

L2 Motivation and Investment

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Abstract

Jeju has become an important hub for tourism and English education in Northeast Asia and the importance of English in Jeju cannot be overemphasized. This paper compares the psychological and cognitive approaches of SLA motivation and sociological approaches of investment. Language learning involves the complex identities of language learners. Poststructuralists are interested in how language learners' positions might influence their investments and how their investments affect their identity formation. However, researchers in Jeju have not given enough attention to the identity changes and investment transformation during students' English learning processes. Therefore, it is important to investigate English learners' investment and identity formations in the various sociocultural contexts in Jeju.

Key words :

motivation, investment, English language learning, poststructuralist, Jeju, psychological and cognitive approaches of SLA

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Introduction

Jeju has experienced rapid political, economic, sociocultural changes at an unprecedented rate because of globalization in spite of its history of being a land of isolation and a place with a distinct culture and language (Hilty, 2011). As for the economic change, it was designated as a Jeju Free international City (hereafter JFIC), making it a base as a traveling destination and for business. The Jeju Free International City Development Center (JDC) was established in 2002 to carry out the Master Plan for JFIC. The development of JFIC is a strategy of the survival of Jeju that promotes national development and enhances national and regional competitiveness simultaneously. JDC has been carrying out projects in tourism and at the English education city to transform Jeju into a free international city (Kang, 2004).

Tourism is one of the most significant components of Jeju economy. It is famous for its designation as a UNESCO world heritage site and such designation helps to establish a reputation for Jeju as a major travel destination for international and domestic tourists. In particular, due to the increasing number of foreign tourists in Jeju, further English educational development has been emphasized by creating an English-friendly environment. The importance of English education in Jeju cannot be overemphasized since English is used more often in Jeju than in other regions of Korea. Considerable investment and continued efforts to create an English-friendly environment has been made to transform Jeju into a free international city.

For instance, the Korean government announced the development of the Jeju global education city in 2006 not only to reduce the number of Korean students studying abroad but also to solve various English education problems in Korea. As a result, four international schools: North London Collegiate School, Branksome Hall Asia, St. Johnsbury Academy Jeju, and Korea International School have been established since 2009. Jeju has created a new era of English language learning and teaching based on the establishment of those international schools.

Furthermore, since English is significant in everyday life in Jeju, there is little doubt that English teachers and researchers focus on English learners' motivation to learn English. However, Norton (1995) argues that the notion of motivation does

not adequately address the relationship between language learning, identity, and power, so the concept of motivation needs to be problematized. As a complement to the psychological construct of motivation (Dörnyei & Ushida, 2009; Murray et al., 2011), the sociological construct of 'investment' is conceptualized by Norton (1995, 1997, 2000, 2010, 2013). This study employs poststructuralist perspectives to compare the psychological construct of motivation with the sociological construct of investment.

Literature Review

Second language motivation has drawn a lot of attention. The psychological and cognitive approaches stress the relationship between language learners' L2 motivation and their traits or internal factors within the learning outcomes (Gardner, 1985, 2000; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993a, 1993b). That is, language learners have a coherent identity that organizes the intensity and the type of language learners' motivation according to the concept of motivation in SLA. In other words, the psychological and cognitive approaches of SLA motivation are regarded as a factor that is in language learners. They view language learners' characteristics as internalized, measurable, and fixed personalities. Such approaches hypothesize that the reason individuals do not succeed in learning the target language is that they do not have enough desire to learn the target language.

For instance, the notions of instrumental and integrative motivation are introduced through the work of Gardner (1985) and Gardner and Lambert (1972). Integrative motivation indicates language learners' desire to study a second language to integrate with the target language community, but the proliferation of English has caused a lot of controversy on the notion of integrative motivation. Since there is no particular target reference group in the globalized world, the concept of integrative motivation has become debatable. As for Instrumental motivation, it is language learners' desire for utilitarian purposes. The notion of instrumental motivation considers a fixed language learner who strive to gain access to material resources that are regarded as target language speakers' privileges.

However, poststructuralists maintain that SLA theory is not focused enough on the influences of power on social interaction. They (Bakhtin, 1981, 1984, 1986; Hall, 1993; Lantolf, 1996; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Weedon, 1997; Wenger, 1998) emphasize the social nature of learning by integrating language learners to their language learning contexts and the importance of socially informed research that concentrates on learners' social and cultural contexts. Distancing from structuralists' theories of language that perceive language learning as an individual process of internalizing rules and vocabulary, poststructuralists stress language learners' participation in their language learning communities.

