"Born to be a teacher": An interview of a Japanese EFL teacher

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Aya Watanabe

Abstract

Identity construction of English teachers has attracted researchers in the field of TESOL for the past 20 years (Richards, 2023). Many of these studies use interview as a data-collection method to collect stories among participants from diverse backgrounds. However, there are very few studies which analyze the process of how the identity construction occurs through the interactive process of the participants' own accounts with an interviewer. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to this topic by analyzing interview data from an interactional perspective. This paper investigates how a teacher constructs identity as a Japanese EFL teacher through analyzing interview data using qualitative research methods. The study views interview as a social activity in its own right, and takes the perspective of "active interview" proposed by Holstein and Gubrium (2004). The active interview approach is based on the belief that "all interviews are interactional" (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004, p. 141), and the meaning is co-constructed and situated within a specific context. Thus, rather than viewing interviews as an information gathering method, this approach allows analysts to consider how versions of reality, knowledge, and meaning are co-constructed between the interviewer and interviewee on a moment-by-moment basis.

Keywords: *teacher identity, identity in TESOL, EFL teacher, interview, identity construction*

1. Introduction

Teacher and learner identity construction has been a topic of increasing interest among researchers in the fields of Applied Linguistics and TESOL (Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages) for two decades (Richards, 2023). Among other methods like surveys and self-reflective journals, conducting in-depth interviews has become a popular data-collection method to investigate teacher-identity construction focusing on participants with various backgrounds (Johnston, 1997; Duff & Uchida, 1997; Simon-Maeda, 2004; Tsui, 2007). For instance, Duff and Uchida (1997) combined interview with other ethnographic data to examine the sociocultural identities of one male and three female EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers working in Japan. Simon-Maeda (2004) also

attempted to reveal the complex identity construction of nine female EFL teachers in Japan by conducting open-ended interviews. Tsui (2007) combined face-to-face interviews and reflective diaries to examine the lived experience and the identity formation of Minfang, an English teacher in China, and revealed its highly complex nature.

The interview data generated from these studies are often categorized thematically and focus on content analysis. These studies attempt to treat identity as complex and multi-faceted; however, they tend to draw on the macro-context without closely analyzing how the accounts were locally produced. This way of analyzing the data is often criticized by researchers who view interview as an active interactive process (Potter & Hepburn, 2005), in which knowledge and understanding are jointly and actively produced by all interactants (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004). Thus, the analysis of data in these studies lacks the view of interview as a dynamic and negotiated co-constructive process between the interviewer and the respondent (Baker, 2002).

Very little study on EFL teacher-identity construction has been conducted to analyze the process of how the actual identity construction occurs through the interactive process of the participants' accounts. This study aims to contribute to this topic by analyzing interview data of an experienced, female English teacher in Japan. Questions regarding how the teacher came to be an English teacher, and what teaching philosophy she believes in and practices were addressed through the semi-structured interview. The data were analyzed using conversation analysis and membership categorization analysis, with a particular focus on both the process (how) and the product (what) of the active production of the interview (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004), by treating the story as an account (Baker, 2002) or a version of a reality.

2. Theoretical Framework

2-1. Interview as active interaction

Typically, people consider interview as a mere data-collection method to extract information from the informants (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004). There are various books that introduce techniques to obtain necessary information, such as how to ask effective questions etc. These books reflect the idea that interview is a site for transporting or extracting knowledge, in which interviewees are considered as the "vessel-of-answers" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002, p.13) and the interviewer as a neutral facilitator to elicit information. In this view, the active production of knowledge and meaning co-constructed by and between the interviewer and interviewee is ignored by positioning the interactants as passive, unchanging subjects (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002).

In contrast, viewing interview as active interaction (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004) is to acknowledge and appreciate the active production of knowledge and to view interview as a social activity in its own right. In this approach, the interviewees are "practitioners of everyday life" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002) who constantly work to construct versions of reality within the interview interaction. Moreover,

the interviewer is not seen as mere facilitator but rather as actively engaging in the co-construction of knowledge and meaning as an interactant throughout the interview (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004).

