian and English versions ensured the accuracy of the constructs included in the Persian draft. The items were clearly explained to the learners in the researcher's presence and obtained results were analyzed based on the nature of the supports that participants had received regarding their English courses and the kind of supports they had received as mapped on some identity accounts including their imposed

vs. public selves as well as learning perceptions concerning four intended support groups as mentioned above.

RESULTS

Response to the First Research Question

In line with the first research question in which the researchers intended to follow English language learners' perceptions within four relational contexts, the researchers first attempted to recount how parental involvement was viewed by the learners. Here, the learners participated in filling out the TQMI questionnaire about four relational contexts as explicated earlier. In the following, the results from distributing this section of the questionnaire are first represented through four vignettes.

The first vignette detailed students' recognition over their self-realized situation as a submissive person towards four groups of people as 'important others' (family members, language teachers, classmates, and best friends). Table 4 below gives an account of the descriptive statistics for the extracted responses by the respondents at this initial stage.

Table 4: Frequency Counts/Percent for the First Vignette in the Modified Questionnaire

Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
My English teachers	5	13.2	13.2	13.2
My family members	25	65.8	65.8	78.9
My classmates	2	5.3	5.3	84.2
My best friends	2	5.3	5.3	89.5
All	4	10.5	10.5	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

As Table 4 displays, the preferences for each categorized relational context including adolescents' English teachers, family members, classmates, and best friends were assorted with "my family members" having the most rated cell (25, 65.8%) which showed the targeted learners and having more

tendency to interact with their family members as better knowers of their potentialities, needs, and desires in their prospective learning. Seemingly, they thought that their family members did know about their personality, and this mattered to them, which directed their dreams towards more improvement if they were involved in their English language learning processes and followed what they said. The next order of priority was with language teachers (5, 13.2%) and classmates and finally with their best friends (2, 5.3%) to help them in the process of their learning.

The second vignette of the modified TQMI questionnaire assessed the same situation above with the order of adolescents' tendency towards giving ignorance on the part of four important others thus recounting adolescents as being duplicitous or double-dealing in their learning affairs. Initially, Table 5 details descriptive statistics for this second item (vignette no.2).

Table 5: Frequency Counts/Percent for the Second Vignette in the Modified Questionnaire

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	My English teachers	5	13.2	13.2
	My family members	3	7.9	21.1
	My classmates	21	55.3	76.3
	My best friends	7	18.4	94.7
	All	2	5.3	100.0
	Total	38	100.0	

As Table 5 verifies, this time, the inclinations for each categorized relational context including adolescents' English teachers, family members, classmates, and best friends were again assorted with "classmates" having the most rated cell (21, 55.3%). This could also verify how relatively in comparison with classmates and best friends, inclination with giving ignorance was directed towards classmates among Iranian learners.

The third characterized situation- vignette 3- assessed respondents'

tendency to follow their own goals in life although they acknowledged that they had a tendency, but this inclination could not be actualized due to having a rebellious character. Those relational contexts for this third assigned category believed in their abilities to openly refuse any help since the directions were different. So, their perceived abilities to solve their problems deterred them to be more submissive or duplicitous as in the first subsequent two cases above. First, descriptive statistics for this item are represented in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Frequency Counts/Percent for the Third Vignette in the Modified Questionnaire

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	My English teachers	8	21.1	21.1	21.1
	My family members	10	26.3	26.3	47.4
	My classmates	9	23.7	23.7	71.1
	My best friends	8	21.1	21.1	92.1
	All	3	7.9	7.9	100.0
	Total	38	100.0	100.0	

As Table 6 shows, the preferences for each categorized relational context including adolescents' English teachers, family members, classmates, and best friends, were again varied with "my family members" having the most rated cell (10, 26.3%). Here, this could somehow show that although in relation to family members, respondents had tendencies towards them, in the majority of cases, they liked to ease off with some restraints.

The last vignette represented a harmonious character in the presented situation. Table 7 presents descriptive statistics for this last item.

Table 7: Frequency Counts/Percent for the Fourth Vignette in the Modified Questionnaire

Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	
My English teachers	14	36.8	36.8	36.8
My family members	14	36.8	36.8	73.7
My classmates	2	5.3	5.3	78.9
My best friends	5	13.2	13.2	92.1
All	3	7.9	7.9	100.0
Total	38	100.0	100.0	

As Table 7 displays, the preferences for each categorized relational context including adolescents' English teachers, family members, classmates, and best friends, were mixed with two items "my family members" and "my teachers" having the same rated cell that stood in the equal rate (36.8%). This showed among other things that learners wanted to move along this idealized situation with a pleasant-sounding behavior towards language teachers and family members.

