A Review on Identity from A Linguistic and Sociological Perspective

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Abstract: This review article introduces a number of essential linguistic and sociological notions concerning identity. The present paper tries to scrutinize the route towards the construction of identity and its existence in relation to how a person understands his or her relationship to the world. Analytical views throughout the areas of linguistics and sociology are highlighted in order to identify multiple types of identity and the methods that are implemented to expose those types. It also focuses on how and why certain types of identities have appeared.

1. Introduction

Identity refers to the attributes, convictions, personality traits, outward manifestations, and/or expressions that define a person or a group. The importance of identity is covered by the notion of having an identity can help you feel like you belong to somewhere or something, which seems to be crucial for your confidence and well-being. Language, especially speech, exposes the identity of a particular person, be it on an individual level or in-group. On the other hand, throughout the field of sociology, identity mirrors self-awareness and others. The current article tries to give a clear portrait of the existence of different identities throughout the areas of linguistics and sociology. Thus, the main objective of this article is to share a range of detailed views on identity throughout the stated scientific fields for those who are interested in one of the stated notions or the combination of both. The article also seeks to highlight the relationship between language and identity and identity's standpoint in the sociological world. Present and earlier linguistic and sociological research have continually tried to expose the sphere of identity via different linguistic and sociological dimensions. Having that said, this review article contains an overview of previous works on the topic. First, it introduces a summary of language with a special focus on different views from influential linguists followed by the notion of identity. Then, the article lists a range of sub-sections about the way of the establishment of identity via language. Next, language use and identity are

stated through style shifting and dialect. Afterwards, sociological thoughts on identity appear by highlighting relevant data such as sociological views on identity and social identity.

Furthermore, a theory on social identification in conjunction with a theory of symbolic interactionism is shared followed by the impact of social networks on identity. Finally, the conclusion part of this review article contains restated points that remind the reader of the main points of the article.

2. The Literature Review

2.1 What is Language

By depending on different social settings, language helps us to communicate with each other. For that reason, language is an important factor behind the formation of our daily social realities. It enables us to express our feelings, emotions, thoughts, and ideas. On the other hand, language provides a helping hand when we want to buy something in the supermarket, to get a job, to make a telephone call, to invite someone out, to buy tickets to support our favourite football team, and so forth. All in all, language is a phenomenon that is systematically built for the purpose of communication. Therefore, to see how language influences all the mentioned notions, it is worth focusing on how linguists see and define human language first. Yule (2010, p. 11) states that language consists of specific communication signals that are intentionally sent by the speaker to the listener. According to Lyons (1981, p. 3), Edward Sapir believes that "Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols". In their Outline of Linguistic Analysis Block and Trager (1942, p. 5) argue that "A language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of a social group cooperates". They emphasise that without language human society is unthinkable. According to Encyclopedia Britannica (2022), the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure tells us that language should be seen as a social phenomenon because it is a structured mechanism that can be considered synchronically (based on a particular time) and diachronically (based on its changes over time). In his An Introduction to the Study of Language, the American linguist Leonard Bloomfield (1983, p. 17) explains that "Language has been developed in the interchange of messages, and every individual who has learned to use language has learned it through such interchange". As for Wardhaugh and Fuller (2014, p. 3), when two or more than two people communicate with each other, we can call the system they use a language. Thus, it seems that all the above-mentioned linguists agree on one thing, that is, language is a social phenomenon that has its occurrence in societies which operates as a tool, for the members of society, to communicate.

2.2 Identity from a Linguistic Perspective

Every person has a certain identity, however, the identity of a particular person is drastically determined by the language the person speaks. Thus, the specific speech one is using may help to identify his or her identity. Nevertheless, the language that is used by the speaker is intensively influenced by the occasion, purpose, or context. Well, now, why does someone want to carry a certain identity? According to Mesthrie and Tabouret-Keller (2001, p. 165), in their book Sociolinguistic Theory, Chambers highlights that humans continually admire and want to maintain social identity. People need to show that they belong to someone (a community) or somewhere (territory). The underlying purpose of the mentioned need lies in

that people want to define themselves. The latter is usually operated by speaking like the members of the society who live in the same territory as you do.