Scholars who are interested in this approach believe that "all interviews are interactional" (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004, p. 141) and the meaning is co-constructed and situated within a specific context. This perspective poses questions about both the traditional stance of neutrality of the interviewer and the nature of the perceived reality or truth of the respondents answers. Basically, there are no neutral questions (Baker, 2002) or real/genuine answers (Gubrium & Holstein, 2002) and the focus is not on the truthfulness of the obtained interview responses. Instead, this alternative perspective turns our focus to how the responses were generated and how the knowledge was collaboratively constructed.

As mentioned above, an active interview approach values the process of *how* the interview came about as well as *what* versions of reality or accounts (Baker, 2002) were produced within the interview interaction. Holstein and Gubrium (2004) argues that "understanding how the meaning-making process unfolds in the interview is as critical as apprehending what is substantively asked and conveyed" (p. 142). The *how* refers to the focus on interactional procedures of situated meaning making by the interactants, and *what* refers to the content of information conveyed during the interview. Traditionally, the interest lied heavily on the *whats* of the interview research which influences how the analysis and the results are presented. However, the stress on the *hows* of the interview enables the researcher to illuminate the dynamic production of how the responses are produced in relation to the interviewers' questions and how the interactants interpret each other and negotiate meaning as they work through the interaction. Thus, in the active interview model, there is a dual interest on both how the interaction was produced and what was produced which contributes to the understanding of the structure of the interview as a process.

2-2. Interview as conversational interaction

The discussion of how to represent interview data and how to analyze the data itself is largely influenced by how the researcher understands what interview is as a qualitative research method. The typical understanding of interview as an information-gathering method often shows heavy focus on the *whats* rather than *hows* of the interview, which leads to the conventional "content" or "thematic" analysis that is criticized by certain eminent discourse analysts as under-analysis (Antaki, et al., 2002) or for its lack of consideration of interview as interaction (Potter & Hepburn, 2005). Based on the approach that envisages interview as active and situated social interaction, Baker (2002) proposed an ethnomethodological approach towards analyzing the interview data as conversational interaction.

Ethnomethodology was developed by Harold Garfinkel from sociology in the late 1960s (ten Have, 2004). It is interested in explaining "the ways in which collectivity members create and

maintain a sense of order and intelligibility in social life" (ten Have, 2004, p. 14) through observable organization of discourse that social members display in a specific context. In approaching interview data from an ethonomethodological perspective, Baker (2002) proposed the necessity for the analysts to attend to *how* the participants make sense of each other and *how* they represent their view of the world jointly with the interviewer in the interview interaction (p. 777). She has emphasized the interest of ethnomethodology in "how people accomplish their identities, their activities, their settings, and their sense of social order," leading to studying interviews as a topic in-its-own-right (p. 778) and introducing several analytic resources in approaching interview data.

To analyze interview data as conversational interaction, Baker (2002) introduced conversation analysis (CA) as a method to attend to the turn-by-turn organization of the sequence. Through sequential analysis, the researcher is able to observe the organization of how meaning and knowledge are produced in the interview (p. 781) and analyze how turns are organized and shape the interview interaction. In addition to CA, she suggested membership categorization analysis (MCA) as an analytical resource to attend to how speakers generate and use categories to make sense of the events they are describing (p. 783). Through categorical analysis, the analysts can observe how the interviewer and the interviewee generate social reality and produce moral reasoning through employing categories and related activities. Furthermore, identifying what and how identities are produced and made relevant in that interview context (p. 786) is also an interest of this approach, informing the analysts of the reflexive nature of identity work accomplished by all the interactants.

2-3. Identity work in talk-in-interaction

Benwell and Stokoe (2006) defined identity as "performed, constructed, enacted or produced, moment-by-moment, in everyday conversations" (p. 49). The ethnomethodological approach to identity is to investigate how participants display identity and examine what is being achieved by accomplishing the interactional work (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006, p. 69). In the edited volume entitled "Identities in talk", Antaki and Widdicombe (1998) proposed five principles for analyzing identities in talk-in-interaction. The first principle is to analyze evoked "categories with associated characteristics of features" (p. 3). In analyzing interview talk, among multiple identities which could be possessed by the participants, attending to the categories and the relevant features associated with the evoked categories are necessary. Secondly, the analyst need to keep in mind the "indexicality and occasionedness" (p. 4) of the identity work produced by the participants. In other words, every identity and categorical work should be made sense within the local context. Thirdly, analyzing identities and categories which members are "making relevant and orienting to" (p. 4) is very important to avoid imposition from the analysts. Fourth, relating to the third principle, the analysts need to attend to the identities and categories only when they have "procedural consequentiality" (p. 5) or effect on the interaction. Last but not least, the fifth principle directs the analysts' attention to