Response to the Second Research Question

The last two sections of the modified TQMI evaluated respondents' preferences towards achieving their goals in learning English as mapped on their two selves (Imposed and Public). Within imposed self as an identity framework in Taylor's work (2010), demonstrations represented other people's hopes, desires, and expectations that an individual was supposed to achieve in two-time directions: present and future. The scores that each respondent received in this section of the questionnaire (Items 1 through 12) were concisely enumerated for each relational context in which the learners reflected functions including family members, language teachers, best friends, and classmates individually. Table 8 represents descriptive statistics for the present imposed self-realizations (Items 1 through 6).

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics for Present Imposed Self on Four Relational Contexts

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
My English teacher	38	23.00	36.00	34.28	3.08
My classmate	38	10.00	36.00	24.07	8.37
My best friends	38	8.00	36.00	26.44	8.43
My family members	38	20.00	36.00	34.02	3.52

As it is clear in Table 8, from the statistics of the relational contexts, the level of imposing on the part of teachers and families on the learners was nearly the same and both had the same power. This showed that regarding present imposed identity indices, compared with others, these two categories had more supremacies/concerns based on the learners' attitudes. Besides, the other two case categories had a mean of 24.0789 and 26.4474 respectively. In order to differentiate the four mean scores of relational contexts, the non-parametric Friedman Test for repeated measures was used. This was due to the detected non-normality in the data case as shown in Table 9 for the SK test.

Table 9: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Present imposed teacher	Present imposed classmate	Present imposed best friends	Present imposed family members
N		38	38	38	38
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	34.28	24.07	26.44	34.02
	Std. Deviation	3.08	8.37	8.43	3.52
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.32	.163	.18	.29
	Positive	.29	.124	.12	.28
	Negative	-.32	-.163	-.18	-.29
	Test Statistic	.32	.163	.18	.29
	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000 ^c	.013 ^c	.001 ^c	.000 ^c

Subsequent results after the Friedman test regarding the mean ranks indicated indices as 3.39, 1.37, 1.99, and 3.25 for teachers, classmates, best friends, and family members respectively. This showed the preference of language teachers over the other three case categories, which was significantly proved.

In the next phase, the dataset was checked on future imposed self/identity. Table 10 shows the initial descriptive statistics.

Table 10: Descriptive Statistics for Future Imposed Self on Four Relational Contexts

	N	<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>			
		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My English teacher	38	8.00	30.00	24.86	6.19
My classmates	38	5.00	30.00	18.97	8.04
My best friend	38	6.00	36.00	23.21	9.62
My family members	38	16.00	39.00	30.76	6.31
Valid N (listwise)	38				

As the statistics in Table 10 show, among the four categories, “the family members” had the most influence on the learners since the obtained mean equaled to 30.7632 which was the highest amount compared to other factors. Again, to differentiate the four mean scores of relational contexts as mapped on future imposed self, another non-parametric Friedman Test for repeated measures was used.

A comparison of the repeated measures was performed using Friedman’s test displaying a statistically significant difference regarding four relational contexts for future imposed self, with family members that had the ranks closest to the mean (MR = 3.79 over the other two case categories $\chi^2(3) = 74.174$, $p = .000 < 0.005$).

The last section of the questionnaire showed the learners’ partialities for public self as a social representation of the learners in diverse contexts.

Table 11 shows descriptive statistics for the public self in four relational contexts.

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics for Public Self on Four Relational Contexts

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
My English teacher	38	6.00	36.00	32.26	6.37
My classmates	38	6.00	36.00	23.52	9.42
My best friends	38	6.00	36.00	24.86	9.69
My family members	38	6.00	36.00	32.78	5.83
Valid N (listwise)	38				

Based on the statistics obtained from descriptive statistics for the public self on four relational contexts in Table 11, it became clear that the mean for “family members (parental involvement) and the teacher was much more than the other two groups. Based on the mean of obtained data that equals 32.7895, it is evident that the external agents/motivators for learners were family members and English teachers and they had the most influence on the learning of the respondents. However, in order to check if this was statistically significant, another Friedman test was run.

A comparison of the repeated measures using Friedman’s test showed a statistically significant difference regarding four relational contexts this time for public self, $\chi^2(3) = 62.953$, $p = .000 < 0.005$. Once more, this significantly showed the preference of family members (MR = 3.28) over the other two case categories.

