

Narrative Analysis in English Language Teachers' Professional Identity Research: A Review

Bharat Prasad Neupane
Laxman Gnawali

Abstract

Amidst the escalating emergence of generic methodological articles on narrative inquiry, this article critically reviews different narrative analysis approaches and their application in English language teachers' professional identity research. For this purpose, we reviewed currently available methodological books and articles on narrative inquiry in general and narrative analysis in particular. Additionally, we reviewed twenty purposively selected empirical articles published since 2015 that employed narrative inquiry to explore English teachers' professional identities. A review of methodological articles revealed that the narrative analysis and analysis of narrative dichotomy are blurred as a certain level of interpretation occurs during the co-construction of stories, transcribing, translating, restorying, and finally, the consumption of the reports by the readers. Consequently, many researchers have considered paradigmatic analysis as the first step of narrative analysis. In contrast, research practices showed that the interpretation of stories begins only after story generation. Besides, amongst different narrative analysis approaches, positioning analysis underscores how tellers represent themselves through narratives, whereas the small story approach of Barkhuizen accentuates analyzing content and context; however, narrative forms and linguistic features and their motives are rarely investigated. Though the small stories approach of Georgakopoulou (2007) advocates explicitly for considering ways of telling (linguistic features and communicative how), it is rarely evident in practice. This article, therefore, identifies a need for a comprehensive narrative analysis approach that considers what (content), where and when (context), how (form), and who and why (agency and discourse) of the story.

Keywords: *narrative analysis, review article, teacher identity, English language education*

Introduction

In his research proposal focusing on the identity transformation of English language teachers, the first author of the article proposed to use narrative inquiry as a research methodology. The members of the research

committee provided feedback that included making a significant shift to the methodology, particularly the meaning-making process from his proposed paradigmatic analysis of the storied lives of English language teachers from Nepal to explore their projected identities. In other words, the committee recommended

conducting a narrative analysis instead of thematization and crafting the proposal in a narrative mode of presentation. This article is the outcome of the literature review carried out for the research of which the second author was the supervisor.

Considering the questions and feedback, we started exploring methodological articles and came across Barkhuizen (2016), where he presents a short story approach to analyzing teachers' imagined identities. Apart from restorying the longitudinal study of the identity reconstruction of an immigrant named Sela from the Pacific Island of Tonga, Barkhuizen also substantiates why the short story analysis approach is appropriate for identity research in the article. Another study by Mendieta (2013) discusses different directions narrative inquiry can take, for instance, autobiography and life history, the role of researchers in producing narratives, the focus of narrative analysis, and the contribution of narrative inquiry in teaching English to the students of other languages (TESOL). Specifically, he highlights the role of the researcher as a co-creator in which the researcher actively participates in constructing stories along with participants and the importance of analyzing form, content, and context during narrative analysis. This article can immensely help novice researchers develop a fundamental understanding of narrative inquiry in a broader sense. When Barkhuizen (2016) highlights the appropriateness of a short story analysis framework with three layers of context in teachers' professional identity research, Mendieta's (2013) approach to narrative inquiry is generic.

Another study by Barkhuizen and Wette (2008) reports using narrative frames to explore university English teachers' experiences in China. In the article, they

highlight the effectiveness of narrative frames in generating stories from a large number of research participants. They also explicitly confess the potential of narrative frames in depersonalizing the experience of teachers (an atypical feature of narrative inquiry) as its limitation. The article concentrates on co-constructing the narratives from a large number of participants using narrative frames and the limitations of narrative frames instead of presenting a comprehensive picture of narrative analysis.

