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MDT2015-1398

**Autobiographical Narrative:
An Exploration of Identity
Construction Processes in Relation to
Gender and Race**

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**Nadeem, N. (2015) "Autobiographical Narrative:
An Exploration of Identity Construction Processes in Relation to Gender and
Race", Athens: ATINER'S Conference Paper Series,
No: MDT2015-1398.**

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URL Conference Papers Series: www.atiner.gr/papers.htm

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ISSN: **2241-2891**

23/04/2015

Autobiographical Narrative: An Exploration of Identity Construction Processes in Relation to Gender and Race

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Abstract

Autobiographical narrative is “a selective reconstruction of the ruminative past” and an account that serves to explain, for the self and others, how the person came to be whom s/he is at present (McAdams, 2011) and thus can provide a rich source of data for sociolinguistic analysis and a speculation in the studies of identity construction processes and narrative combined. The present paper aims to investigate how narrators- – through the subtle exploitation of tense patterns manage to reflect an integrated vision of their identity and evaluate these identity construction processes. To do this, I will a) develop a model of identity construction and evaluation processes in autobiographical narrative that is based upon the writings of McAdams (1985 & 2011) and Luyckx et al. (2011)’s identity model; b) closely examine how narrators subtly use tense patterns to combine the acts of narrative with moments of reflection and finally, c) relate these linguistic features of autobiographical narrative to the process of identity construction and evaluation. For this purpose, I use as data two speeches by two females each representing a different socio- cultural background: an ex-female slave from pre-civil war America and a Lebanese author in which both reflect upon their ruminative past and how they became who they are at present. The model and the analysis give empirical evidence that a close investigation of tense patterns in autobiographical narratives is an effective analytical and explanatory tool that shows how narrators reflect their evolving self, display, and evaluate identity on its individual, relational and collective levels and make a stance on social constructs such as race and gender.

Keywords: Autobiographical Narrative, Evolving Self, Critical Discourse Analysis, Identity Construction and Evaluation Processes, Stance- Making.

Introduction

The present study examines how the subtle shifts from past ruminative acts of narrative to reflection on life events and social variables reveal the identity construction and evaluation processes in autobiographical narrative. Primarily inspired by Luyckx et al.'s process oriented approach to personal identity development and McAdams' work on narrative identity as the theoretical constructs on which the study is based, the identity construction model developed below postulate the following: a) through the act of narration, narrators manage to construct both a sense of who they are and the reality within which they live. This is discursively achieved through the subtle exploration and narration of significant life events and the interpretive frames provided to make sense of these narrated events. Patterns of tense shifts from past narration to present reflection and vice versa are an integral part of the marked linguistic features through which the constructive process of identity formation and evaluation is revealed. Quoting Kelly (1955) Berzonsky (2011) maintains that "to understand experiences, people manufacture personal constructs that govern the selection, integration, and understanding of environmental stimuli. Experiences and life episodes are not inherently meaningful. A person's reality reflects personal interpretations of objects and events, not the events in themselves." (P. 57).

In this sense, autobiographical narrative can provide rich resources of data on how identity is discursively displayed and simultaneously evaluated on its multiple levels: individual (a developmental sense of who I am) relational (through the positive/ negative interaction with significant others) and collective (a reevaluation of the social and cultural constructs in the socio-political context in which narrators live. To illustrate, in the extract below, the shift from past narration to present reflection significantly reveals the collective side of Mary Reynold's identity as she reflects upon the black history of slavery and racism:

When a nigger died they let his folks come out the fields to see him afore he died. They buried him the same day, take a big plank and bust it with a ax in the middle nough to bend it back, and put the dead nigger in betwixt it. They'd cart them down to the graveyard on the place and not bury them deep nough that buzzards wouldn't come circlin' round. Niggers mourns now, but in them days they wasn't no time for mournin'.

Therefore, an effective model of analysis should capture this interconnection between the process of narration that reveals multiple aspects of the narrator's identity and the interpretive frames provided to simultaneously evaluate those aspects. A key discourse feature of the interconnection is the shift of tense from the past narrative clauses to present reflections which gives an indication of how Mary presents herself as a member of the black slaves' community and how she evaluates the narrated events from her own personal perspective.