Response to the Third Research Question

As to the third research question on the relationship between overall language learning success and two aspects of relational identity pointers on public and imposed selves, without any reference to each categorized case context (family members, teachers, classmates, and best friends), this time

collected measures on relational identity for the two public and imposed selves were estimated for each participant and mapped on their self-reported measures of language learning success. The results from descriptive statistics and Spearman correlation measures have been shown in Tables 12 and 13 for the imposed self/identity indicators and language learning success.

Table 12: Descriptive Statistics for Imposed Self on Four Relational Contexts and English Scores

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
English score range	2.97	.16	38
Imposed identity	224.71	44.06	38

Table 13: Spearman's Rho Correlations for Imposed Identity and English Score Range

		English score range	Imposed identity
Spearman's rho English score range	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.045
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.789
	N	38	38
Imposed identity	Correlation Coefficient	.045	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.789	.
	N	38	38

Spearman rho correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between the English score range as reported by the learners and imposed identity indices, which showed that there was a positive correlation between the two variables [$r = .78$, $n = 38$, $p = .04$].

The same procedures were taken for public self-indicators and measures of English performance. Tables 14 and 15 demonstrate the descriptive and inferential results respectively.

Table 14: Descriptive Statistics for Public Self on Four Relational Contexts and English Scores

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
English score range	2.97	.16	38
Public identity	113.44	25.73	38

Table 15: Spearman's Rho Correlations for Public Identity and English Score Range

		English score	
		range	Public identity
Spearman's rho	English score range	Correlation	1.000
		Coefficient	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.893
		N	38
Public identity	Public identity	Correlation	-.023
		Coefficient	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.893
		N	38

DISCUSSION

Home-school relationship, as basic to learning, is one of the under-researched lines of inquiry within English language learning contexts (Eccles & Harold, 1993; Epstein & Connors, 1992; Gaitan, 2004; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Meier & Lemmer, 2018; Lemmer, 2012; Le Roux, 2016; Shannon & Milian, 2002). Within the milieu of foreign language learning arenas, many classroom teachers seem to 'feel unprepared to work with families who speak limited or no English' at all (Chen, Kyle & McIntyre, 2008). Within less experienced teachers, dealing with such parents is a routine activity but it has mostly been viewed as a burden (Willemse, Thompson, Vanderlinde & Mutton, 2018). According to Finders and Lewis (1994), children who do not succeed in language learning have parents who are usually not involved in educational activities or support their goals at home. Many previous types of research emphasize the importance of parents' involvement in promoting school success (Christenson & Reschly, 2009; Comer, 1984; Katyal, & Evers, 2007; Lareau

1987; Lemmer, 2013; Peiro, 2013, etc.). At the same time, the lack of parental involvement with socially and culturally diverse students is also well documented (Clark, 1983; Delgado-Gaitan, 1991).

Regarding involved factors in the utilized questionnaire, there was a shortage of relevant studies in the local contexts in order to compare the findings in this study with assimilating data in other studies. In a recent study by Dastgostar deh (2018), possible selves were deliberated and validated in a researcher-developed questionnaire among EFL teachers. In the present study, evaluated respondents' preferences towards achieving their goals in learning English as mapped on their two selves (Imposed and Public) were explored through relational identity theory pertained to Taylor (2010, 2013).

As to imposed self/identity, the level of imposing on the part of "language teachers" and "families" on the learners was nearly the same and both had the same power. This showed that regarding present imposed identity indices, compared with others, these two categories had significantly been aligned with more supremacies/concerns based on the learners' attitudes. As to future imposed self, among the four categories, "the family members" had significantly the most influence on the learners compared to other factors. Comparing the two datasets for present vs. future selves could indicate that although for present condition of the learners, language teachers had more prominence over family members, this could also indicate that in the modern era and the more we go ahead in our life, the more family involvement and parent involvement becomes conspicuous in the community. However, documenting the abovementioned statistics, nowadays, the parents' involvement has been so prominent in the pedagogical settings that the parents are regarded as the second chance of the students' learning. For the public self cases, on four relational contexts, it was evident that the mean for "family members" (parental involvement) and the "teacher" was significantly much more than the other two categories.