focus on "conversational structures" (p. 5). In sum, through closely attending to the details of how the conversation is organized, the analysts are able to identify the evoked categories and identities that are relevant for the speakers and the listeners and allow the researcher to observe how identity is consequentially relevant within that sequence.

Zimmerman (1998) identified two types of relevant identities as an element of context for talk-in-interaction. The first type of identity is '*Discourse Identities*' (p. 91), which emerges within an interaction over the course of talk. The examples for various discourse identities are those such as 'speaker'/'hearer,' 'story-teller'/'story-recipient,' and 'questioner'/'answerer.' These identities are "interactionally contingent rather than determined" (p. 91) and are made relevant through moment-by-moment organization of interaction. Thus, discourse identities can shift turn by turn and change according to the organization of sequence. In comparison, '*Situated Identities*' are identities which deliver relevant "agendas, skills and knowledge which allow the participants to accomplish various projects in an orderly and reproducible way" (p. 88). Situated identities are tied to that particular situation and context in which participants engage activities in, for instance, 'teacher'/'student' and 'mother'/'daughter.' Therefore, situated identities are influenced by the social structure and shape the interaction in a certain way by allowing the participants to bring external context into play.

Another relevant concept for this study is '*Teacher Identity*' (Richards, 2023), which is understood as part of an individual's personal identity with specific features that originates from the profession of teaching and being a teacher. Teacher identity has been defined by Hseigh (2010) as "the beliefs, values, and commitments an individual holds toward being a teacher (as distinct from another professional) and being a particular type of teacher (e.g., an urban teacher, a beginning teacher, a good teacher, an English teacher, etc.)" (as cited in Richards, 2023, p. 253). According to Richards (2023), teacher identity comprises various factors, e.g., *commitment*, *self-esteem*, *agency*, and *self-efficacy*. *Commitment* refers to the teacher's engagement with teaching, *self-esteem* refers to attitudes and beliefs to be a successful and competent teacher, *agency* refers to the active contribution and management of their own changes as a professional, and *self-efficacy* refers to one's view of their effectiveness as a teacher. Previous studies have revealed that these factors play an important role in teachers' development as professionals and how they view their own practices. Thus, teacher-identity construction consists of multiple factors and should be observed and analyzed as such.

3. Research Questions

Based on the above theoretical framework, the present study attempts to find out how both interviewer and the interviewee orient to the interaction as an interview interaction through examining a particular sequence of the interview. Through closely describing and analyzing the interview interaction, the study aims to investigate what categories or identities are evoked and how they are utilized in the question-and-response sequence. Thus, I would like "to treat the data as

displays of membership categorization work by interviewees as well as interviewer" (Baker, 2004, p. 168). By doing this, the analyst is able to see how the interviewer positioned the interviewee as a 'good teacher' and how the respondent used categories to answer the question. The research questions for this study are the following:

1.   What makes this particular interaction an interview interaction?

2.   What categories and category-bound activities are evoked by the participants? How are the categories utilized, and what is the speaker achieving?

3.   What kinds of identities are negotiated and constructed in interaction and how?

4. Data Collection: Participant and Site

The data in this study was collected in 2008 for the purpose of completing an interview assignment for a Qualitative Research Method course in a Masters program. This data is still relevant because the story-telling produced in this interview still stands true today for the participant. The participant of this interview is an experienced female English teacher who owns a private English school in a rural area of Japan. She has been teaching English to variety of age groups, i.e., from young children to adults, for over twenty years (at the time of the interview). The interview was conducted to talk about her beliefs on teaching English based on her rich experience of being a learner and a teacher of English. The interactants were the researcher/interviewer and the participant. The researcher is her daughter who is also a teacher who often engages in a conversation about teaching English with the interviewee. This mother-daughter relationship is worth mentioning, since as Richards (2003) rightly states, "we cannot ignore our relationship with the interviewee and the effect this might have on the way the talk develops" (p. 85). This relationship between the interviewer and interviewee has probably influenced how the questions were shaped and how they were being responded to as well as how the data was analyzed, which will be discussed in the analysis.