Thus, the proposed model provides an integrative conceptualization of identity construction on its multiple levels. Through the tools of critical discourse analysis (CDA), the study will reveal how autobiographical narrative is the reflection of the psycho-sociolinguistic practice of identity construction and evaluation processes. In summary, the proposed model captures and builds upon three key postulates:

- A) Autobiographical narrative reveals the identity construction and evaluation processes on its three parallel levels: the individual, relational and collective levels.
- B) The narrative- as it stands- is the concrete manifestation of the complex process of identity construction through the exploration of ruminative past (CF. Luyckx et al., 2011) - particularly childhood memories- that leaves its mark on present identity; and a means to expose, question and ultimately make a stance on social constructs such as race and gender.
- C) Sequentiality and tense shifts (from past to present and vice versa) will give empirical linguistic evidence of the concept of evolving self as well as provide the link between the identity exploration process that happens via narration on the one hand and the evaluation/ stance making process that happens through the act of reflection on the other.

Before I graphically introduce and explain the proposed identity construction model of analysis, I will wrap up the present section by giving some necessary background information on the data. In the next section, I will briefly review the theoretical framework of the study and explain the proposed model. In the section under the heading *Research Questions: Application of the Model and Methodology*, the main research questions and the analysis procedures will be presented. The following section (*Results of the Quantitative Analysis*) will tackle the results of the quantitative analysis, and then, in the section under the heading *Discussion*, I will round off the arguments presented through a final discussion. In the final section, conclusions will be drawn and suggestions for future research are provided.

Background Information about the Two Narratives

The two autobiographical narratives used as data are taken from the site “Gifts of Speech”. They are both given as public speeches and then transferred into written texts on the website. The rationale behind choosing the two narratives is that they both represent the genre of autobiographical narrative from a gender/ race perspective (which is the focus of the present study). In both, the narrators reflect upon stories from their ruminative past and how it affected “the way they are now”. More significantly, they both represent two different cultures at two different times in history so they shed light on how social constructs such as gender and race are enacted in different socio-

historical contexts and are reflected through the psycho-sociolinguistic practices used in the autobiographical narrative.

The Theoretical Framework

Developing a Model of Analysis: Exploring the Discourse Features of Identity Construction and Evaluation Processes in Autobiographical Narrative

There is a huge literature that investigates the process of identity formation and evaluation in narrative discourse using critical discourse analysis tools (CF. Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Bamberg et al., 2011; Moore, 2006, Schiffrin, 1996 for exemplars of such work). As a genre, autobiographical narrative can offer a rich source of data for identity and narrative research combined. Through employing specific types of clauses and tense patterns, narrators can display their identity at several levels of inclusiveness both as individuals and as social interactants who interact with others in the social milieu who in turn are nothing but the embodiments of the social values and constructs that prevail in a given socio-cultural context at a given time in history. Bamberg et al. (2011) writes:

Repeated choices in language use, as well as changes in these choices over time, signal “acts of identity in which people reveal both their personal identity and their search for social roles”. (P. 184)

The study takes an integrative approach to identity formation and evaluation as its point of departure. The model of analysis suggested below is indebted to Luyckx et al.’s identity model (2011) and McAdams’ work on narrative identity. Luyckx et al.’s identity construction process model (2011) presents a four-dimensional model of identity formation and evaluation (P. 80). The model explores two important aspects of identity formation: exploration and commitment, then unpacks them into five distinct but interrelated identity formation processes: three forms of exploration (ruminative, in-breadth, and in-depth) and two forms of commitment (commitment making and identification). “The model includes processes of commitment formation and commitment evaluation— each of which includes one dimension of exploration and one dimension of commitment” (figure 1 below).¹

The model suggested below adapts Luyckx’s model so as to describe and explain the discursive display of identity in autobiographical narrative. The two dimensions of exploration and commitment are adapted into a “four step process” that simultaneously cover: the ruminative exploration of identity themes through the act of narration on the one hand and the evaluation of these identity themes through the act of reflection on the other. In autobiographical narrative, narrators mainly explore their ruminative past that reveal different identity aspects and as they do, they provide interpretive frames that help us

¹For full explanation and examples, refer to Luyckx et al.’s PP. 79-80

evaluate their own stance on key events and the social variables at play in the narrative. Therefore, the proposed model taps on Luyckx et al.'s model but differs in the dimensions used to describe identity formation and evaluation processes in autobiographical narrative (compare figure 1 below with figure 2).