It should be pointed out that the majority of linguistic investigations on identity have concentrated on group identity instead of individual ones. For example, Coulmas (1998, p. 71) indicates that, in Britain, speakers use accent features to signal that they are from Scotland, Wales, or England. Regional identity is becoming more and more important in the domain of globalization. Lanza and Svendsen (2007, p. 293) suggest that "Language might become important for identity when a group feels it is losing its identity due to political or social reasons".

Apart from regional identity, social identity is another concept that refers to one's self-sense of who he or she belongs to in terms of social groups. When language and social identity meet one cannot neglect the American linguist William Labov's attempt to examine the pronunciation of certain speech sounds among New York City's residents in three different department stores based on social ranking. His research tried to reveal how different pronunciations help to indicate the social class of speakers. In 1966, in New York City, Labov conducted an interesting experiment demonstrating in a neat and economical way that pronunciation of post-vocalic [r] varied in the city according to social groups. He asked a number of people in different department stores where to find an item which he knew was sold on the fourth floor. Then, pretending he had not heard the answer, he said, 'Excuse me?' People repeated their answers and he obtained a second and more careful pronunciation. So each person had the chance to pronounce [r] four times: twice in fourth and twice in floor. This ingenious rapid and anonymous survey technique provided some interesting patterns. The results showed that, overall, the posher the store, the more people used the post-vocalic [r]" (Holmes, 2012, p. 147). This means that speech, thus language, appears to be related to social status because rhoticity appears to be a useful indicator for social status.

In addition to what has been said, ethnicity is another type of identity that has to be clarified when relating it to language. Fought (2006, p. 4) points out that most linguists agree that ethnicity is a socially constructed category. One of the most attractive definitions of ethnicity is the one that is constructed by Allan Bell in his book The Guidebook of Sociolinguistics. Bell (2013, p. 173) believes that ethnicity has to do with a group that shares sociocultural characteristics dominated by a place, an ancestry, a common history, religion, cultural practices, ways of communicating, and last but not least language. However, race such as skin colour also helps to identify the ethnicity of a certain speaker. Moreover, for a while scholars thought that ethnicity was a biological notion that was related to race. But, according to Holmes (2012, p. 186), a community usually contains many different groups, yet, when a group of speakers share the same linguistic features, then, they belong to the same group within a given community. Language use often indexes a speaker's ethnic identity because it is usually possible for a listener to signal the ethnicity of a speaker by the language he or she is using (Holmes, 2012, p. 186). Because of being ethnically diverse populated, The United States is a useful example when it comes to ethnic identity. Wardhaugh (2006, p. 50) points out that speakers that use Afro-American Vernacular English (AAVE) differ from Italian or Jewish speakers in terms of ethnic groups.

Further, gender identity is another notion that should be highlighted when addressing identity from a linguistic perspective. As suggested in The Guidebook to Sociolinguistics by Bell (2013, p. 307), gender is more regarded as a constructed or performed matter rather than a biological one by referring to sexes.

West and Zimmerman (1987) affirm that gender should not be studied as the source of linguistic behaviour but as the product of our language performances. Interestingly, many sociolinguistic studies have focussed on gender via the language repertoire, attitude, and behaviour of specific ethnic groups. Mesthrie (2011, pp. 246-247) underlines that according to Patricia Causey Nichols's Ph.D. dissertation entitled: Linguistic Change in Gullah: Sex, Age, and Mobility, women in the rural African-American community she studied basically used more features of the local creole variety than the men did. Mesthrie also points out that in a series of studies on Cajuns in Louisiana, Dubois and Horvath found out that apart from an increase of Cajun among younger speakers, which was related to ethnic pride, there was a strong differentiation by gender because it appeared that young men were using significantly more Cajun features. Thus, as it is written in their book named An Introduction to Sociolinguistics, Wardhaugh and Fuller (2014, p. 328) refuse the perception that gender is pre-existing and fixed because gender is continually shifting, in other words, individuals are not fixed subjects in a society, rather, they position themselves or are positioned by others in different ways as language use is one of the ways.