In other similar researches, it was indicated that higher academic

achievement can come after when parents or family members become involved in students' education (Enever & Moon, 2009; Linse, 2011; Nunan, 2003; Quezada, 2010, etc.). Nevertheless, the critical prominence given to language teachers and family members that was reached in the present study could yet indicate how such interactivity might lead to intended possible selves by gaining more success in L2 courses for both future careers of interested learners as prospective language teachers and becoming better learners as communicated by the learners. Also, this sense of becoming better learners as studied in this research was critical to be explored among adolescents as such since, at this time, learners are exposed to diverse identity clashes with other individuals around (Omidian, 2010). Other similar research within the local contexts of Iran such as Rahiminezhad and Ahmadi's and Shamshiri's study, (2008) showed a conforming public concern with regard to identity seeking pointers in L2 learning among adolescents.

In the next phase of this study, two aspects of identity including public and imposed selves were inspected to find their relationship with English learners' overall performance. Measures resulted in a significant relationship for only imposed identity and learning status. Initially, this could show among other things that indicators of public identity such as learners' conscious attempts to show their tendency and interest in learning English is less prominent as compared with the pressure that they feel from the relational contexts especially family members. However, such a finding on the part of the invited learners in this study could be authenticated on some local grounds in that how pressure from other-related people in the learning process has been more weighted compared with the learners' attempts to show their public uniqueness. It is to be noted that this study has been conducted in a city as distinct from larger contexts such as capital city and more populated cities in which language learners might feel less pressure from their other-related people in their surroundings in order to make progress in their English courses. For sure, other factors might have been effective as Holmes (2008) once claimed for identity in that in many

societies, some typical factors including gender, social status, age, ethnicity, and even social networks people belong to affect how identity is shaped by the learners. In Razmjoo's study (2010), some aspects of identity pointers on collective, social, relational, and personal levels were sought among some Iranian English language learners' achievement. It became evident that none of the identity aspects could predict language achievement, which was partly in line with the results gained for public identity in this study. Also, it is worthy of note that in Razmjoo's study, students' success was explored on their actual performance on some corroborated achievement tests promoted by the researcher, which was restricted to one single session performance on the part of participants. In the present study, aspects of identity were related to self-reported overall performance during a longer period, which could lead to more plausible interpretations of identity matters.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In sum, as proved in this study, family members and English teachers as more responsible agents for the learners' education and training were more in the light in the datasets. This could show among other things that in fact, the teachers must enlighten the parents on the physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional development of the learners, and possibly display the activity of students through films documenting their child's developmental stages. On the other hand, the results reached in this study could reconfirm the previous studies on the intellectual development of the less-advantaged families whose children found it hard to gain more achievements at schools due to the lesser abilities of their parents both intellectually and environmentally (Gubbins & Otero, 2020; Honig, 1979; Park & Holloway, 2018).

In the present study, such a close relationship was sought on the part of some sampled adolescents regarding language education experiences in an Iranian community. It seems critical that views affecting such

involvement on the parts of Iranian parents be closely followed. Kalaycı and Öz (2018) established such a positive relationship in a Turkish context and emphasized that although positive attitudes are in action, parents' demographic information such as gender, age, occupation, or level of education, generally, could not make any significant contribution to the parents' perceptions about parental involvement regarding English language learning. Still, other factors could be pursued such as teachers' and school administrators' attitudes, cultural influences, parents' level of education in language literacies, etc. In a recent study by Hornby and Blackwell (2018), some barriers over individual parents, child factors, parent-teacher factors, and societal factors were brought as updated obstacles in the process and designated that the pressures exerted on parents due to declining support for families from external agencies and services was one factor that had a diminishing role.

As seen, a hurdle of factors can be influential in the process. In this study, the researchers tried to show the close relationship among parental involvement, parents-teachers connection along with other related people such as the learners' classmates and best friends, and success in English language learning among some male and female adolescents. In the interim, it also became evident that adolescents in this study preferred to share their concerns with their teachers after parents as critical people in their surroundings. Likewise, projecting studies to verify teachers' reactions towards engagements with parents can be highly serious to see through ways why some teachers are reluctant in involving the parents. As Bilton, Jackson, and Hymer (2017) revealed, a collaboration between parents and teachers can be set above just communicating and exchanging views on students and turned into parents' becoming critical assistants in educational centers.