Exploration in breadth ↔ commitment making ↔ exploration in depth ↔ identification with commitment

Figure 1 shows the simple four step process of the identity formation in Luyckx et al.'s model (2011: 82):

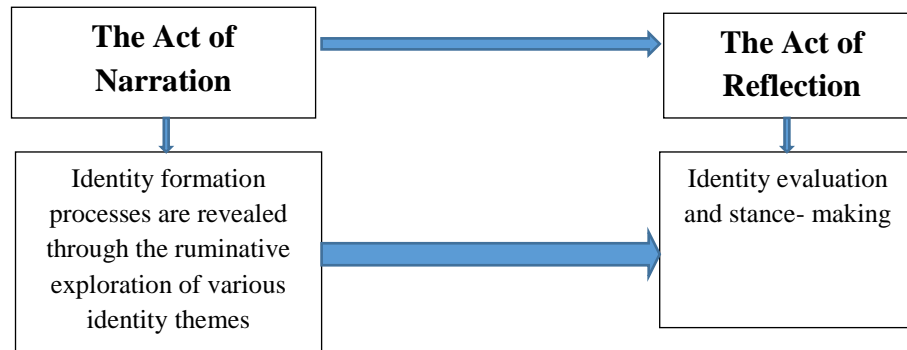


Figure 2 presents the key processes of identity development in autobiographical narrative as used in the model below (see figure 3).

Another significant work that explains the processes of identity construction in narrative is McAdams' (2011) work on narrative identity. He examines the personal development and intricate display of culture in narrative identity. In other words, identity narrative does reflect both aspects of identity: individual and social. According to his analysis, narrative identity does two things: first, it makes the processes of exploration and the final stance making whether in the form of commitment or rejection of social categories transparent, described and reflected upon. McAdams (2011) writes:

Narrative identity, therefore, reflects gender and class divisions and the patterns of economic, political, and cultural hegemony that prevail at a given point in a society's history. (P.111)

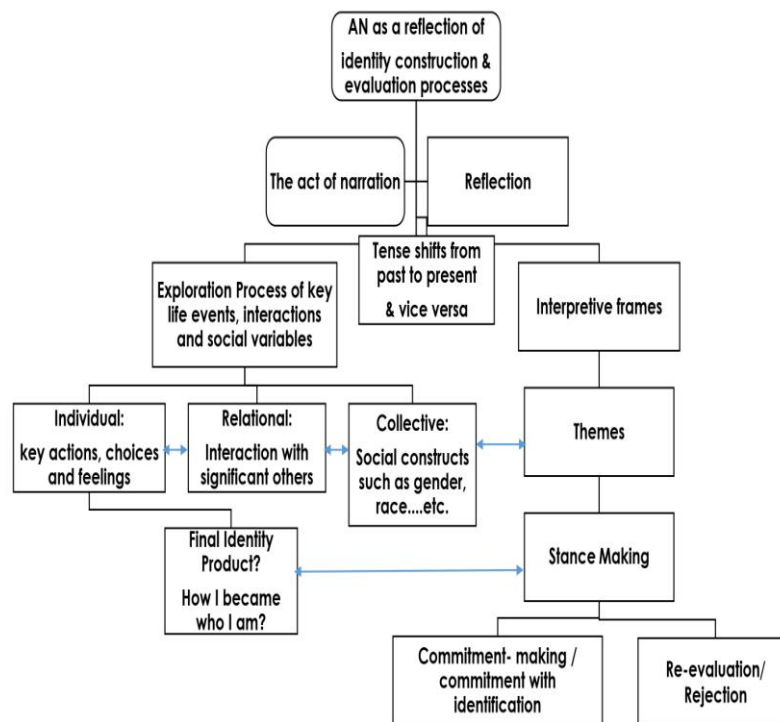
Second, on a personal level, it provides a time link that ties past to present and helps predict the future "me". In other words, autobiographical narrative not just present identity in its integrative whole but provides a sequential evidence of the concept of "evolving self". McAdams (2011) writes: "complete with setting, scenes, characters, plots, and themes, narrative identity combines a person's reconstruction of his or her personal past with an imagined future in order to provide a subjective historical account of one's own development, an instrumental explanation of a person's most important commitments in the realms of work and love, and a moral justification of who a person was, is, and will be." (P.100). According to him, the mere act of narration empowers people to make sense of their lives as well as "provides a person's life with some semblance of unity, purpose, and meaning." (P. 100)