Over the last few centuries, nationhood and independence have been very important political matters around the globe. The appearance of one unified national language has often played a crucial part in the process to create a national identity and securing independence from colonial power. This is also verified by Spolsky (2004, p. 57) by mentioning that the search for national identity via nationalism was a positive motivator for language management in the nineteenth century. Both the French Revolution and German Romanticism found that a single unified language was the best option as the protector of nationhood. Holmes (2012, p. 106) states that the idea of a national language as a unified value in the struggle for independence was rapidly accepted in countries such as Tanzania, where more than 120 different languages are spoken. In countries such as Indonesia and the Philippines, a national language is not only an official language, it also has a unifying function for these nations. Snow (2013, p. 66) explains that Katharevousa which is a conservative form of the modern Greek language because it is heavily based on the vocabulary and grammar of ancient Greek and relates itself with the language of Greece's ancient philosophical tradition and its Church Fathers, its creation served to establish a sense of Greek national identity that helped to gain support from other European countries to seek for Greek independence.

The above overview about identity has provided a general understanding, in that, aside from the fact that identity refers to the way a person labels him or herself as a member of a given group, language plays a crucial role in the development of the mentioned process. Among other things, it is through language that people identify themselves. It is through the way one uses his or her language which shapes the exact type of identity. It is language that is used as a tool to portray differences or similarities among members of a society. Above all, it is language that has a significant effect on the establishment of identity labels such as status, ethnicity, gender, and nationalism.

2.2.1 Group Labelling

Group labelling is very important when talking about identity because the language that one uses identifies whether he or she is part of a group or not part of a group. The stated notion is popularly known as in-group and out-group. Eckert and Rickford (2001, p. 147) argue that it is up to the speaker whether to choose his or her group or an outgroup with which the speaker wishes to identify. Pronouns like I, we,

you, and they are instant situations of group labelling which is also argued by Fong (2021, p. 99) stating that pronouns serve to stress the unity of a group of people marking in-group and outgroup relations.

2.2.2 Naming

Another area to look at when it comes to language and identity is the concept of naming. Naming refers to identifying ourselves, our children, our family, and our friends by using given names or family names. In his book Attitudes to Language, Garrett (2010, p. 3) points to David Crystal's list of top-ten given names of males and females in the USA, England, and Wales between 1925 and 1993. For example, in 1970, Michelle was the top name for girls in the USA. Robert appears in the USA's top ten names for boys from 1925 to 1985. An important role of naming is that it establishes a relationship among members of a group. For example, Tagliamonte (2006, p. 22) emphasizes that naming yourself "a friend" means that you have an entry into the relationships of the network you have attached yourself to. Mesthrie (2001, p. 64-65) argues that the process of naming the categories of persons such as kinship terms (mother, father, cousin, etc.), profession names (doctor or judge), or positions in sports (coach, basketballer) helps to identify the position of a person in a social system.

2.2.3 Vocative Case

There are also some vocative cases that are used to signal language and identity relationships. These cases are usually generated through power distance. Vocative cases are simply grammatical forms that are used for calling one another. If there is no power distance one may identify his or her friend by calling: "Hey Bob" while calling someone "Mr. Jones" indicates that one identifies power distance between Mr. Jones and the speaker. Mooney and Evans (2018, p. 240) argue the vocative case is a grammaticalisation of social situations. Vocatives are used as special markers to search for and identify each other.

2.2.4 Pronouns

A pronoun is another tool that can be used to indicate social identity. In their research named Address Practices and Social Relationships in European Languages Norrby and Warren (2012) share a review of literature on the usage of personal pronouns in Europe since 1960, examining French, German, and Swedish. They explain how pronouns play an important role in the establishment of social relationships and social distance. Pronouns help to reveal whom one wants to identify with and whom one wishes to distance himself or herself from. Wardhaugh and Fuller (2014, p. 266) point out that "speakers use pronouns to construct their identities and their relationships with their interlocutors".