In a nutshell, measures of imposed identity as shown in this study were significantly related to measures of perceived success. This could show how such a relation exists, which mainly maintains sociolinguistic orientations for the learning in the local context in line with the socio-

political conditions that were taking place for language education inside the country. This connection was sought among a group of adolescents in one city. But the researchers think that the same research can be done on adults and the results of that research might complete the results of this study in a more comprehensive way.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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Appendix I: Modified version of Taylor's Quadripolar Model of Identity (TQMI) Questionnaire in Persian:

به نام خداوند مهربان

این پرسشنامه راجع به دیدگاه های شما در یادگیری زبان انگلیسی و ارتباط شما با برخی از افراد است که ممکن است برای تان بسیار مهم باشند از جمله معلمان انگلیسی، اعضای خانواده (از جمله والدین و خواهر و برادران)، بهترین دوستان شما و همکلاسی های تان. این پرسشنامه دارای سه بخش می باشد. لطفاً به موارد موجود در هر قسمت به دقت پاسخ دهید. بسیار سپاس گزارم.

میزان آشنایی شما به زبان انگلیسی:

در مدرسه ----- (سال) آموزشگاه های خصوصی زبان----- (سال)

محدوده نمرات درس زبان انگلیسی شما در مدارس: الف) 1- 10، ب) 11- 15، ج) 16- 20

جنسیت: زن مرد

سن: -----

بخش اول پرسشنامه:

*****لطفاً پاراگراف های زیر را با دقت بخوانید و آن گزینه ای را انتخاب کنید که مناسب ترین برای توصیف معلمان انگلیسی، اعضای خانواده، بهترین دوستان شما و همکلاسی های شما باشد. در هر قسمت در جدول داده شده علامت بزنید.**

قبل از شروع، لطفاً توجه داشته باشید که....

***اگر بیش از یک معلم انگلیسی دارید، لطفاً در هر سوال درباره معلمی که زمان بیشتری را با ایشان درس داشته اید پاسخ دهید.

***اعضای خانواده شما شامل والدین و خواهر و برادران شما و یا شخصی است که در حال حاضر با آن زندگی می کنید.

***همکلاسی های شما می توانند کسانی باشند که شما بیشتر وقت خود را در کلاس درس با آنها می گذرانید.

***بهترین دوست شما کسی است که زمان و منابع خود را با شما به اشتراک می گذارد.

1) آنها به خوبی می دانند من چه نوع شخصیتی دارم. آنچه که آنها دوست دارند من در زندگی انجام دهم متفاوت است از آنچه من می خواهم انجام دهم، به همین دلیل است که من ترجیح می دهم که نیت و قصد خود را عوض کنم و آنچه را که آنها فکر می کنند برای من بهتر است، انجام دهم. آنچه که آنها می خواهند من در زندگی انجام دهم اهمیت بیشتری دارد نسبت به خواسته های من، بنابراین من آنچه را که آنها می گویند انجام خواهم داد.

می توانید در بیش از یک خانه نیز علامت (✓) بگذارید اگر جملات درباره بیش از یک نفر درست است.

معلمان انگلیسی	اعضای خانواده	همکلاسی ها	بهترین دوستان

2) آنها واقعا در مورد شخصیت من اطلاعاتی ندارند و این برای من اهمیتی ندارد ، آنها به دنبال این هستند که من خلاف آنچه را که دوست دارم انجام دهم و به همین دلیل است که من رویاهای خود را دنبال می کنم بدون اینکه آنان را از این امر مطلع سازم. در عین حال، من به آنها این تصور را می دهم که من به آنچه که از من می خواهند انجام می دهم، هر چند خودم کارم را بهتر از آنها می دانم .

معلم انگلیسی	اعضای خانواده	همکلاسی ها	بهترین دوستان

3) آنچه که آنها می خواهند من در زندگی انجام دهم، متفاوت از آن چیزی است که من می خواهم انجام دهم، به همین دلیل است که من رویاهای خود را دنبال می کنم، حتی اگر مجبور شوم در برابر آنها قیام کنم . آنها من را به خوبی می شناسند، من هیچ چیز برای پنهان کردن آنها ندارم، و اگر آنها بخواهند من را از انجام آن باز دارند، احتمالا به طور آشکارا آن را رد می کنم. و خواسته های خود را دنبال می کنم.

معلم انگلیسی	اعضای خانواده	همکلاسی ها	بهترین دوستان

4) آنها به خوبی من را می شناسند و مرا به خاطر شخصیتم قدرشناسی می کنند. رویاهای من برای آینده بسیار شبیه آنچه است که آنها دوست دارند من در زندگی انجام دهم. آنها نمی خواهند چیزی را به من تحمیل کنند، اما به من آزادی کامل را می دهند تا انتخاب کنم، و آنها همیشه از تصمیم های من در مورد آینده من قدردانی می کنند. آنها واقعا به من کمک می کنند که احساس خوشحالی و موفقیت بکنم.