Through sequentiality, narrators provide a timeline of key events that connect these identity construction and evaluation processes through the narrative. What personal narrative does- as he (2011) claims- is to fill in this gap between what is personal and social as well as connects these life events and psychosocial processes in time to give them meaning, unity and a life focus. McAdams (2011) writes: “integrating human lives in time is what stories ideally do” (P. 101.) Quoting Erikson (1963), he writes: “... his seminal writings on the topic suggest that identity itself might look something like a story that puts a life together in time and in culture.” (P.101)

So far, no systematic attempts have been made to integrate how autobiographical narrative reflects the processes of identity formation and evaluation into a single empirically based model of personal identity development and this is what the proposed model below aims to do.

The Proposed Model

Drawing upon the above theories, I attempt to develop a model of analysis that mainly focuses upon the linguistic manifestations of the identity construction/ evaluation narrative practices (figure 3 below).



The double-headed arrows emphasize the reciprocal nature of the relationships among these dimensions.

Figure 3 presents a simplified graphical presentation of the interplay between the act of narration and the processes of identity formation on the one hand and the act of reflection and commitment evaluation in autobiographical narrative on the other.

The model is mainly an analytical and explanatory tool that attempts to incorporate CDA tools into the analysis of identity formation and evaluation processes in autobiographical narrative. The model shows two parallel processes: the act of narration by which narrators explore key events and interactions in their lives that shape different aspects of their identity and how they simultaneously reflect upon them. As such, the narrated events can be investigated under unifying identity themes that reflect different aspects of identity: individual, relational and collective and at the same time provide interpretive frames “a lens to see through the events”. As observed in the data, the act of narration actually involves the ruminative exploration of key events, actions and interactions that are rendered significant through the narrators’ reflection and constant evaluation of those events.

According to the model, what evolves out of the four parallel processes of narration and reflection is an exploration of identity on its multiple levels that eventually leads to commitment evaluation and a final stance-making whereby narrators either eventually commit to or reevaluate not just who they are but the social/ cultural context they live in. However, the model does not imply that this is a final identity product or a finished task but a continuous psychosocial task as discussed in the section under the heading *Evidence of stance making: Identity formation and evaluation as an ongoing process*.

Research Questions: Application of the Model and Methodology

In an attempt to apply a single empirically based model of personal- social identity development in autobiographical narrative, the two narratives are used as the backdrop behind which a number of theoretical questions are raised and empirically investigated; namely:

1. How can the proposed model help explain the processes of identity construction and identity evaluation in autobiographical narrative? Specifically, how can the act of narration itself empower narrators not just to display their identity on its multiple levels: individual, relational and collective but eventually make a stance on social constructs such as race and gender?
2. What empirical linguistic evidence can autobiographical narrative provide on the discursive display of these identity processes through the marked and unmarked tense patterns in the data? What are the implications for psycho-sociolinguistic theories of identity and narrative research?

As stated, the study adopts a CDA approach to validate the model proposed and be able to track the interconnections between the processes outlined above. Therefore, to examine how autobiographical narrative can be a reflection of these parallel processes, I chose the clause as the unit of analysis and tense patterns as a key mark of the interconnection between the narration-identity exploration process on the one hand and the reflection- identity evaluation and stance –making process on the other. Clauses are identified as either narrative (mainly representing the events per se); they answer the questions of who did what, when, where and how?¹) or reflective (mainly dealing with the narrator’s perceptions of the events, emotions, reasoning, attitudes, and opinion of what is going on in the course of the narrative; i.e., how the narrator makes sense of these accounts by ascribing a range of beliefs, desires, emotions, intentions, and goals to the inhabitants of the narrative world. In the analysis, clauses are marked by tense and function as follows:

A: Narrative clauses mainly deal with the ruminative exploration of past events and therefore, are typically given in the past since the events narrated naturally occur prior to the act of narration.