2.3 Language Use and Identity: Style, Dialect, and Language

As individuals, we have different language choices to project ourselves out to the world. The language choices we have to project ourselves to the world are the language style choice, the dialect choice, and the actual language choice. Style in speech refers to the ability to say the same thing in more than one way while carrying a particular social goal(s). The shift from one style to another style in speech is generally known as style shifting which is often a response to social conditions in which one of these conditions is linked to identity. Wardhaugh (2006, p. 19) underlines that speakers of a language do not possess a single style, rather, each person controls and uses a variety of different linguistic styles, thus, no one speaks in

exactly the same speech style in all situations. For example, in multilingual communities, in genres such as hip-hop and rap, the shift from English to local language and vice versa is a sign to express identity. In Eastern African countries, for instance in Tanzania and Malawi, the process of mixing a local language with English has become a marker of identity (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008, p. 152). In his book, Sociolinguistic Styles, Juan Manuel Hernández Campoy (2016, p. 54-55) talks about how the small permanent population of Marta's Vineyard tried to defend their social and cultural identity on the island. Campoy explains that the isolated island consisted of only 6,000 inhabitants but from the 1960s onwards the island saw a significant increase in the number of tourists in the summer periods which caused massive social changes in relation to linguistic consequences. Therefore, William Labov started a phonetic and phonological investigation on the island by focusing on diphthongs pronounced by the native speakers of Marta's Vineyard. Labov observed that the old-fashioned diphthongs became more exaggerated while occurring more frequently in the speech of local people. He concluded that, in this way, the autochthonous speakers wanted to signal their local identity through their speech in order to present their difference in comparison to the summer visitors. Additionally, style and identity are common notions in bilingual communities. European nation-building (especially on south-eastern European grounds) has opened the doors for researchers to study language styles and identities. Auer (2007, p. 2) points out that the recreation of Croatian and Bosnian as independent national languages played a prominent role to establish their identity. In such bilingual regions, the existence of mixing and switching styles is considered as a natural expression of bilingual identity. Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008, p. 149 - 150) express the opinion that in multilingual settings switching and mixing styles with local dialects and/or languages is a norm. Subsequently, Mesthrie and Bhatt (2008, p. 152) argue that according to Myers-Scotton, in East Africa, style-shifting during daily conversations is covered by a post-colonial identity. That is to say, local languages signal local and community orientations while English is frequently dominant in domains like education, status and Westernisation.

Another way to expose one's identity is by focusing on the dialect a speaker uses. Dialect refers to a specific form of a language which is connected to a particular region or a social group. In his recent research, Hernández-Campoy (2016, p. 36) divides dialect into the following types: social dialect, regional dialect, urban dialect, and class dialect. Wardghaugh (2006, p. 28) argues that as a social norm, a dialect is a type of language that is excluded from polite society, in that, it is often comparable to nonstandard or even substandard language. An interesting example of dialect and identity could be found in the Alsace region which is situated in the eastern part of France. Wardhaugh (2006, p. 30) explains that the majority of the people in the mentioned region are speakers of Alsatian which is the group of Alemannic German dialects. Alsatian speakers use French when looking for national leadership and participation in higher education. Yet, Alsatian is the speech they use in their home-setting which is a strong marker of local-identity and makes an important pillar for being Alsatian in France. Holmes (2012, p. 156) adds that features such as education, residential area, and occupation income are the basis of social dialects that differentiate speakers from each other regarding pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. Thus, social dialect identifies which social group an individual belongs to. Then, regional dialect is a different form of a language used in a particular geographical area which signals the geographical identity of speakers. According to Trudgill (2000, p. 24), regional varieties influence language in which distance and barriers have a serious key-role. Regional dialect boundaries are often accompanied by geographical barriers such as mountains, swamps or rivers. For example, the society found in the northern part of the British River