In contrast to Barkhuizen and Wette (2008), Connelly and Clandinin (1990) outline criteria, methods, and norms related to narrative report development. They describe the criteria in terms of beginning the story, living the story, and selecting the story to construct and reconstruct narrative plots, along with potential risks, dangers, and abuses inherent in narrative inquiry. Similarly, Clandinin and Huber (2010) introduce narrative inquiry as a research method and its importance in educational research. They elucidate the commonplaces of temporality, sociality, and place, along with ethical considerations. Likewise, Savin-Baden and Niekerk (2007) offer practical guidance for using narrative inquiry, particularly the ways of exploring and analyzing narratives. They argue that narrative analysis is often undertaken by exploring epiphanies and metaphors inherent in stories. These studies on narrative inquiry offer a multitude of perspectives in terms of story generation, restorying the stories, ethical standards, narrative genres, and limitations of narrative investigations; however, these articles offer generic insights on narrative analysis with no significant contribution made, particularly on narrative analysis in teachers' professional identity research in English language education. With the review of papers on narrative inquiry in general and narrative

analysis in particular, we got acquainted with multiple genres such as autobiographical, biographical, and arts-based narrative inquiry (Kim, 2016) and diverse narrative analysis approaches; however, we were astounded by the paucity of succinct methodological articles particularly on meaning-making processes on identity research in ELT.

In this thematic review, therefore, we present a comparative study of conceptual frameworks of narrative analysis and its use in English language teachers' professional identity research. The study aims to map the narrative analysis approaches prevalent and their application in English language teachers' professional identity research. To this end, it becomes pertinent to answer the following questions:

- a. What narrative analysis approaches are currently prevalent in teachers' identity research in ELT?
- b. How are such approaches employed to explore English language teachers' professional identities?

To address the first question, we have reviewed currently available methodological books and articles (Barkhuizen, 2011; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Kim, 2015; Riessman, 2008, among others) written in the context of education in general and ELT in particular. We selected methodological books and articles purposively considering their relevance to the research questions. A review of purposively selected methodological books and articles has significantly contributed to the discursive construction of the theoretical underpinnings of narrative analysis with due consideration of the evolution of the concept in different phases and subsequently mapping different

approaches of narrative analysis prevalent. In addition, to explore the practical application of these approaches, we reviewed empirical articles published after 2015. For this purpose, we employed keywords such as "narrative inquiry," "narrative analysis," "narratives and identities," and "narrative inquiry and English language education research" to surf articles in databases such as *Google Scholar* and *ERIC* and some of the momentous journals related to ELT, for instance, *Language, Identity and Education*, *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, *Teaching and Teacher Education* and *TESOL Quarterly* among others. Out of 150 downloaded articles, only 20 of the most relevant research were short-listed to explore how these approaches are employed in research practice. Of those 20 most relevant articles reviewed, we referred to only a few purposively selected papers to substantiate the argument.

This review article presents substantially the diverse narrative analysis approaches relevant to teacher identity research in ELT. The paper contributes immensely to the field by filling the paucity of comprehensive research articles intensively and extensively focused on the narrative analysis of English language teachers' professional identity. Additionally, the article also becomes instrumental in projecting the way forward in terms of the development of an alternative narrative analysis approach. With this, in subsequent sections of the article, we present the historical development of the concept of narrative analysis along with narrative analysis and analysis of narratives debate, different narrative analysis approaches and their development in sociolinguistic research, narrative analysis approaches prevalent in identity research in ELT, their application in research practices, and conclusion and implications. In short, amidst the paucity of

comprehensive methodological articles on narrative analysis and the increasing trend of employing narrative analysis in ELT research in the 21st century, in this article, we present the narrative analysis discourse, its application, and future direction.

Narrative Analysis

A review of primary texts and articles on narrative analysis showed a wide range of conceptual definitions, among which we found the definition of Polkinghorne (1995) significant. He defines narrative analysis as “a configuration of the data into a narrative or narratives that render some explanation, gives meaning to some experience, and offers insights into the motivation and purpose behind a chain of events” (p. 251). Narratives are featured by the components of temporality, sociality, and spatiality that are interwoven so tightly that they cannot be separated from each other without losing the meaning of narratives. More than just the amalgamation of events into a linear sequence, narrative analysis explains how the outcome might come about or how meaning is given to certain aspects of teachers’ lives. Providing meanings and insights to the reader about teachers being studied is the purpose of narrative analysis (Oliver, 1998). Narrative analysis of the storied lives of teachers provides us with better insights into their lives, beliefs, values, perceptions, practices, needs, and interests so that we can respond to them accordingly.