The use of technology as a means to conduct qualitative research has been popular in this modern society (Bampton & Cowton, 2002). Due to the physical distance resulting from the different locations of residence, face-to-face interview was not feasible. Thus, the author arranged an online interview through the widely used application called *Skype* which allows users to make telephone calls and video-chat over the internet. This allowed the interviewer and the interviewee to verbally interact synchronously and all interactions were audio-recorded. There were several technical difficulties throughout the interaction due to the disconnection of internet, which resulted in noise and long pauses that are usually absent in face-to-face interview interaction.

Two semi-structured interviews were conducted due to the technological difficulties. The first interview was conducted for about 25 minutes, and data was obtained through audio-visual recording using the software called Quick Time. The second interview was conducted five days later, following

on the first interview, which lasted about 30 minutes. The data was audio-recorded and both data blocks were fully transcribed using the transcription convention of ten Have (2007). The extracts for this study are mainly from the second interview data (see Appendix for all interview questions and transcription conventions).

5. Methodology

The method of analysis employed for this study is Conversation Analysis (CA) and Membership Categorization Analysis (MCA). Both CA and MCA were originally developed by Harvey Sacks, who was interested in describing "methods persons use in doing social life" (Silverman, 1998, p. 74). As mentioned earlier, CA aims to investigate how people talk by attending to the details of turn-taking, sequence organization, repair organization, and turn-design (ten Have, 2007). The interview data in this study is analyzed to see how participants orient to this particular interaction as interview talk especially in terms of turn-by-turn organization.

In contrast, MCA investigates how members "generate and use categories and membership categorization devices as ways of describing and making sense of events and situations" (Baker, 2002, p. 783). *Membership categorization devices* (MCD) consist of a collection of membership categories, which may be applied to some population (Silverman, 1998, p. 79), for instance 'family.' Membership categories are "classifications or social types that may be used to describe persons" (Hester & Eglin, 1997, p. 3) like 'baby', 'mommy', and 'father.' These social categories are not just explicitly indicated or implied but also carry various associated properties called *category-tied predicates* or activities called *category-bound activities* (Stokoe, 2012, p. 281). For example, a social category: one of a baby's category-bound activity is 'crying.' Another important concept of MCA is the idea of standardized relational pairs (SRPs), which are paired categories such as 'mother-daughter.' Thus, based on the above concepts, MCA offers a useful starting point to analyze "social knowledge which people use, expect, and rely on in doing the accountable work of living together" (ten Have, 2007, p. 45) as well as allow analysts to track how identities are made relevant by members' from their perspective (Stokoe, 2012).

Since CA and MCA examine the "methods members actually use to produce activities as observable and reportable" (Silverman, 1998, p. 74), combining the sequential analysis of interaction and the categorization analysis allows the analyst to see how the members are displaying their cultural knowledge through utilizing categories within the sequence of interaction. A strong advocate of this combined approach was Watson (1997), who criticized the dualism of CA and MCA (p. 53). He stressed the inter-relatedness of these two perspectives, stating that "categorical and sequential aspects of talk are reflexively related or mutually determined" (p. 73) and argued that combining the two methods is essential to reveal the participants' sense-making processes and to help the analysts to avoid imposing their own categorical work on the data analysis.

6. Data Analysis

Before going into the analysis of the focused segment, I would like to discuss the rationale for the language choice for this particular interview interaction. Then, I will move on to the sequential and categorical analyses of the focused extracts. Moreover, I will carefully identify the identity work that emerges within the local interaction in relation to the categorization work produced by the interactants.

6-1. Language choice

Interview studies that involve bilingual or multilingual speakers sometimes lack explanations of the choice of language (Pavlenko, 2007). In her well-cited overview article on narrative analysis, Pavlenko (2007) pointed out the importance of discussing the rationale, implications, and limitations of the particular language choices the researcher or the participants make for conducting an interview. Based on the understanding that language use reflects the relationship and identity of the speaker and the listener, I would like to further discuss this topic for this study.