Humber appears to use monophthong in words while speaker's south to the same river use diphthongs for the same words. Having said that, the stated example from Britain's dialectical situation supports the identification of speakers from the north and south of the mentioned river. It has been argued by Wardhaugh and Fuller (2014, p. 39) that the notion of dialect continuum helps to differentiate among regional varieties in order to identify specific dialects. For example, as you may travel throughout a large geographical area where the same language is spoken, you will certainly notice differences in pronunciation, in the choice and forms of words, and even in syntax, each time you arrive or depart from a particular region. So, the word choice, way of speaking, and the construction of sentences, clearly mirror the regional identity in terms of where a specific speaker comes from. In his book The Arabic Language, Versteegh (1997, p. 145) classifies the Arab world via purely geographical factors:

1. Dialects of the Arabian Peninsula, spoken in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf area
2. Mesopotamian dialects, spoken in Iraq
3. Syro-Lebanese dialects, spoken in Lebanon and Syria
4. Egyptian dialects, spoken in Egypt
5. Maghreb dialects, spoken in North Africa

The above classification by Versteegh is a useful notion that shapes the identity of Arabs based on their regional background.

Now that the above part has explained the relation between language and identity by mainly focussing on the main types of identity and those methods that are used to expose identity. The below part will discuss the link between social aspects and identity, particularly from a social perspective.

2.4 Sociological Views on Identity

The concept of identity carries different meanings in social sciences. Identity is determined by whether the subject is individually or collectively. In social fields, the notion of identity is across sociology and psychology. Nevertheless, identity also covers biology, philosophy, and geography. Each field has a different focus, for example, in psychology psychoanalysts study whether identity is found in the ego or in identification. On the other hand, philosophy concentrates more on personal identity. It is worth mentioning that, in sociology, the concept of identity is enclosed to the main point which is the relationship between social conditions versus individual singularity. Until recently, it is impossible to discuss the concept of identity without evoking the main social currents including their various approaches.

Scholars agree that there are many ways to study identity since identity has a broad understanding. Identity can answer questions such as; who am I? and how am I (Vincke, 2007). According to Lawler (2008), identity brings order to many social relationships and feelings that come with it. The notion of identity originated from the word 'identic'. Nevertheless, identity depends on the differences and similarities that people have with each other. Therefore, Lawler (2008) argues in his article that he sees identity as a dichotomy. Furthermore, each person has a shared identity or belongs to a group identity. This identity that arises from what a person wants to share with others makes it possible that every person identifies himself with more than one group. Sometimes these identities interact with each other, and sometimes identity is also formed based on a group of people that do not belong to a certain group. The part of identity

that depends on the membership of groups is also referred to as social identity (Mead, 1934: Jerkins, 2008: Lawler, 2008).

2.5 Social Identity

The self-image of an individual is strongly related to social identity. The latter disposes and supports what the individual says or does. In this way, insecurities on a personal level reduce based on the social identity that as a matter of course leads to more self-confidence and stability. On the other hand, identity is also formed through characteristics that divide us from others that make us unique (Lawler, 2008). Nobody has the same life, and therefore no one has the same identity. Often this unique part of the identity is seen apart from the social world, and the surroundings (Vincke, 2007).

In addition, some scholars indicate that this unique part of identity is strongly related to the social relations that individuals build. In other words, identity is formed by the surroundings of persons rather than the personality inside of a person. Individuals are not born with an identity, they must acquire it (Jenkins, 2008). However, Jenkins (2008) also argues that an individual must obtain communication opportunities. Also, it is important to understand that identity changes continually, and it can be seen as a process. As Jenkins (2008) mentions in her article, identity is a continuous process and it is not something that you have or do not have. The social anthropologist Barth (1969) indicates in his book that he believes that ethnic differences are constantly being remade.