It is important to understand narrative analysis and analysis of narrative dichotomy to have a comprehensive understanding of narrative analysis. Polkinghorne (1995) considers narrative analysis as a meaning-making (restorying) process from the diverse range of data sets that consist of actions, events, and stories of experiences whereas in the analysis

of narratives, categories, patterns, and themes are developed out of narrative data (Savin-Baden & Niekerk, 2007; Watson, 2012; Demir, 2018). When the analysis of narratives breaks narratives into non-narrative forms, narrative analysis utilizes storytelling to analyze narrative and non-narrative data and present the findings (Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik, 2013; Demir, 2018). In short, when narrative analysts focus on the *how* (emphasis added) or discursive construction of the English language teachers’ professional identity, thematic analysts exclusively consider the *what* (emphasis added) or the nature of identity (Georgakopoulou, 2006; Vasquez, 2011). This dichotomy is explicitly evident in the methodological literature of the beginning era of narrative inquiry.

However, Kim (2015) blurs this traditional dichotomy when she argues that narrative inquiry is open-ended, emergent, and evolving. She highlights the relational understanding between a researcher and the researched where a researcher engages participants in the research process as co-researchers, co-constructors, and co-storytellers. In narrative construction, researchers are not passive listeners but actively participate in the story construction process as characters and narrators. As characters, they become part of the narrative and shape the form and content of the stories, whereas as narrators, they restory the participants’ lived experiences (Barkhuizen, 2011; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Riessman, 2008). In other words, stories are created, interpreted, and re-created at the participants’ level first, then during the storying (interview/conversation), and finally during the restorying process (Savin-Baden & Niekerk, 2007). As an interpretive epistemology, narrative analysis asserts the co-construction of the knower and the known through interaction (Demir, 2018; Denzin &

Lincoln, 2018). During narrative reporting, researchers are encouraged to be aware of the complexity of the plurivocal nature of narrative and be mindful of whose voice is dominant in restorying the stories through “I” (Barnieh, 1989). Therefore, researchers engage participants in the restorying process to ensure that participants’ voice is adequately represented in the research report.

Narratives undergo multiple levels of interpretation before they are produced as data, and what we read as research reports are already interpreted and reinterpreted by the researcher and the participants (Barkhuizen, 2011). As a result, myriads of elements are prevalent in narratives, and hence researchers are encouraged to consider not only what (reality) but also how (process, form, and linguistic features) and why (context) of the research (Mendieta, 2013). Barkhuizen and Wette (2008) argue that form and content are not distinct but lie in a continuum. As noted by Mendieta (2013), analysis of form, to some extent, involves analysis of content and vice versa. Appropriate terminology to define the whole process from story generation to interpretation (analysis) and reporting (restorying), therefore, could be narrative knowledging, as rightly pointed out by Barkhuizen (2016), which blurs narrative analysis and analysis of narratives dichotomy.

With the review of methodological books and articles, we became accustomed to multiple approaches to narrative analysis that range from the psychological model of narrative that includes Bartlett’s schemata theory, Kintsch and van Dijk’s macro-structure model and story grammar, literary models of narrative; anthropological model of narrative; and sociological and sociolinguistic model of narrative that includes conversational analysis, frame analysis, and Labov’s evaluation model

of narrative (Cortazzi, 1993) to mention but a few. However, this article mainly focuses on the sociolinguistic models of narrative analysis as these models are paradigmatically compatible with identity research.