The choice of language for this interview was made by the respondent during the first interview. After a brief introduction of the background of the respondent's work career to date, the interviewer explicitly initiated a question regarding the choice of language, as observed in the following extract.

Extract 1 : Choice of language [03/28/08]

```
48   A:  Are you comfortable using English in this interview, or
49       do you want to do it in Japanese (.) English is okay?
50       (..)
51   T:  yeah. English is fine.
```

The first turn in line 48 was taken up by the respondent (T) as a yes/no question as she orients to it and provides a positive answer 'yeah' in line 51. This choice of language by the respondent is significant, since it reflects her high competence in using English as she is not thrown by the question 'Are you comfortable using English in this interview?' addressed to her in line 48. Living in rural area of Japan, there are not many opportunities to use English in daily life; however, she mainly uses English to teach her English classes. Having a high language proficiency is viewed as a core element of language teacher's professional identity (Richards, 2023, p. 256). Thus, the choice of using English in this interview seems to reflect both her 'situated identity' (Zimmerman, 1998, p. 88) as an 'English teacher' and her 'teacher identity' (Richards, 2023, p. 253) as a professional with high language proficiency, capable of using English to answer questions for this interview.

6-2. Sequential and categorical analysis

The following extract was produced after a discussion of the participant's teaching philosophy in the second interview.

Extract 2 : 'initiation' and 'response' [04/03/08]

```
346 → A:  umm (.) why do you like (.) teaching (.) English (.)
347       so much, like (0.5) what do you like about teaching English.
348       (1.0)
349 → T:  well first I wanted to be teacher, (.) I wanted to be
350       a PE teacher because I loved the volleyball
351   A:  uh-huh
352   T:  a:: then I came to like English a lot
353   A:  uh-huh
354   T:  I changed my mind
355   A:  yes
356   T:  yea and there's another re:ason but um yeah.
357   A:  uh-huh
```

From the above extract, there are two characteristics which show that this interaction is oriented by the participants as an interview interaction. One characteristic is the 'initiation' and 'response' formation, and the other is the frequent minimal responses produced by one of the interactants. In line 346, one interactant (A) initiates a question, and the other party orients to this by providing a response to this inquiry (line 349). In this sequence, the two interactants manifest their discourse identities as a 'questioner' and an 'answerer.' T never becomes a questioner in this whole sequence of interaction, which indicates that the participants are orienting to this interaction as an interview by fulfilling their roles as a questioner and an answerer.

After the initiation and reply sequence, A keeps providing minimal responses, such as "uh-huh", in lines 351, 353, and 357. These conversational continuers are employed in this sequence in order to show acknowledgement to the talker and to let the other party have the floor to continue to tell their stories (Silverman, 1998). Thus, in this sequence, the discourse identity of the two interactants shifts to 'story-teller' and 'story-recipient.' Moreover, continuers show the collaborative nature of this interaction as an active interview (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004), in which both interviewer and the respondent co-construct the interaction. Without the continuers, T cannot keep taking turns to do story-telling.

The frequent production of continuers by the story recipient can also be explained in relation to the context in which this interaction was produced. As explained earlier, this interaction was

produced through an online software called *Skype*, where the two interactants were not able to monitor each other's facial and body movements as closely as how they usually would in face-to-face interaction (web cameras, which allow the users to visually see each other, were not used: it was just an audio call). Due to the nature of this interaction, it was important for the story-recipient to frequently produce continuers to let the story-teller know the turns had been heard and that the story could continue.

It is interesting to point out that in line 346, the questioner addresses the respondent as someone who likes teaching English, which shows that a certain membership is ascribed to the respondent by the questioner. Baker (2002) claimed that "no question is neutral" (p. 787), which means that all questions shape how participants characterize each other in the interaction, and it has a consequence on how interaction is produced. Moreover, this question evokes the situated and professional identity of T as an 'English teacher' as well as the membership category device 'teacher' as a collection of a category that will be further expanded by the respondent, for instance 'PE teacher' (line 349). In line 349, the respondent shapes the answer by expressing how the subject did not matter for her, but being a teacher was more important for her. The subject matter could have been anything, such as PE (Physical Education) or English. This is a very interesting way to shape an answer because the respondent is not providing an expected answer for the question being addressed.