B: Reflective clauses; however, will be typically given in the present to show how events of the ruminative past impact and shape present identity. Through the tense / function shifts, there will be a concrete reflection of the concept of “the evolving self” and an evaluation of the impact of events on different aspects of identity- i.e. “This is what happened to me and this is how it affected me at present and made me who I am now”- (as will be shown in this section). Therefore, the marked/ unmarked tense patterns in each clause type is hypothesized to be as follows:

Narrative clauses in the past	Narrative clauses in the present	Reflective clauses in the present	Reflective clauses in the past
Unmarked	Marked	Unmarked	Marked

Specifically, the following procedures were followed:

First, as a tool of analysis, the researcher designed a table that includes columns of the two investigated processes: narration and reflection with identity themes and marked tense variables.² To ensure objective and validated results, the table was passed to 9 post graduate students in a sociolinguistic course after a brief reading of the data and explanation of the designed model. Since the analysis focuses on the type of clauses and the tenses used as the discursal link between the above processes, an analysis task was assigned in detail (see appendix 1). Then, the marked narrative clauses and reflective clauses were counted and contrasted by the researcher with a ratio of (1: 0.51)

¹ The distinction between narrative and reflective clauses is a modified version of Labov’s (1972) narrative and evaluative clauses. For a critique, see Nadeem (2013)

² See the table used in the contrastive analysis in the results section.

to overcome the difference in length and word count in the two narratives¹. Finally, this was followed by a discussion in order to analyze the interrelationship between the narrative/ reflection acts and the identity construction and evaluation processes in the light of the significance of the marked usage of clauses and tenses; so we can reach a better understanding of the concept of evolving self and the integrative approach to identity construction and evaluation processes in autobiographical narrative.

Results of the Quantitative Analysis:

The quantitative analysis gives substantial evidence that autobiographical narrative as a genre is a reflection of the identity construction and evaluation processes. The analysis investigates the relationship between the four variables under investigation: narrative versus reflective clauses and identity exploration and identity commitment and evaluation.

Through the investigation of identity themes, it was evident that the identity construction and evaluation processes are reflected on multiple levels through the exploration of life events and interactions with significant others in the social context. It has also been observed that reflection clauses not just stand as a proof of the narrator's own perception of the events and interactions but an evaluation of specific social variables: e.g. in Mary Reynolds, race and slavery come as the mostly exposed, questioned and eventually rejected variables whereas in Al-Shaykh's, issues of gender, patriarchy and the oppression of women and authors in the Arab World are predominantly the focal point of the narrative.

The model also works as an effective explanatory and analytic tool, though, in many instances, the borderline between what is narrative and reflective as well as the distinction between the identity themes is rather fuzzy and not always clear-cut. The analysis reveals how personal and social aspects of identity are so intertwined and at points inseparable particularly when events and interactions are emotionally overcharged. For example, in Al Shaykh's narrative, she said: "In one of many conversations with my mother, she lectured me, saying, "You should always remember, my daughter, that craftiness becomes second nature to the weak and the oppressed; it is the ultimate emancipation for a woman...". Here, there is an observed overlap between what is "individual", "relational" and "collective" and a much more subtle overlap between "what is narrative" and "what is reflective". Though the extract mainly focuses on the dialogue between Hanan and her mother- i.e. a relational aspect of identity; yet, there is reference to the collective state of women in the Arab world and issues of gender that far extends beyond the family episode.

The marked tense hypothesis also proves to be mostly valid; yet there are many exceptions in which narrators narrate certain personal/ relational or

¹ Mary Reynolds' narrative is 3.591 words whereas Al-Shaykh's is 6.983

collective events in present in order to make them more vivid and highlighted as extremely significant and so, are given a sense of present immediacy. Reflective clauses also occur in present and past. When they occur in present, the hypothesis of the evolving self is validated i.e. past events are shown to have present significance on one or more aspect of identity- whereas when they are in the past, the reflective clause is subtly and intricately interwoven with the narrative- that at times the whole narrative cannot be separated from the narrator's own perception of it. In other words, though these distinctions are theoretically valid; yet, in practice, these four processes are intricately interwoven as they provide an integrative view of the perceived self both as an individual and a social interactant.

Below is the contrastive table of the four processes under investigation

Author	Cases of narration in present			Cases of reflection in present			Cases of reflection in past		
	Self	Relational	Collective	Self	Relational	Collective	Self	Relational	Collective
Mary R.	6	164	43	29	5	19	25	14	20
Hanan Sh.	22	46	52	35	87	47	18	106	26