Narrative Analysis Approaches in Sociolinguistics

When we trace the historical development of narrative analysis in sociolinguistics, we find its development in three waves. According to Georgakopolou (2007), the first wave emerged with the narratives elicited using the “near-death” experience in which the expression of participants became largely unmonitored, through which Labov’s influential structural criteria for defining narratives appeared. According to this classic structure, narratives consist of abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, result, and coda. In other words, the story consists of a summary of what the story is about (abstract), the scene setting (orientation), the narrative core (complicating action), the significance of the story to the narrator (evaluation), how the situation pans out (result), and how the narrator moves out of the story or how the narrator moves back to the present moment (coda). Researchers following the Labovian tradition always looked at the presence of these functional parts in a fully formed narrative (Franzosi, 1998; Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Vasquez, 2011), in which narratives are constructed through sociolinguistic narrative interviews.

The second wave of sociolinguistic research moved away from the classical Labovian model of narrative analysis by incorporating narratives told in a conversational context instead of just focusing on narratives constructed during interviews. According

to Georgakopoulou (2007), it was a move away from the study of “narrative as text” to the study of “narratives in context” (p. 537). However, as pointed out by Georgakopoulou, only the stories that met the Labovian structural criteria were considered worthy of narrative analysis, and any accounts that did not meet these criteria were deemed uncharacteristic and abnormal. Later, Ochs and Capps (2001) contributed immensely to the second wave of sociolinguistic research by accentuating the fact that the Labovian model of the narrative is just a type and that narratives of personal experience can vary along the five-dimensional continuum of narrative, namely tellership, tellability, embeddedness, linearity, and moral stance. They also stressed that narratives elicited in a research context can vary from those produced in a day-to-day conversational context.

The third wave of sociolinguistic research that emerged in the 21st century highlighting narratives and identity research considers narrative as a social practice that provides special analytic attention to the context in which narratives occur. This development in narrative analysis stresses the co-construction of identities in narratives and equally highlights the multitudes of narrative genres (beyond the Labovian model) as worthy of analysis (Bamberg, 2007). Different approaches to narrative analysis emerged during this stage, ranging from positioning analysis, small stories approach to narrative analysis, and the five-step process to narrative analysis forwarded by Menard-Warwick (2011). The succeeding topic presents a critical outlook on different narrative analysis approaches developed in the third wave.

Narrative Analysis Prevalent in the Discourse of Identity Research in ELT

One significant narrative analysis approach to identity research is positioning analysis, which is based on certain theoretical assumptions worth uncovering before we discuss the positioning analysis approach. Positioning analysis considers that “positions are situated achievements, which do not sum up to a coherent self. Positions give evidence of multiple facets of personal identity. They are potentially contradictory, and they may be fleeting and contested” (Deppermann, 2015, p. 370). This notion of positioning analysis contradicts the essentialist view of identity. It equally rejects the individualized conception of self and identity. Thus “positioning is a non-essentialist and practice-bound concept” and these “practices are routine, habitual ways of speaking and interacting, which are sensitive to situational contingencies” (Deppermann, 2015, pp. 369-370). Positions are made relevant and realized in social actions that can be explored in three levels.

This three-level positioning framework of narrative analysis was mainly developed by Bamberg (1997) and Wortham and Rhodes (2011), among others, to analyze the narratives in interaction. According to Bamberg (1997), in the first level, images of narrators and other characters in the story, projection of narrators as protagonists and antagonists, evaluation of characters’ actions, and distribution of responsibilities, among others, are looked at. At the second level, how narrators position themselves to the audience, for example, what the narrator tries to accomplish with the story, the narrative strategies, and interactional approaches, are analyzed. The third level of positioning focuses on how the narrator has

established himself as a certain kind of person (De Fina, 2015; Watson, 2012). This approach seems monolithic as it primarily focuses on the narrators' outlook while analyzing identity construction.