Extract 3 shows the respondent's account of why she wanted to start teaching English.

Extract 3 : first motivation

```
358  T:  so:: (0.5) a: the very beginning(.)
359  A:  uh-huh
360→ T:  a:: stage, I thought that a I wanted to teach English to
361      the very beginners (.)which is (.) the junior high school
362      first year students who start learning English
363  A:  uh-huh
364→ T:  in- in my time, um:(1.0) well (0.8) I think most of us
365  A:  uh-huh
366  T:  didn't study English before we entered junior high school
367  A:  uh-huh
368→ T:  and then a in those days that the way English was taught
369      was not very interesting
370  A:  uh-huh
371  T:  we didn't have lots of sounds, it's not in communicative way,
372      (0.7)
373  T:  so it was like textbook subject.
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374  A:  uh-huh
375  T:  a: so I wanted to teach English in a fun way (.) and then
376      e:as:y way for them to understand,
377  A:  uh-huh
378  T:  so that number of kids who don't like English would be(.)
         very small
379  A:  uh-huh
380  T:  understand best, that was my (0.5) first motivation,
         to be an English teacher
381  A:  uh-huh
```

This sequence shows the respondent's account for why she decided to become an English teacher. In line 360, starting with the hesitation marker "a::", she produces a statement which requires an account of why she wanted to teach English to beginners, specifically "junior high school first year students" (lines 361-362). She provides an account by utilizing categories like "in my time" (line 364) and "in those days" (line 368) and evoking category-bound predicates to explain how she learned English in an uninteresting way. The activities associated with the category 'English teaching in the old days' were described as "didn't have lots of sounds" (line 371), "not in communicative way" (line 371), and "like textbook subject" (line 373). These category-bound activities are achieving two things. One is to provide an explanation of why the way English was taught was so boring in her time, and another is to contrast this boring teaching with her current way of teaching English. In line 375, she explains how she wanted to teach English in contrast with how she was taught English by evoking predicates like "fun way" and "e:as:y way" (lines 375-376) to decrease the number of students who do not like English.

In the continuing extract, the story-teller starts to evoke a new category: 'born teacher.'

Extract 4 : born to be a teacher
```
382→ T:  a::: but I think a I was born (0.9) a:: to be a teacher,
383      because I really enjoy teaching,
384  A:  uh-huh
385      (0.6)
386  T:  and I- I enjoy associating with the young ones,
387  A:  uh-huh
388  T:  from five year olds to eighteen twenty (0.5) I- I think umm
389  A:  °uh-huh°
390  T:  I'm- I'm very good at social skills.
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391  A:  uh-huh
392  T:  I teach at a univer- open university of Japan, and my
393      students they are all grown-ups.
394  A:  uh-huh
395      (1.0)
396  T:  and then eldest one will be: in seventies,
397  A:  [uh-huh
398  T:  [somewhere in seventies.
399  T:  and we can all build up a very good relationship.
400  A:  uh-huh
401      (1.0)
402  T:  and classroom atmosphere is very good
403  A:  uh-huh=
404  T:  =you know, (0.8) so I think um. (0.6) yeah. I really like
405  A:  uh-huh
406  T:  to be
407  A:  uh-huh
408  T:  with the little ones to old ones
409  A:  [uh-huh
410  T:  [and a: teaching, I can enjoy teaching and a: when I see
411      the results or achievements (1.1) a:: of my teaching,
412      I'm VERY very happy too (.)
413  A:  ummm
```

The hesitation marker "a:::" and the contrast marker "but" in line 382, seem to indicate that the story-teller is introducing a new topic or a story in contrast to her previous talk. She introduces a new category "born to be a teacher" as a contrast of just an "English teacher" or a "PE teacher," which were discussed earlier in the interaction. She provides a range of category-bound activities for 'born teacher,' for instance "enjoy teaching" (line 383), "enjoy associating with young ones" (line 386), "very good at social skills" (line 390), "build up a very good relationship" (line 399), "classroom atmosphere is very good" (line 402), and "really like to be with the little ones and old ones" (lines 404-408). These predicates are all attached to the subject "I", which shows that she has all these characteristics of a 'born teacher,' which thus make her a 'born teacher.' In other words, by evoking these category-bound activities and presenting them as her practice, she is justifying why she thinks she is a "born teacher."

