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LANGUAGE SOCIALIZATION AND SECOND/FOREIGN
LANGUAGE AND MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION IN
NON-WESTERN¹ SETTINGS

INTRODUCTION

Language socialization research documents and theorizes the diversity of cultural paths to communicative competence and community membership. From this theoretical perspective, linguistic and social development are viewed as interdependent and inextricably embedded in the contexts in which they occur. Language socialization is a life-long process, and a collaborative one. Through participation in recurrent interactions with more expert members of the community, novices are socialized *through the use of language* and *socialized to use language* (Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986).

Garrett (2006) identifies four core methodological features of language socialization research: (1) a longitudinal research design, (2) field-based collection and analysis of a substantial corpus of audio or video recorded naturalistic discourse, (3) a holistic, theoretically informed ethnographic perspective, and (4) attention to micro- and macrolevels of analysis, and to linkages between them. Taking an ethnographic and interactional discourse analytic approach, researchers identify patterns in novice–veteran interactions and study how they shape individual developmental processes. Furthermore, they seek to understand how these patterns and processes relate to community norms, values, and ideologies, as well as to large-scale social, cultural, and historical processes.

The paradigm was formulated by linguistic anthropologists Elinor Ochs and Bambi Schieffelin, both of whom had conducted extensive fieldwork in small-scale non-Western societies (Ochs in Madagascar and Western Samoa, Schieffelin in Papua New Guinea). They observed in these communities patterns of caregiver–child interactions and child language development that challenged some assumptions about first language acquisition that had emerged from research conducted almost exclusively with white middle-class Europeans and North Americans

¹ The term non-Western is used here to refer to regions of the world other than Europe or those areas in which the dominant culture is European.

(such as the universality and necessity of Baby Talk). These discoveries demonstrated the need for a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary perspective on linguistic and social development, one that placed sociocultural context at the center of analysis.

In their seminal 1984 article, Ochs and Schieffelin compared “developmental stories” from Samoan, Kaluli, and Anglo-American white middle class communities. The authors identified differences in how members of these societies organized interactions with children and how they conceptualized the child and its social and linguistic development. They proposed that caregivers’ communicative behaviors were organized by and expressive of values and beliefs held by members of their social group. Thus, interactions between children and caregivers could be understood as cultural phenomena embedded in the larger systems of cultural meaning and social order of the society into which the child is being socialized.

Before long, this perspective was brought to bear on second and foreign language education. It should be noted that the distinction between second language (a nonnative language used in the speaker/learner’s daily life) and foreign language (a language studied by the speaker/learner in a formal instructional setting removed from the target language community) is a problematic one. This may be particularly true in postcolonial, multilingual contexts, where many people rarely use the “official” language outside the classroom and where the boundaries between languages are often not clear. Thus, in the following discussion I use the term Lx to refer to any language other than the learner’s native language (cf. Pavlenko, 2006).

Poole (1992) studied interactions in adult ESL classes in the USA, where she found several discourse features that resembled those of white middle-class American (WMCA) child-caregiver interactions. She argued that these features encoded and communicated cultural messages and norms of expert-novice interaction, including a preference for expert accommodation of novice incompetence and a dispreference for displays of asymmetry. Poole observed that the role of teacher is “culturally constrained and motivated” (p. 611), making efforts to change classroom discourse patterns or scripts difficult because these patterns are tied to cultural norms and the individual’s identity as culture member.

Duff (1993, 1995) examined foreign language classroom interaction in three experimental dual-language (Hungarian-English) secondary schools in Hungary. Focusing her analysis on a traditional genre of oral assessment known as *felelés* (“recitation”), she found that political and social changes in post-communist Hungary were reflected and enacted in the transformation of classroom discourse patterns in the English-medium sections of these innovative schools. Associated with

the authoritarianism of the Soviet era, the socialization practice of *felelés* broke down as new classroom interactional patterns associated with ascendant democratic values became more preferred.

These and the many language socialization studies conducted since have illuminated the social, cultural, and political organization of participants' roles, expectations, and linguistic behaviors in second/foreign language educational settings. But while a number of studies examine Lx education in mainstream, immigrant, and aboriginal minority communities in North America, Europe, and Australia, only a handful of language socialization studies of Lx education have been conducted in non-Western societies.² Yet such settings are rich sites for exploring the sociocultural nature of language teaching and learning. Many non-Western (NW) societies have undergone dramatic changes in recent decades as the result of colonialism, missionization, Western schooling, and accelerated integration into the global economy (Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo, 1992). The result is a complex and sometimes conflicting array of linguistic and cultural practices and ideologies. Many people participate in multiple speech communities and/or multiple educational traditions, giving rise to hybrid practices. While few in number, studies of Lx education in NW settings have yielded important insights that expand our understanding of both language socialization and the teaching and learning of nonnative languages. In this chapter, I discuss three core theoretical domains illuminated by this work, and I conclude with reflections on future directions and challenges.