Norton (1995, 1997, 2000, 2016) develops the concept of investment by drawing upon Bourdieu's (1977, 1991) concepts on social, cultural, symbolic and linguistic capital. Bourdieu (1977) particularly stresses language use as a means of expressing power within social relationships. He is interested in how language and power influences the concept of the self and emphasizes the relationship between the frequently unequal social world and language learners.

Bourdieu (1977) asserts the significance of power in structuring discourse because interlocutors rarely share equal speaking rights. He maintains that a speaker wants not only to be understood but also to be respected, distinguished (p. 648). However, the relationship between language learners and the social world is frequently unequal because of symbolic power relations between interlocutors. His work on the influence of positioning within power relations has important influences for the opportunities language learners get to speak.

Regarding the influence of positioning within power relations, Norton (1995) maintains that psychological approaches of SLA motivation do not adequately explain the reason a language learner is hesitant to speak in contexts where he or she is positioned in an unequal relationship in spite of being highly motivated. Therefore, it is important to consider that motivation is frequently socially established within unequal power relations in a diverse range of sociocultural contexts. That is, language learners' investments need to be understood not just as motivation, which presumes a unitary and ahistorical personality.

Investment highlights the socially constructed relationships between language learners and their

target languages and aims to verify the relationships between language learners and the changing social world. Poststructuralists (Gu, 2008; McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton, 1995, 1997, 2000; Norton & Gao, 2008; Norton & Toohey, 2001; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007; Skilton-Sylvester, 2002; Ushioda, 2001, 2007) assert the social impact on motivation and the interactions between social and individuals within their motivation development.

As mentioned above, poststructuralists are interested in language learning and investment. They especially take into consideration how affective factors such as motivated or unmotivated, introverted or extroverted, are socially constructed in unequal relationships. Therefore, it is important to understand the influence of positioning within power relations in various learning contexts (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Duff, 2002; Harklau, 2000; Norton, 1995, 2000, 2001, 2013; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Siegal, 1996; Stein, 1998) in learning English.

Norton (2000) is particularly interested in to what extent language learners' positions influence their investments in learning English. The participants in Norton's study (Norton, 2000) are reluctant to learn English under certain conditions, which cannot be adequately explained by motivational factors. She asserts that unequal relations of power between language learners and target language speakers were often noticeable in her study.

According to Norton and Toohey's research (2001), motivation should be understood with regard to social relations of power since it is not a fixed individual characteristic. According to Duff (2002), a lot of silent English learners in her research were not invested in learning English in their class since there are the unequal relations of power between themselves and native English speakers in spite of their high motivation.

Furthermore, the concept of investment regards language learners as having multiple identities (Norton, 1995, 2000, 2016). Norton maintains that motivation needs to be regarded within the context of individual language learner's changing identities and his or her social context. The concept of identity helps to indicate relationships between language learners and the social world as well as language learners' changing motivation in studying a language. Norton (1995) claims that language learners not only continuously exchange information when they speak but also change their identities. Thus, investment in learning a language is also

investment in language learners' identities.

Investment is contradictory and multiple because identity is a site of struggle and complex. Therefore, investment needs to be considered in terms of contradictory and changing language learners' identities (Darvin & Norton, 2015; Gu, 2008; Haneda, 2005; Kinginger, 2004; McKay & Wong, 1996; Norton, 1995, 2001, 2013; Norton & Gao, 2008; Skilton-Sylvester, 2002).

The concept of investment indicates language learners' ambivalent desire to learn the target language as well as the socially constructed relationships between language learners and the target language. The notion of investment views language learners as having fluctuating desires to engage in various social interactions where they are situated. That is, investment in learning a target language can coexist in contradictory ways in each language learner and it changes over space and time. The construct of investment provides questions regarding language learners' changing identities and their commitment to target language learning, which is understood not just with respect to motivation because of its internalized, measurable, and fixed personality.

In spite of the significance of conducting research on investment in learning English, there has been little research on investment transformations during English learners' learning processes. Therefore, it is important to investigate English learners' investment and identity formations in the various sociocultural contexts in Jeju.

Learners' identities and investments are not intrinsic, but are constructed within unequal relations of power and positioning, which may constrain their opportunities for learning English. Since students' marginalized positions could impact their identities and investment formations, it is important to investigate English learners' investment transformation during their English learning experiences in Jeju.

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