Moreover, by providing an alternative category, the story-teller assembles an account of herself as not just a person who likes teaching English, but as a person who is good at teaching no matter

what subject it is. In relation to the question that was initially addressed in line 346 (i.e., why do you like teaching English so much?), the respondent utilizes the new category to depict herself as someone who does not just "like to teach English" but enjoys teaching in general and feels satisfied about her job. This sequence reveals how the story-teller's moral sense making is put together using categories, memberships, and predicates in a skillful way. As a result of this account, she is making sense of how she is a competent teacher in general, as well as someone who teaches English very well. Furthermore, these categories and predicates evoked in this sequence reflect both the story-teller's sense of *commitment* as a professional and her *self-efficacy*, which are also important components of 'teacher identity' (Richards, 2023).

The story continues to evolve as the storyteller further evokes psychological and emotional terms in the following extract.

Extract 5 : philosophy of education

```
414→ T:  and also the um (0.7) psychological (1.1) bond gets (0.7)
415      um stronger and stronger?
416  A:  uh-huh
417→ T:  we trust each other?
418  A:  uh-huh
419→ T:  and we love each other? (.) after all, (.) you know?(.)
420      teaching and being taught (.) that kind of a: relationship?
421  T:  it's really wonderful (.) when you really feel love, that exists
422      between you and your students.
423  A:  I see:
424  T:  hmmm
425→ A:  so trust is (0.3) one of the key words.
426  T:  withou-(0.9)Yes. without trust, the education doesn't work out.
427  (.)
428  A:  uhm
```

For instance, the "psychological bond" getting stronger (lines 414-415) and words that represent abstract concepts such as "trust" (line 417) and "love" (line 419) are effectively used to show strong affiliation towards the invisible concept of a good relationship. In addition, the rising intonation in lines 415, 417, 419, and 420 shows that the story-teller is listing up the characteristics of what she values in her teaching, i.e., building close relationships with her students.

In line 423, the story-recipient produces the strong acknowledgement "I see," and the storyteller

indicates that there is nothing more to add by uttering a weak response token in line 424. The story-recipient takes the initiative to summarize the key point of what the story-teller has been saying previously by clarifying her understanding in line 425, which was taken as a question initiation by the storyteller in the next turn. She provides an answer and positively acknowledges the previous summary and re-states her educational philosophy to conclude her story. This turn displays her views on both what education should be and what she values the most for a good education. This last interaction particularly shows the nature of co-construction by both parties through accumulating shared understanding and clarifying it through question and answer. Line 428 connotes the end of the sequence by the interviewer providing no further comments on what the respondent had mentioned.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

There are four analytical implications that I would like to identify based on the analysis presented above. First is the participants' orientation to this interaction as interview activity, next is the multiple and interchangeable nature of identity work, third is the consequence of evoked membership and category-bound predicates, and fourth is the types of identities evolving and being constructed through the interview.

First of all, the analysis revealed that this particular interaction was managed as an interview talk by the participants through their orientation to it. As analysts, we need to take into consideration that, just because the context is assumed to be an interview context, it does not mean that the participants orient to the activity as an interview activity. Through sequential analysis, the analyst is able to reveal what participants are displaying and how they are making sense of the interaction. Thus, it is important to always observe what participants are doing in each turn and see what they are orienting to and whether they are engaging in the activity as interview interaction.

Second, the complex identity work that is made relevant by the participants needs to be closely attended to. The focused-on sequence was only about three minutes, and yet the analysis uncovered frequent shifts and the emergence of various discourse identities, situated identities, and teacher identity. Thus, as discourse analysts, we need to be aware of the relevant identity work that is displayed in the interaction and avoid assuming that any pre-existing identities will be relevant. For instance, in this sequence, there was no orientation by the interactants towards the situated identities of 'mother' and 'daughter.' In other words, the participants did not make this identity relevant in this interaction. Therefore, the identity construction by the participants should not be assumed but should be closely attended to by focusing on what identities have been evoked and made relevant.