COMPETENCE

The concept of communicative competence is fundamental to both the language socialization research paradigm and Lx education research and practice in the West. In response to generative linguist Chomsky's (1965) explicit exclusion of sociocultural aspects of language use from his definition of competence, linguistic anthropologist Del Hymes (1972) argued that a speaker must know much more than grammar and lexicon in order to comprehend and produce speech in real situations in ways that are effective and appropriate in relation to the context.

Hymes' idea is at the heart of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), an approach to Lx education that emerged in the 1980s and dominated for nearly two decades.³ In an effort to (re)define and refine

² Several researchers working in bi- or multilingual non-Western settings refer to schools as shapers of community language ideologies but do not provide detailed analysis of language socialization in formal educational contexts (e.g., Kulick, 1993; Obondo, 1996).

³ In recent years, content-based instruction has become increasingly popular.

the objectives of language instruction and assessment, many researchers have elaborated on the concept of communicative competence. Canale and Swain (1980), for example, specify four components: grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence. Bachman's (1990) framework identifies three components—language competence, strategic competence, and psychophysiological mechanisms. Language competence comprises organizational competence and pragmatic competence, competences Bachman further divides into grammatical and textual competences and illocutionary and sociolinguistic competences, respectively.

Language socialization studies of Lx education take an ethnographic and holistic view of communicative competence and the practices through which it is developed. As Garrett and Baquedano-López (2002) state, research in this paradigm is “concerned with all of the knowledge, practices, and orientations that one needs in order to function as—and, crucially, to be regarded by others as—a competent member of (or participant in) a particular community or communities” (p. 345). Language socialization researchers seek to identify community norms, preferences, and expectations with regard to language competence and its development; to examine how they are locally enacted and negotiated; and to understand their cultural meanings and social histories. Studies of Lx education conducted in non-Western settings have proven particularly fruitful for exploring cultural variation in the ways language competence is conceived, constructed, and developed over time.

In her study of language socialization of children in a Northern Thai community into the use of two languages, Howard (2003a, b) found that children were socialized into practices of language hybridity in the classroom. Despite the fact that Standard Thai (ST) is the official school language, kindergarten children did not need to produce only or even mostly Standard Thai to be regarded as using language appropriate for the classroom. Rather, they were instructed to speak politely in their native language Kam Muang (KM) and to use the honorific particles of Standard Thai. Howard observed that this local norm for classroom communicative competence reflected wider “community perceptions about what it means to speak ST versus KM—the perception that the use of a particular honorific particle marks the boundary between languages” (2003a, p. 327).

According to Howard, this classroom norm of code-mixing emerges from two modes of teaching and caregiving that are rooted in two core values of Muang culture. An ethos of accommodation underlies a noninterventionist mode, while an ethos of respect underlies an interventionist mode. Adults are expected to accommodate children, to gauge the readiness of individual children to understand new knowledge,

and to avoid pressuring them to perform beyond their abilities and/or proclivities. On the other hand, children are expected to develop competence in community practices of respect from a very early age. Thus, teachers accepted children's code-mixing behavior, seeing it as an indicator of "readiness" (or lack thereof) to "receive" ST vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation" (2003a, p. 327). At the same time, teachers explicitly corrected children when they failed to display respect through the use of ST honorific particles.

Communities vary not only in how they conceptualize Lx competence, but also in what they consider to be an appropriate pathway *to* competence. Among the Fulbe of northern Cameroon, the ability to speak and understand Arabic is highly valued. In her study of Fulbe children's apprenticeship into Arabic at Koranic school, Moore (2004a) found that the developmental trajectory Fulbe children follow in learning Arabic was quite different from those preferred in present-day Lx education in the West. As in many non-Arabophone Islamic societies, Fulbe children learn to recite and write verses of the Koran in Classical Arabic without comprehension of their lexico-semantic content. In learning to reproduce faithfully the sounds and signs of the Koran, a student achieves a first level of understanding of the sacred text that is foundational to any subsequent study of Arabic. Recent efforts to modernize Islamic education include teaching Arabic as an Lx in the way that French is taught in secular schools. However, most Fulbe object to such innovations on the grounds that they desecralize Arabic and fail to provide learners with as deep an understanding as traditional pedagogy does.

LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES

Language ideologies—the ideas with which people “frame their understanding of linguistic varieties and the differences among them, and map those understandings onto people, events, and activities that are significant to them” (Irvine and Gal, 2000, p. 35)—are at play in any Lx educational context. Indeed, Lx pedagogies can productively be understood as constellations of ideologies about language and communication, language acquisition, human learning and development, and specific languages and the people who speak them. Language ideologies are highly salient in situations of language contact, wherein local and state ideologies are often in conflict and community members manage competing interests and ideologies. This makes Lx educational contexts in non-Western settings particularly fruitful ones in which to explore the complexity of language ideologies and their relationship with language socialization practices and outcomes.

In her research on the Caribbean island of Dominica, Paugh (2000, 2005) examined schooling as an agent of language socialization and a significant influence on the language ideologies of community members. She found many of the ideologies about the community language (Patwa) and the language of the state and school (English) that have been documented in postcolonial settings around the world. Teachers and parents alike expressed the belief that English was better adapted and necessary for personal and community development, while Patwa was “holding back” the village. Concerned that the use of Patwa would interfere with children’s acquisition of English and lead them to mix the two languages, teachers discouraged the use of Patwa in the classroom. Moreover, they encouraged parents to speak only English with their children, and parents agreed that this was important for their children’s success.

However, Paugh found that community members’ actual language socialization practices often did not match these purist, English-only ideologies. Parents code-switched frequently when speaking to and in the presence of children. While English had replaced Patwa as the primary language of the community, Patwa was believed to be better for emotionally expressive speech functions (e.g., joking, arguing, teasing, and assessing others) and was associated with “the very valuable qualities of boldness, self-sufficiency, and independence” (2005, p. 1817). The two codes had complementary roles in the community, used for different purposes and different roles, and children’s use of English and Patwa reflected their awareness of a community member’s need for both languages to participate fully in village life.

In most states, monolingualism is the preferred norm (usually in the ex-colonial language in postcolonial settings), while multilingualism is regarded as an obstacle to development and national unity. However, a fluid and complex linguistic repertoire is valued in many communities (Woolard and Schieffelin, 1994). In the Mandara Mountains of northern Cameroon, Moore (1999, 2004b) documented communicative and socialization practices that reflected and reinforced a multilingual norm among the montagnard (traditionally mountain dwelling) groups. From birth, children of this community were socialized into the use of multiple languages in complex ways for both Lx learning and interethnic/linguistic communication. At school, however, montagnard children had very little success in learning French. Moore identified several aspects of Lx classroom practice that prevented children from applying to the learning of French the language learning skills they had developed in their multilingual home environment. In particular, the French-only policy of Cameroonian schools failed to make use of—in fact, punished—the Lx learning competencies children brought to school. This study indicates that in multilingual communities, Lx

educational policy and practice rooted in a monolingual norm may have serious implications for children's additional language development and academic success.

The language socialization lens has also been trained on study abroad programs. In her study of dinnertime talk between college student learners of Japanese and their Japanese host families, Cook (2006) found these conversations to be an "opportunity space" (p. 145) for participants to be socialized into, challenge, reexamine, and transform stereotypical folk beliefs about Japanese and Westerners. She observed that the ideology of *nihonjinron* (theories on the Japanese) was reflected in dinner table discussions of topics such as language, social customs, and gender roles, and that "part of being Japanese is constituted by participating in the discourse of *nihonjinron*" (p. 147). However, dinnertime talk provided opportunities not only for the Japanese learners to participate in such discourse and to learn *nihonjinron*, but also for students and hosts to question their cultural assumptions and "to co-construct shared perspectives and emotions" through co-tellings of folk beliefs (p. 147).⁴

SOCIALIZING SUBJECTIVITIES

A central concern of most language socialization research is the development of locally intelligible subjectivities, or ways of being in the social world (Garrett, 2006; Kulick and Schieffelin, 2004). Guided by more competent interlocutors as they engage in cultural/linguistic practices, novices come to view particular behaviors, perceptions, and affective stances as appropriate to particular goals, settings, and identities (Ochs, 1988). National, ethnic, and religious identities are constructed and maintained in everyday interactions, and they may also be contested and transformed (Garrett and Baquedano-López, 2002).