The contrastive table shows interesting trends in the data analysis. For example, Mary Reynolds' narrative shows high frequency of present relational narrative. Instances of interactions with significant others are mainly narrated in present to highlight the interactional episode whereas in Al-Shaykh's present narration relates more to self and the community (see figure 4 in the appendix). Moreover, there is no observed link between reflection and tense since reflective clauses in present and past show almost equal distribution in both narratives. Yet, in Al-Shaykh, they relate more to social aspects of identity particularly the nostalgic recollection of relational episodes while in Mary's they relate more to self or self in relation to the community (see figures 5 & 6 in the appendix). Therefore, we can conclude that three aspects of identity are reflected, however, narrators do use the language of "identity construction and identity evaluation" differently particularly in the extent these processes develop and influence each other in the narrative data. It can also be concluded that aspects of relational self is predominant in both narratives and the impact of significant others in the two narratives is huge. The low frequency in narrative and reflective clauses that pertain to self finally, shows how they are both preoccupied with the surrounding environment more than the individual self.

Discussion

In order to summarize the arguments developed in this paper, I will take a closer look at the following four parameters in the model that generally pose key postulates in identity theory and narrative literature.

Autobiographical Narrative: A Tool to Display Identity as One Integrative Whole

The data analysis shows how narrators often display personal and social identity aspects- which validates the argument that an integrative approach to identity is essential for a comprehensive understanding of how identity is formed and evaluated. As pointed out above, different identity categories often overlap and intertwine. Identity in its integrative whole is at once individual, interactional and collective. There is also a need to particularly do more research on reflection as a tool of identity evaluation process in autobiographical narrative.

Individual Identity: Sequentiality and the Concept of Evolving Self

An important aspect of individual identity is the concept of the evolving self; i.e., the shift from the ruminative exploration of life episodes to reflect upon their present significance (McAdams, 2011). It provides the time link between the act of narration and that of reflection and as such gives a sense of self- continuity –i.e. “how the ruminative exploration of past events made me who I am now”.

It should be noted, however, that the selected life episodes and the shift in tense in general do not necessarily reflect any real life sequence or even chronological order. McAdams (2011: 100) writes:

If one were able to “see” an identity, McAdams (1985) argued, it would look like a story—an internalized and evolving tale with main characters, intersecting plots, key scenes, and an imagined ending, representing how the person reconstructs the personal past (chapters gone by) and anticipates the future (chapters yet to come). As Erikson (1963) argued, a major function of identity is to organize a life in time. What might possibly organize a life in time better than a story?

The data analysis, however, has not always validated this link between the evolving self and the above- mentioned time frames of “past, present and future”. There is also no direct link between the clause function and tense shifts. Tense shifts do occur during narrative and reflection and temporality in general seems to carry a more psychological significance than chronological sequence. There are times when tense shifts point to an “evolving self” and reflect the subtle shift between ‘what is narrative’ and ‘what is reflective’ but more often, reflection comes intermixed with the past narrative mostly to reveal nostalgic reflections on past events and interactions.

However, the concept itself is still valid- not necessarily through a time link of past, present and future that ties life events chronologically- but through the perceived significance and impact of events on personal and social identity. The boundaries between past and present in many cases are blurred and the temporal sequence of the narrated events seems to be fuzzy. Using clause function and tenses, nevertheless, proves to be an operative discourse analysis tool since tense shifts in the two clause types provide evidence that temporality in general sheds light on the narrator's consciousness of the impact of the narrated event on different aspects of identity past and present.

Parameter 3: Autobiographical Narrative: A Reflection of Social and Cultural Variables

The data analysis also shows that narrators not just give a sense of who they think they are but the "reality" within which they live. Both narratives empower narrators to question and evaluate social variables in the course of the narrative- e.g. issues of gender and oppression in Al-Shaykh's, race and slavery in Reynolds'.

Both narratives focused on the individual in the middle of the social and cultural reality in which both narrators lived. The selected life episodes and interactions are meant to signal at the outset of the narrative the social variable/s that will be foregrounded, explored and ultimately evaluated.

Evidence of Stance making: Identity Formation and Evaluation as an ongoing Process

Through constant reflection on the narrative, the data provide insights into how narrators constantly assess and evaluate what certain ascribed social identities mean to them- e.g. what it means to be a female or a female author in the Arab World or a black American slave at a certain point in history. These ascribed social identities may carry different meanings for different individuals, and through the narrative these meanings can be explored, committed to, or simply rejected and rebelled against.

In other words, the double process of identity exploration via narration and identity evaluation via reflection not only tie the three aspects of identity together but help evaluate them as narrators make a stance on the social values, roles and transactions they narrate. The act of reflection itself has an identity evaluation function. It shows the narrator's perception of the events initially by selecting them and by integrating them within an interpretive frame that includes their own value judgments. At the end, reflection culminates in a sense of closure and a final stance- making.