Another narrative analysis approach that is prevalent in teachers' professional identity research is the small story approach to narrative analysis, which is somehow closer to positioning analysis in the sense that it also recognizes pluralism and heterogeneity in terms of the nature of stories and the notion of identity (Georgakopoulou, 2015). Like positioning analysis, small story approaches to narrative analysis are inspired by conversational storytelling or narratives-in-interaction that do not confirm Labov's (1972) classical narrative criteria. Small stories research brings to the fore long-neglected non-canonical and atypical stories as the unit of narrative analysis. When big stories prioritize coherently, settled, and consciously crafted selves and identities, small stories project inconsistency, messiness, fragmentation, and troubled identities (Georgakopoulou, 2006, 2009; Ryan, 2008). Researchers in small story approaches believe that both small and big stories enable researchers to explore the complex process of identity formation. When big coherent life narratives are a priority in the analysis of narrative (narrative inquiry) tradition to explore teachers' professional identity in TESOL, the narrative analysis focuses on small stories to study the situated social identities of language teachers and learners. Freeman (2007) also reiterates that it is high time to pay attention to small stories when the study focuses on individuals' identities.

Georgakopoulou (2007) has developed the heuristic approach to analysing small stories that focus on exploring three separate but interrelated levels of analysis: ways of telling,

sites, and tellers. Ways of telling are related to patterns of telling stories or communicative approach that includes verbal choices and socioculturally shaped and conventionalized storytelling, particularly recurrent ways of interacting. Next, analysis of tellers or their roles in participation or as a character in the story is essential. Exploration of tellers' social and cultural groups and biographies, including hopes, desires, beliefs, habits, and fears, is critical (Georgakopoulou, 2015). At the same time, the site refers to a place with socio-cultural and ideological aspects embedded in the story.

Similarly, Barkhuizen (2016) presents a model for short story analysis with three levels of stories that range from the first level of a story (all small letters), the second level of Story (with a capital S), and the third level of STORY (in capital letters) in which the first level includes teachers' immediate contexts that are intimate and personal where teachers have more agency and power. The second level of the Story goes beyond teachers' immediate context, such as assessment practices, language policy, and interpersonal relations among colleagues within the school. Here, teachers have less agency to construct their teaching practices and identities. Lastly, STORY (in capital letters) refers to a broader sociopolitical context that influences teachers' teaching-learning and identity construction. These larger contexts include national curriculum, national language policy, examination modality, teacher education standards, and discourse of race, gender, and other ideologies. This level of the story is related to the macro scale of the context where there is the most negligible influence of teachers' agency. With the interaction of three layers of context (story, Story, STORY) with the three dimensions of story content, namely who (sociality), where (place), and when (temporality), teachers practice, and the construction of identity is realized.

Another significant model forwarded by Menard-Warwick (2011) presents a five-step narrative analysis approach for exploring identity. Referring to Riessman (2008), the author presents thematic analysis as the analytic first step in narrative analysis that is useful in exploring narratives relevant to the study issue. Likewise, structural analysis, particularly the organization of the narrative to achieve the narrators' purpose, is considered an analytic second step. In the third step, he proposes identifying linguistic resources that aid in constructing identity; for instance, one linguistic resource can be the words that provide sensory details. In the fourth analytic step, he proposes to explore the dialogic voicing and performance in which narratives are produced in the interaction between researchers and researched, speaker and setting, and history and culture, among other factors. As the analytical fifth step, he recommends exploring the study's relevance in knowledge construction and the connection between identity and pedagogy. Though these analytical approaches stress analyzing content and context, their focus on communicative how (discourse) and the agency is limited.