According to Barth, some mechanisms ensure that social categories are preserved. People believe that ethnic differences have always been there and will always exist and, that is why they are reaffirmed over and over again. This process happens independently without impact on the people who are part of ethnic collectives. Thus, it is possible that the identity of those people changes, but the image of ethnic groups remains the same because it is constantly reconstructed. Therefore, sharing general knowledge, common sense, and behaviour should be seen as a manner of keeping categories existing (Barth, 1969).

2.6 Social Identity Theory

Social identification makes individuals aware of where they belong to. According to Tajfel (1974), social identity is related to the manners in which individuals' self-concepts are based on their belonging to a social group. For example, belonging to a certain sports team, occupation, ethnicity, religion, nationalistic group, etc. Sociologists find it interesting to understand how individuals attribute to a certain group. Therefore, a social identity theory was developed by the social psychologists Tajfel and his student Turner (1982) that indicates how a group of individuals who categorize themselves as belonging to the same social classification internalize the social attributes to determine and assess themselves, by assigning to the similarities and differences within a category. However, social identity theory investigates the conditions under which social identity is more important than personal identity. Besides, it also demonstrates the different forms of how social identity influences individuals' behaviour and attitude concerning their in-group and out-group.

Hence, Tajfel and Turner (1982) believe that individuals do not have only one certain self-personality, but rather have more identities that are associated with certain groups they belong to. A person may behave differently in different social contexts depending on the group to which a person belongs. The origin of

social identity theory arises from the prior work of Henri Tajfel. In his research, Tajfel (1974) studies how perceptual processes steer to stereotypes and prejudices. His research was conducted in different series, in which various participants were randomly divided into a certain group. Their membership was primarily illogical and yet these participants preferred the group they were assigned to. In addition, this indicates that group membership is so powerful that simply dividing people into groups is enough to make them think of themselves in terms of this particular group membership.

Another finding of his research shares that categorizing individuals in such a way led to favouritism and discrimination towards members of other groups. Nevertheless, these results let Tajfel propose for the first time the concept of social identity in 1972. Then, Tajfel and Turner published in 1979 the social identity theory. In other words, social identity theory focuses on three different mental processes that individuals go through when they classify their selves into in-groups and out-groups. The first process is categorization, in this process, people start to divide themselves into groups and the main goal of their division is to understand their social environment. The second process is identification, in this stage individuals start to identify themselves socially with a certain group and they behave in a way that they believe that all members of that particular group should behave. Last but not least, the third process is social comparison. In this process, individuals compare the group they belong to with another group in terms of social status and prestige. To maintain a good sense of self-esteem, people regard their own in-group as having a higher social status than the out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1982).

Individuals who belong to a specific group have the same social norms (Pariser, 2011). The subjective norm is also named the social norm; this is the feeling of an individual about how others in the immediate environment think of certain behaviour. According to Ajzen (1991), this is accompanied to a certain extent in which the person is willing to conform to the opinion of the social surroundings. Moreover, individuals tend to want to join a group that they want to be a member of. That is why, they are likely to conform to the opinion of the group(s) of which they are members (Tajfel & Turner, 1982).

Pariser (2011) designed a so-called echo chamber concept, this is when individuals in groups to which they belong, often have the same beliefs, norms, and values. In this echo chamber existing, beliefs are reinforced by the repetition of people who share the same kind of opinions and faiths. However, beliefs that are not in accordance with the opinions of the in-group are excluded. As a result, members of the out-group are seen as even more outsiders, and this leads to further division between the in-group and out-group (Pariser, 2011). Additionally, several studies have displayed that members of an in-group prefer to talk negatively about members of an out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1982). These members of the in-group do this for their own social identity and another reason is to maintain a positive self-image.