This perspective informs recent research on the relationship between identity and Lx learning (e.g., Duff and Uchida, 1997; Norton and Toohey, 2001; Siegal, 1996). In this work, language learning is viewed as "not simply a skill that is acquired through hard work and dedication, but a complex social practice that engages the identities of language learners" (Norton, 2000, p. 132). Language socialization researchers who study Lx education identify patterns in classroom interaction and explore their meanings for participants. Their analyses illuminate the communicative processes through which participants teach and learn ways of feeling, thinking, and behaving that are (or come to be) associated with the target language. Most of the research in non-Western

⁴ See also Dufon's (2006) study of the socialization of taste of study abroad language learners in Indonesia participating in homestays.

settings has been explicitly comparative, investigating Lx socialization in two or more cultural contexts and yielding insights into the relationship between language socialization practices and the development of subjectivities.

In her study of language socialization in Koranic and public schools in Maroua, Cameroon, Moore (2004a, forthcoming) found that rote learning dominated in both schooling traditions. Moreover, Koranic recitation lessons and French oral expression lessons had the same overall organizational structure, which she called guided repetition. This language socialization practice was used to teach and learn not only Lx knowledge and skills, but preferred ways of being in the social worlds in which Arabic and French were privileged. Guided repetition was accomplished in different ways in the two contexts in order to achieve different intellectual and moral effects. Koranic schooling was meant to socialize children into reproductive competence in Arabic and traditional Fulbe and Muslim values of self-control, respect for religious authority and hierarchy, and submission to the word of God. The practice of guided repetition in the Koranic context emphasized strict discipline, reverent renderings of the text, and deference to teacher and text. At public school, children memorized and acted out dialogues crafted to teach not only generative competence in French, but also “modern” ways of acting, feeling, and thinking. Guided repetition in the classroom was often playful, and teachers used exuberant praise, liberal manipulation of the text, and rapid expert–novice role shifts to encourage students to emulate the educated, Francophone, and Cameroonian characters in the dialogues.

Meacham (2004) examined English language instruction as a cultural practice in two public high schools in Tokyo, Japan. Comparing two communities of Lx learning—one located in an elite liberal arts high school, one in a technical high school—she found that linguistic practices in the two settings were quite different and that they socialized two very different types of English-speaking Japanese subject. At the technical high school, students were socialized through what Meacham calls empathetic participant frameworks to view English as imposing or intruding. Through word choice and the structure of her elicitations, the teacher positioned students as problematic recipients of English in need of emotional support. Lessons were primarily listening activities, and when participants did produce English, it was frequently filtered through Japanese phonology. In Meacham’s words, the effect of Lx activities in this school was “to construct a kind of Japaneseness out of English incompetence” (p. 233). At the liberal arts high school, students were apprenticed into an affectively neutral

stance toward English through an analytical participant framework. Participants tended to keep Japanese and English separate in class, stressing word for word translations and maintaining English phonology when English words were inserted into Japanese utterances. In texts and activities, English was framed as an expressive tool students needed to master for the purpose of representing Japan to outsiders. Thus the “competent performance of Japanese identity [came] in being able to deftly move back and forth between the two languages” (p. 234).

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND CHALLENGES

Through the creation and comparison of richly contextualized accounts of Lx education in non-Western settings, language socialization researchers have generated new understandings of how language teaching and learning is shaped by the social, cultural, and linguistic systems in which it is embedded. However, many more studies are needed if we hope to document and theorize the full range of ways in which humans are apprenticed into nonnative languages. In some cases, there is a need for studies longer than is typical for language socialization research or the integration of longitudinal and cross-sectional studies. A data set spanning several years or levels of Lx education will be essential to understanding the relationship between interactional patterns and developmental outcomes of traditions like guided repetition or the non-interventionist mode of Muang teachers.

A handful of studies of Lx classroom interaction in non-Western settings have illuminated the organization, function, history, and impact of teacher-centered, rote pedagogies in postcolonial settings (Hornberger and Chick, 2001; Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo, 1992; Wright, 2001). Such practices are the object of reform in many nations. However, reform efforts are rarely grounded in an anthropological understanding of locally, regionally, and globally organized sites of Lx educational practice, based instead on the assumption that Western approaches to language education are superior and universally applicable (Kachru, 1991; Pennycook, 1989). Schieffelin and Ochs (1996) stress that a “defining perspective of language socialization research is the pursuit of cultural underpinnings that give meaning to the communicative interactions between expert and novice within and across contexts of situation” (p. 255). Such a perspective is crucial to the successful development and dissemination of language education policies and practices that will be more inclusive of and effective for underserved populations in non-Western settings and worldwide.

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