In both narratives, narrators make a stance on what is shown to be the most significant social variable at play (for Mary, race and the brutality of slavery and for Al-Shaykh gender and patriarchy). Through Al-Shaykh's full identification with Shahrazad both as an individual and author, she managed to expose and reject the rigid patriarchal system and state of oppression in the Arab world. She identified herself with Shahrazad as a woman liberator and a rebel against the prevailing cultural norms. For example, Al-Shaykh's narrative

clearly reflects the state of her confused identity and her rejection of being an Arab female in: “I’ve become a wannabe: a French wannabe, an American wannabe, every kind of wannabe”.

This said, however, the model does not suggest that this is a finished task since the meanings of these social variables can be further explored and reevaluated during the narrator’s lifespan and in more and more narratives. At the end, it is important to note that the process of identity formation and evaluation is an ongoing psychosocial task as Luyckx et al. (2011) maintains:

Erikson stressed that identity is never “final” and continues to develop through the lifespan. Due to both normative developmental changes and transactions with the environment, one’s identity is subject to change and transformation. (P.78)

Conclusion

So far, the analysis of the data gives theoretical and empirical evidence that the model works as an operative tool for the analysis of the discursive display of identity in autobiographical narrative. The study as a whole confirms that formative and evaluative identity processes complement and influence each other in the narrative and therefore, should be included within a more comprehensive model as the one suggested in the study. The investigation of tense patterns helped to provide a discursal link between the four parallel processes of identity exploration via narration- and identity evaluation via reflection. Yet, the model can extend to cover the analysis of other discursal features and more language variables in relation to different identity categories.

Autobiographical narrative is also shown to reflect identity as an integrative whole revealing individual, relational and collective tendencies- which eventually culminates in a final stance- making on social constructs such as gender and race among others. Therefore, understanding the interplay between personal and social construction and evaluation processes is an important goal for future theorizing and research— especially to identify the conditions under which individuals will be more likely to internalize, commit to or may be challenge the socially constructed identity categories that prevail in their local and cultural contexts.

Appendix 1

Analysis task

- Read the autobiographical narratives assigned and as you read, fill in the table below as follows

Author	Narration			Reflection					
	Present narrative clauses			Reflective clauses					
				Present reflective clauses			Past reflective clauses		
I.	Rel.	C.	I.	Rel.	C.	I.	Rel.	C.	
Reynolds									
Al. Sh.									

- Identify clauses in the text by putting slashes (/).
- Specify the function of the clause as either narrative **N.** or reflective **R.** If the clause fits both criteria, mark the clause as having a dual function and include it in the analysis under the two columns.
- Specify the identity theme displayed- i.e., whether the clause content relates to the narrator as an individual (**I.**), relational (**Rel.**) or collective (**C.**) In case of mixed identity themes, include the clause under two or more columns depending on the overlap in the identity content.
- Finally, check the tense used whether marked unmarked as follows:
 - Past narrative is unmarked (and not included in the analysis) whereas present narrative is marked.
 - Present reflections are unmarked while past reflections are marked.
 - Make a final count of clauses under each of the 9 columns.
 - Therefore, for each clause, there will be at least three criteria of analysis: function (narrative or reflective, tense (present or past) and identity theme (individual, relational or collective)

Class discussion

Reflect on the function, tense and identity themes displayed in the two autobiographical narratives and try to answer the following questions:

- 1- Do the clause function and tense match the hypothesis of marked unmarked? Why not?
- 2- Are the boundaries between different identity themes clear-cut or do they often overlap and why?
- 3- According to the final clause count, which type of clauses show high and low frequency in each narrative and why?
- 4- Are there any common tendencies in the two narratives? What are they if there are any?

Figure 4.