2.7 The Theory of Symbolic Interactionism

Identity is something that is constructed by humans. According to Hewitt (1979), this idea is embedded in the tradition of symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interactionism is a theory that is used in the field of sociology to understand humans' relationships within their society and by concentrating on the symbols that support humans by giving meaning to the experiences of their daily life (Aksan, Kısac, Aydın, & Demirbuken, 2009). According to sociologists, the founder of the symbolic interactionism theory is the American philosophy professor, George Herbert Mead. Carter and Fuller (2015) indicate that many of

Mead's students started to gather his teachings and lectures and published a book entitled 'Mind, Self and Society'. This work contributes to the fundamental concept of social interactionism. In addition, one of Mead's followers, Herbert Blumer developed directly after the publication of this book the concept of symbolic interactionism.

Then, Blumer (1986) points out three assumptions that appear from the work of George Herbert Mead, the theory of symbolic interactionism. These premises are first; humans act towards people or things based on the meanings they assign people or things (Carter & Fuller, 2015). The second one is that humans assign to people and things derive from the social interactions one has with another and the third one is that humans reshape the meaning they assign to people or things by their internal interpretation of their interconnections with the world (Blumer, 1986).

Hence, symbolic interactionism assumes that reality is constructed by humans who observe and live in reality. Therefore, reality is not something that simply exists or needs to be discovered, but rather something that is constructed by humans in the moments they live in. Thus, identity is something that people establish by their selves. A very interesting book presented by the sociologist Cooley (1922) who introduces a socio-psychological view on how societies operate, explains how identity is constructed by people by referring to a looking-glass self. The latter arises from interactions with others and is built up in three steps. In the first step, people form an image of how they come across to others, in other words, what others think of them. These beliefs are interpreted in a second step, in this way, they form a picture of how they are evaluated by others. In the third step, people build up an own image of themselves based on how they think and how others think of them (Cooley, 1922).

Consciousness is necessary for building an image of yourself or another. George Herbert Mead (1934) argues that self-awareness is formed because humans start to see themselves as an object. An individual does this by looking at himself from the position of the other. A person sees himself as an object before he can be a subject. The establishment of self-awareness does not happen through introspection but it is rather a social process. The process of self-awareness contained several parts, for example, when you have different roles. You as a wife, you as a mother, as a teacher. Therefore, these different parts must be integrated as well. Also, this self-awareness process is applied to social identity.

2.8 Impact of Social Networks on Identity

The social network of a person is important for building a social identity and self-image (Granovetter, 1973). A social network consists of people with whom someone has contact. Those contacts range from intimate partner relationships to distant familiarity. Having a social identity and other people around you is important. Each person needs to feel at home somewhere and be supported by friends. On the other hand, social networks have also other advantages. Within a network, there is a distinction between strong ties and weak ties, strong ties are when there has been a consistent emotionally intense friendship and weak ties are when individuals know each other only superficially. Individuals who are tightly interconnected with others share friends. Furthermore, information is becoming more efficient about being friends with more people and having a greater distance among friends. Individuals with weak ties often circulate in various centres and have more access to details of various kinds.

3. Conclusion

A general conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that language is an important element that has an influential role in our social world. Many linguists consider language as a crucial tool that is used for our social activities. Language has become one of the factors behind the formation of our daily identities. For instance, spoken language helps to create different identities such as regional, social, ethnic, gender, and national identity. Linguistically speaking, various ways could be taken for the construction of identity such as group labelling, naming, vocative case, through pronouns, and even via language use that includes style shifting and dialect. On the other hand, in social studies, identity carries various meanings. Sociologists have come to the opinion that identity is covered by certain conditions that lead to one's self-image being influenced by his or her surroundings. One of the most known identities in social studies is social identity which refers to a person's self-awareness and the knowledge of belonging to a certain group. However, it is worth noting that according to some sociologists the creation of identity might also happen through features that split individuals from others which makes the individual at the same time unique. Sociologists have appeared with theories to elaborate on identity. The two most common theories related to identity in social studies refer to George Herbert Mead (Symbolic Interactionism Theory) and Henri Tajfel and John C. Turner (Social Identity Theory). The former seeks to understand human relationships with their society through the use of meaningful symbols. The latter refers to a person's self-concept that arrives from perceived membership in a social group.

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