Third, the analysis indicated that membership and category-bound predicates are evoked by both the questioner and the respondent. The questioner invoked a particular membership of 'teacher who likes teaching English' and ascribed this membership to the respondent by addressing her with a pre-formed question. As a result, the respondent was expected to produce an account of being a

member of that category in her answer, which was negotiated during her story-telling. Thus, as an interviewer and as an analyst, we need to be careful of this unconscious membership-category work and ascription that we do regularly as social members. In other words, questioners should be aware of the dangers of assumptions and ascriptions they might impose whenever they ask questions. Being aware of this subtle categorical work, which can have a consequence on the interaction, is important for future practice and analysis.

Last but not least, I would like to discuss the various identities observed and analyzed throughout the interview. 'Discourse identities' and 'situated identities' (Zimmerman, 1998), as well as 'teacher identity' (Richards, 2023), were observed throughout this interview. As we saw in Extract 1, the respondent's choice of language reflected both her 'situated identity' as a teacher and 'teacher identity' as a professional and capable English teacher. Extract 2 showed how the interactants oriented to the 'discourse identities' of a 'story-teller' and 'story-recipient' and 'questioner' and 'answerer' through their actions in how they engaged in the interaction. It is through Extracts 3 and 4 that we could closely observe the story-teller's careful use of specific categories that reflect her strong sense of 'teacher identity' as not just a mere 'teacher' but a 'born teacher' as she supports her claim by providing specific category-bound activities as an account. Thus, interviews can provide us with a rich source of identity work achieved by both interviewers and interviewees, and it is worth exploring how various identities are evoked while question-and-answer sequences are produced.

Future research on EFL-teacher-identity construction should approach interview data as an active interaction based on ethnomethodological perspectives. The interview data analyzed from a sequential and categorical analysis will provide deep understanding of the *hows* and *whats* of the interview interaction and help the analyst to reveal the sense-making process from the interactants' point of view. The delicate and complex identity work can also be effectively revealed based on this approach that will provide insights on how identities are constructed in locally situated interaction rather than an analysis based on preconceived ideas and categories.

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Appendix

Questions addressed in the two semi-structured interviews

First interview [03/28/08]:

#1 Name/where do you work at?, #2 Language choice, #3 What was your motive to teach English?, #4 How did you learn English?, #5 What was your study abroad experience?, #6 How does all your learning experience affect your teaching?, #7 How do you start teaching beginners?

Second interview [04/04/08]:

#1 Can you tell me more about teaching beginners?, #2 What is your working history?, #3 Why did you build your own school?, #4 What's your teaching philosophy?, #5 Why do you like teaching English so much?, #6 How do you support slow learners?, #7 Who has influenced your teaching practice?

Transcription Conventions

[	The point where overlapping talk starts
]	The point where overlapping talk ends
(0.0)	length of silence in tenths of a second
(.)	micro-pause less than 2/10 of a second
underlining	relatively high pitch
CAPS	relatively high volume
::	lengthened syllable
-	cut-off; self-interruption
=	'latched' utterances
?/./,	rising/falling/continuing intonation respectively

「教師は天職」：ある日本人英語教師のインタビュー

渡邉　綾

概　要

　英語教師のアイデンティティに関する研究は、過去20年に渡り英語教育研究のテーマとして扱われてきた（Richards, 2023）。これらの多くは、多様な背景を持つ英語教師の経験や考えを収集するために、インタビューを用いてきた。しかし、インタビューする側とされる側の対話の過程を通して、どのように教師のアイデンティティが協働で構築されていくのか、そのプロセスを分析する研究はあまりない。そこで本研究では、インタビュー自体を社会的活動と捉えるアクティブ・インタビュー (ホルスタイン＆グブリアム, 2004)の視点を踏まえて分析する。そして、インタビューで繰り広げられるやりとりを書き起こしたものを基に、英語教師のアイデンティティがどのように構築されていくのかを明らかにする。具体的には、ある日本人教師が語りの中で、どのように英語教師としてのアイデンティティをインタビューアーと共に構築するのか、質的研究手法を用いて分析した。

キーワード：教師のアイデンティティ、TESOLとアイデンティティー、英語教師、インタビュー、ア
　　　　　　イデンティティの構築