Author	Cases of Narration in Present		
	Self	Relational	Collective
Mary Renolds	6	164	43
Hanan Al-Shaykh	11.2	23.46	26.52

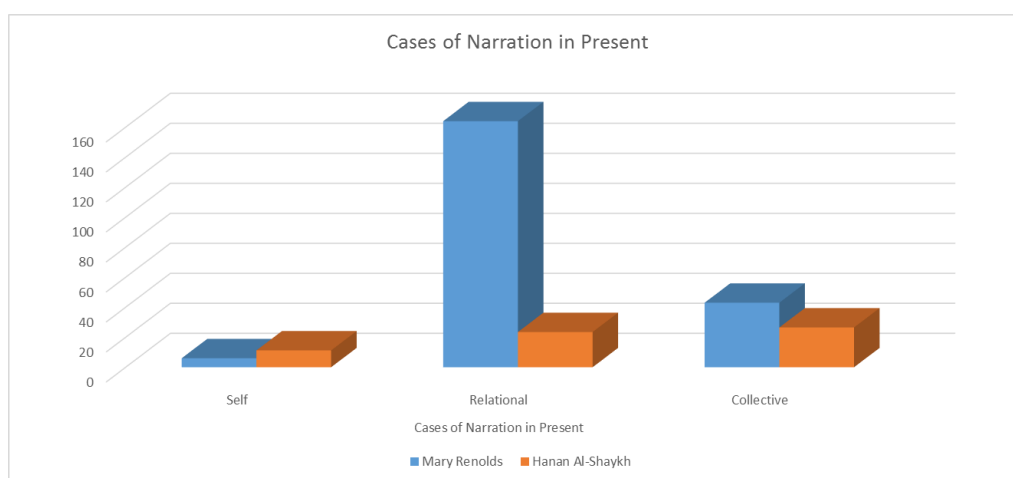


Figure 4 shows the graphic representation of the contrastive analysis of cases of present narration in relation to different identity themes.

Figure 5.

Author	Cases of Reflection in Present		
	Self	Relational	Collective
Mary Renolds	29	5	19
Hanan Al-Shaykh	17.9	44.37	23.97

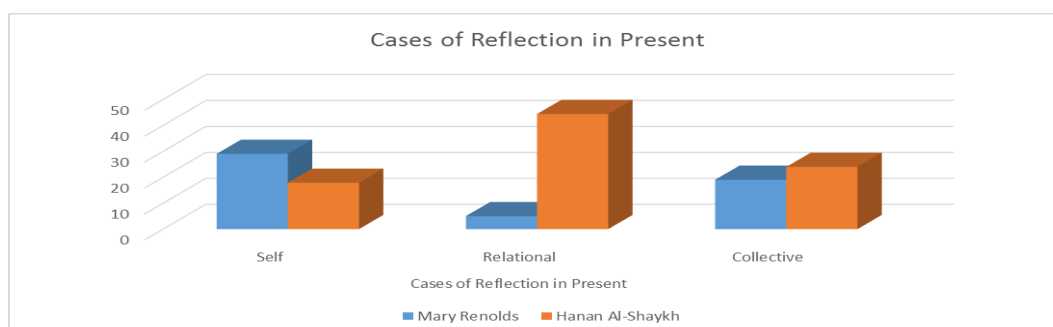


Figure 5 shows the graphic representation of the contrastive analysis of cases of present reflection in relation to different identity themes.

Figure 6.

Author	Cases of Reflection in Past		
	Self	Relational	Collective
Mary Renolds	25	14	20
Hanan Al-Shaykh	9.18	54.06	13.26

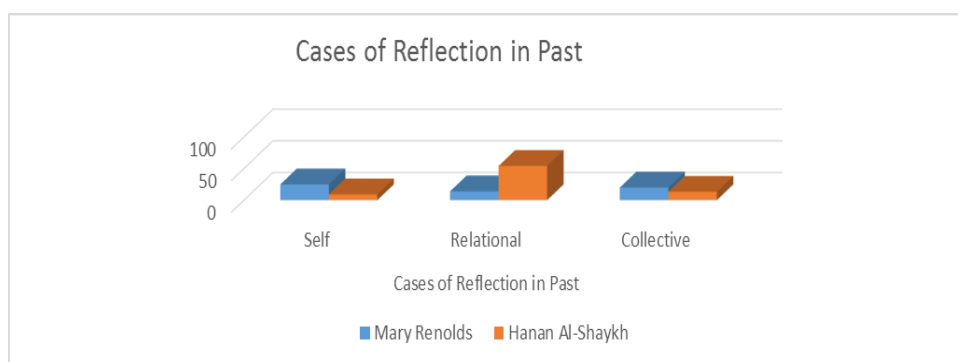


Figure 6 shows the graphic representation of the contrastive analysis of cases of past reflections in relation to different identity themes.

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