Narrative Analysis in Practice

We began this article with the conceptual definition of narrative analysis and methodological debate on narrative analysis and analysis of narratives referring to Polkinghorne (1995). In this section, we elucidate how this debate is reflected in the research practice. A close reading of the selected articles published from 2015 to the present showed that the implementation of narrative analysis and analysis of the narratives debate is rarely evident in actual practice. Nguyen and Dao (2019), for instance, in their exploration of the identity of five prospective

teachers doing masters in applied linguistics/ TESOL at an Australian university, explicitly remark that they are doing the analysis of narratives (thematic analysis) elicited from two semi-structured audio-recorded storytelling sessions. They report that analysis was conducted following the general thematic analysis approach called analysis of narratives comprising five main stages: transcribing interview data, constructing narrative texts from transcribed data and field texts, sending stories to the participants for comment, coding individual stories, and grouping codes into categories, and conducting cross-story analyses and identifying emerging themes as proposed by Murray (2009). The article introduces the dichotomy between *narrative analysis* and *analysis* of narratives with their explicit explanations in the methodology section.

Conventionally, scholars such as Ubaidillah et al. (2020) and Charles (2019) explore common themes and patterns to discover the perceived notion of identity. The scholars seemingly ignore the dichotomy and consider paradigmatic analysis as narrative analysis. For instance, Ubaidillah et al. (2020) explored the imagined identity of a male preservice teacher studying at a private university in Indonesia, examining his past learning experiences elicited through semi-structured interviews. The researchers explicitly report the co-construction of storying that they were cautious of not hindering the flow of storytelling, intervening with the participants in between. Most of the narrative analyses (Fan & de Jong, 2019; Kayi-Aydar, 2015; Mirzaee & Aliakbari, 2018) involving thematization primarily seem to have concentrated on content and context, except Barkhuizen (2016), who also considers sensory language as a unit of analysis.

Another recurrent feature manifest in the research practice is division among researchers in terms of their perceived notion of meaning-making. Researchers such as Kayi-Aydar (2015), Li (2020), and Sahragard (2017), among others, have not reported the process of story generation, particularly the role of researchers in storying and participants' say in restorying. From this, we could infer that the researchers have conceived meaning-making as a separate process from story generation. In contrast, other researchers such as Barkhuizen (2016) consider the whole process from storying to restorying and consumption of the report by the readers as narrative knowledging (Barkhuizen, 2011) and elaborates the co-construction process from storying to restorying adequately.

Similarly, Xie and Dong (2020), in their exploration of the evolution of identity and contributive factors to the identity crisis of full-time college EFL teachers from China, unveil the interaction between factors relating to an identity crisis and the trajectories of identity evolution through self-reflection journal and in-depth interview where researchers report that they engaged participants in co-construction of narratives and meaning-making from initial sense-making process to final restorying. They report that the researchers first conducted "preliminary exploratory analysis" (Cresswell, 2005, p. 237), reading through narratives several times to develop understanding and then identifying recurring themes and categories through manual coding. These categories were further discussed between researchers and final themes were set that turned out to be three phases of teachers' identity development: the honeymoon, confusion, and dilemma. The application of the micro, meso, and macro perspectives of narrative analysis forwarded by Barkhuizen (2016) made the construction

of these phases possible. After manual coding, NVivo 10 was used for final coding. Finally, the story developed after coding and theme development was sent to the participants to check whether the narrative adequately reflected their experiences.

Another interesting fact that emerged from the review of articles published after 2015 is that though the short story analysis approach has been discussed heavily lately, its application is negligible. One such intermittent study is conducted by Barkhuizen (2016), employing a short story analysis approach to explore the imagined identity of an immigrant named Sela. There, he analyzes short stories using the short story analysis framework to see three levels of context and content and considers sensory language used in exploring her identity. Though Georgakopoulou (2007) developed a heuristic for short story analysis that focuses on the three levels of analysis that include tellers, telling, and sites where telling refers to ways of telling stories or communicative approaches such as verbal choices and socioculturally conventionalized ways of story-telling, review of empirical articles showed that researchers have rarely explored the how of the story and its role in shaping the what or content. Still, the examination of the empirical study showed a certain level of analysis of how (sensory language, though not ways of storytelling) but the why (discourse and agency) of the story has remained uncharted.

