

Being a Female English Teacher: Narratives of Identities in the Iranian Academy

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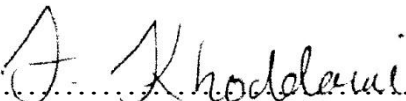
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Abstract

Despite the growing interest in the issue of identity formation in the broader TESOL research field, few studies have been concerned with the question of female teachers' identity formation from a feminist poststructuralist perspective. This study also seeks to further the feminist poststructuralist research within the Iranian TESOL and bridge the substantive gap within the existing literature, which is an almost untouched area of research regarding the teachers' identity formation.

This thesis attempts to explore the construction of identities of eight Iranian female teachers of English and the discourses that shape them through examining their narratives, using data gathered from interviews and email correspondences. In a two-year collaboration with the participants, I applied a feminist poststructuralist conceptual framework to examine the participants' main subject positions and the prevailing discursive practices that construct them. The research data, collected by individual interviews and email correspondence, indicates the teachers' identities as multiple, complex, and contradictory. I contend that multiple subject positions stem out of the clash of the multiple discourses that are available to them. Impacted by both gender and professional discourses that sometimes even collide, the findings show how these women struggle to conceive a sense of coherent self. The results of the analysis indicate that the gender and professional discourses are of normative, disciplinary, and individualizing nature. Negotiating identities within themselves and within the complex cultural context they live in, these female teachers are involved in an ongoing process of adjustment, adaptation and resistance.

For My Parents
In gratitude and Love

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List of Abbreviations

BA	Bachelor of Arts
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
EdD	Doctor of Education
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
FT	Full Time
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IRI	Islamic Republic of Iran
IRIB	Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting
MA	Master of Arts
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PT	Part Time
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TTC	Teacher Training Courses
UAE	United Arab Emirates