معلم انگلیسی	اعضای خانواده	همکلاسی ها	بهترین دوستان

بخش دوم پرسشنامه:

****برای عبارت های زیر، لطفا مجددا هر جمله را بخوانید و این بار به جای انتخاب یک گزینه به همه افراد داده شده در جدول یک نمره بدهید تا چه حد همه آنها دوست دارند که این کارها را انجام دهید؟ در هر مورد شماره ای را از یک (کمترین) تا شش (بیشترین) است انتخاب کنید.**

1= بسیار کم =2 کمی = 3 نسبتا کم = 4 نسبتا زیاد = 5 زیاد = 6 خیلی زیاد

1) این افراد دوست دارند که من تلاش کنم زبان انگلیسی ام پیشرفت کند.

معلم انگلیسی من 6 5 4 3 2 1

همکلاسی های من 6 5 4 3 2 1

بهترین دوستان من 6 5 4 3 2 1

اعضای خانواده من 6 5 4 3 2 1

2- این افراد دوست دارند من به زبان انگلیسی اهمیت بدهم.

معلم انگلیسی من 6 5 4 3 2 1

همکلاسی های من 6 5 4 3 2 1

بهترین دوستان من 6 5 4 3 2 1

اعضای خانواده من 6 5 4 3 2 1

3- این افراد دوست دارند که من واقعا انگلیسی را دوست داشته باشم.

معلم انگلیسی من 6 5 4 3 2 1

همکلاسی های من 6 5 4 3 2 1

بهترین دوستان من 6 5 4 3 2 1

اعضای خانواده من 6 5 4 3 2 1

4- این افراد دوست دارند که من واقعا در زبان انگلیسی مستعد (توانا) باشم.

معلم انگلیسی من 6 5 4 3 2 1

همکلاسی های من 6 5 4 3 2 1

بهترین دوستان من 6 5 4 3 2 1

اعضای خانواده من 6 5 4 3 2 1

5- این افراد دوست دارند که من همیشه تکالیف انگلیسی ام را در منزل انجام بدهم.

معلم انگلیسی من 6 5 4 3 2 1

همکلاسی های من 6 5 4 3 2 1

- 6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
6. این افراد دوست دارند که من آنچه معلم زبان انگلیسی ام از من انتظار دارد انجام دهم.
6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
7- این افراد دوست دارند که من یک مدرک در رشته زبان انگلیسی بگیرم.
6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
8. این افراد دوست دارند که من در آینده یک شغلی داشته باشم که مربوط به رشته زبان انگلیسی باشد.
6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
9. این افراد دوست دارند که من یک معلم انگلیسی یا چیزی شبیه به آن باشم.
6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
10. این افراد دوست دارند که زبان انگلیسی را به عنوان بخش مهمی از آینده من ببینند.
6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
11- این افراد دوست دارند که من در آینده یک متخصص عالی در زبان انگلیسی باشم.
6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
12- این افراد دوست دارند که من در آینده به زبان انگلیسی به خوبی ارتباط برقرار کنم.
6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من

بخش سوم پرسشنامه:

*** گاهی اوقات همه ما می خواهیم به افراد دیگر چیزهای خاصی در مورد خودمان نشان دهیم. چقدر اهمیت دارد که شما موارد زیر را به افراد زیر نشان دهید؟

1 = بسیار کم اهمیت 2 = بی اهمیت 3 = نسبتاً کم اهمیت 4 = نسبتاً مهم 5 = مهم 6 = بسیار مهم

1- چقدر اهمیت دارد که به این افراد نشان دهم که من برای تقویت زبان انگلیسی ام تلاش می کنم.

6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من

6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من

6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من

6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من

2- چقدر اهمیت دارد که به این افراد نشان دهم که زبان انگلیسی برای من خیلی مهم است.

- 6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
 3- چقدر اهمیت دارد که من به این افراد نشان دهم که من واقعا به زبان انگلیسی علاقه مند هستم.
 6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
 4- چقدر اهمیت دارد که به این افراد نشان دهم که من واقعا در یادگیری زبان مستعد هستم.
 6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
 5- چقدر اهمیت دارد که به این افراد نشان دهم که من همیشه تکالیف زبان انگلیسی ام را انجام می دهم.
 6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
 6- چقدر اهمیت دارد که به این افراد نشان دهم که من همیشه آنچه را که برایم در کلاس لازم است، انجام می دهم.
 6 5 4 3 2 1 معلم انگلیسی من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 همکلاسی های من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 بهترین دوستان من
 6 5 4 3 2 1 اعضای خانواده من
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