A review of empirical studies somehow reflects the emerging dimension of methodological development that blurs the traditional dichotomy. For instance, Polkinghorne's (1995) debate on narrative analysis and analysis of narrative is rarely reflected in practice. Nguyen and Dao (2019) are the only researchers who carry forward the discussion

in practice. In contrast, other researchers like Ubaidillah et al. (2020) and Charles (2019), among others, consider paradigmatic analysis as narrative analysis that substantiates Menard-Warwick's (2011) claim of paradigmatic analysis as the analytic first step in narrative analysis. Next, positioning analysis, as proposed by Bamberg (1997) and Wortham (2011), is rarely evident in practice; however, some researchers have used conversation to generate stories. Likewise, though researchers like Barkhuizen (2011) note that meaning-making occurs at different levels, from story generation to transcribing and restorying, very few researchers have acknowledged this and have depicted the whole process in their articles. Most researchers seem to have considered that the interpretation of stories occurs only after the storying process.

Conclusion and Implications

The review of methodological articles on narrative inquiry and its application in practice in education showed mushrooming research trends recently; however, there is a paucity of such articles that reflect the recent methodological trends in English language education in general and teachers' professional identity research in particular. We found Barkhuizen (2008, 2011, 2016) making a noteworthy contribution to teachers' identity research in the context of English language education, both theoretically and practically. Besides, we also reviewed other narrative analysis approaches that include positioning analysis (Bamberg, 1997; Wortham & Rhodes, 2011), the small story analysis approach (Bamberg, 2007; Barkhuizen, 2016; Georgakopoulou, 2006, 2007), and a five-step process to analyzing identity forwarded by Menard-Warwick (2011). We observed that despite valuable contributions made in identity research, positioning analysis is a

one-way approach that unilaterally highlights how the teller (participant) positions themselves and other characters in the story. However, as identity concerns how a teller perceives themselves and how others place them as English language teacher, analysis of identities conducted exploiting this approach seems partial and incomplete. Though positioning analysis somehow considers narrative strategies and interactional processes during the analysis of stories, the approach is monolithic and one-sided as this heuristic only considers the narrator's perspective.

All the analytical approaches discussed above somehow highlight one aspect of the story at the cost of another. For example, the strength of the short story approach to the narrative analysis presented by Barkhuizen (2016) is that it conducts a comprehensive analysis of three layers of context and the commonplaces of narrative inquiry such as temporality, sociality, and place. However, his framework fails to properly address the linguistic/discursive factors affecting identity construction. The approach forwarded by Barkhuizen (2016), in his own words, is a form of "systematic thematic analysis of the content and context" of the short stories (p. 661). This approach remains within the analytic first step, in the words of Riessman (2008). Small story analysis primarily emphasizes content and context instead of forms, though a certain level of analysis of forms, such as sensory language, is embedded in the analysis of the content.

We conclude that none of these approaches adequately appreciates the potential of discourse in constructing teachers' identities and the role of discourse and ideology in exercising power and agency. Now is the time, therefore, to devise a comprehensive eclectic approach as an alternative that incorporates

insight from conversation analysis, discourse analysis, positioning analysis, short story analysis, and five-step narrative analysis approach forwarded by Menard-Warwick (2011) that not only considers what (content) and when and where (context) but also how (communicative how and linguistic features), and who and why (agency and discourse) of the story.

The Authors

Bharat Prasad Neupane works at the Department of Language Education, School of Education, Kathmandu University, Nepal, as an assistant professor of English. Mr. Neupane regularly publishes and presents at international conferences. He mainly writes on teacher professional development, teacher identity, language policy, language ideology, teacher education, and narrative research methods, among others.

Laxman Gnawali works at the Department of Language Education, School of Education, Kathmandu University, Nepal, as a professor of English. He writes on teacher development, training, action research, teacher education, and curriculum development to mention but a few. He regularly presents at national and international conferences and publishes extensively.

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