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7 Language Socialization in SLA

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1 Introduction

The rise of sociolinguistic and contextual approaches in L2 research over the past decade reflects a growing recognition that learning language is a more complex process than merely acquiring linguistic structures, and that language learning and use (if indeed the two can be separated) are shaped by socio-political processes (Hall, 1995; Losey, 1995; McKay and Wong, 1996; Zuengler, 1989). To date one sociocultural approach in SLA research, *language socialization* (LS), is represented by only a few studies. We believe, however, that among such approaches (see Siegel, this volume, for a discussion of sociocultural approaches), LS stands to contribute the most to an understanding of the cognitive, cultural, social, and political complexity of language learning.

Our purpose here is to lay out LS as a theoretical and methodological approach in L1 research and its implications for SLA research; to examine from an LS perspective certain key concepts often simplified in SLA and ESL research; to evaluate existing L2 socialization studies and their contributions; and to propose a research agenda for LS in SLA for the next decade.

2 Cognitive and Social Models in SLA: A Metatheoretical Perspective

In a 1997 issue of *Modern Language Journal*, Firth and Wagner called for "a significantly enhanced awareness of the contextual and interactional dimensions of language use" (p. 285) that would reconstitute all SLA research. At times their spirited critique almost appeared headed toward declaring that cognition is a minor consideration in language acquisition (e.g., "it is at least debatable whether there is such a thing as 'interlanguage,'" p. 294). Long (1997) (among others) countered that while studies of language use produce "theoretically interesting and socially beneficial results," SLA is about a cognitive process,

the "acquisition of new knowledge" (emphasis removed). Long, Poulisse (1997), Gregg (1996), and other psycholinguists draw a sharp distinction between *acquisition* and *use*, one apparently (and rather surprisingly) supported by some socioculturalists. For example, Kasper (1997, p. 310) joined psycholinguists in arguing that acquisition is about "establishing new knowledge structures" and thus SLA should have an "essentially cognitivist" definition – thereby relegating sociocultural approaches to a supportive rather than formative role in the study of language learning.[1]

The framing of the debate between cognitivist and socioculturist camps (for want of better terms) in SLA is problematic on at least two counts. First, at a metatheoretical level, the camps are based on strongly contrastive ontologies or *world hypotheses* (Pepper, 1966): *mechanism* (a machine metaphor) for cognitivists, and *contextualism* (an act/event metaphor) for socioculturalists. The tendency to approach aspects of SLA as unconnected modules that virtually preclude arriving at an integrated theory (Hatch, Shirai, and Fantuzzi, 1990) is an example of how the mechanistic metaphor plays itself out in cognitivist SLA research. Metaphors both facilitate and constrain how we conceptualize language acquisition, and represent "truth" in opposing ways, as simple (an "elegant" theory being one that explains a phenomenon with the fewest variables) or as complex and messy (in the sense of the reality of experience, everyday practice, and the complicated process of learning). Neither of the two worldviews alone, we believe, will move SLA in the direction of a full understanding of language learning. (For further discussion of these philosophical issues and implications for research, see Carspecken, 1996; Diesing, 1971, 1991; Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Kaplan, 1964; Pepper, 1966; and especially Lakoff and Johnson, 1999.)

Secondly, theory in L1 acquisition seems ahead of SLA theory in recognizing, on the basis of both experimental and qualitative research, that cognition itself is constructed and shaped in the context of experience and through social interaction (Nelson, 1996). Such an integrative perspective is congruent with second-generation cognitive science research.

In sum, we agree with Kasper (1997) – although for reasons different from hers – that Firth and Wagner somewhat misconstrue the importance of contextual approaches for SLA research. The cognitive/social dichotomy widely taken for granted in SLA theory obscures the relationship between the knowledge about language that learners construct and the social, cultural, and political contexts in which acquisition takes place. Cognition *originates* in social interaction. Constructing new knowledge is therefore *both* a cognitive *and* a social process. SLA theory's need for just this sort of integrative perspective is one of the arguments for taking a language socialization approach in L2 research.

3   Language Socialization: Theory and Method

As a theoretical perspective, LS "grew out of concerns with the narrowness of the prevailing child language acquisition model of the late 1960s and 1970s,

[and] the recognition that language learning and enculturation are part of the same process" (Watson-Gegeo, 1992, p. 52). LS was grounded in the pioneering sociolinguistic and anthropological work on communicative and interactional competence by Hymes and Gumperz (Gumperz, 1982; Gumperz and Hymes, 1972; Hymes, 1972, 1980), and on child language acquisition and discourse by Ervin-Tripp (Ervin-Tripp and Mitchell-Kernan, 1977) and others (Cook-Gumperz, 1973, 1977; Heath, 1983; Philips, 1972; Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986; Watson, 1975). Its basic premise is that linguistic and cultural knowledge are *constructed* through each other, and that language-acquiring children or adults are active and selective agents in both processes (Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986).

With regard to the *impact of socialization on language*, a child's development of linguistic competence is an outcome of the language varieties he or she is encouraged implicitly if not explicitly to learn, and of the activities in which children routinely interact with others (Ochs and Schieffelin, 1995, p. 91). All activities in which children participate with adults and other children (whether in the family, community, or classroom) are by definition socially organized and embedded in cultural meaning systems. Thus children learn language in social, cultural, and political contexts that constrain the linguistic forms they hear and use, and also mark the social significance of these forms in various ways (e.g., the acquisition of pronoun forms in a language marking rank/status on the pronoun, i.e., honorifics [Agha, 1994]; or of differing syntactic patterns associated with formal and non-formal register in languages such as Kwara'ae [Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo, 1986a]). These points also apply to adult L2 learners because there is no context-free language learning, and all communicative contexts involve social, cultural, and political dimensions affecting which linguistic forms are available or taught and how they are represented. Yet in typical ESL studies, the influence of the classroom context is largely ignored. Some SLA researchers see classroom contexts as "unnatural" (Cummins, 1992; Krashen, 1985) even though schooling in most societies is a normal and pervasive feature of socialization. Although classrooms involve a distinct discourse register that may not be as rich as other contexts in a student's life, they are not inherently "unnatural."

The learning of language, cultural meanings, and social behavior is experienced by the language learner as a single, continuous (although not linear) process (Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo, 1995). Learners construct "a set of [linguistic and behavioral] practices that enable" them to communicate with and live among others in a given cultural setting (Schieffelin, 1990, p. 15). The social contexts in which learning takes place are variable, leading to systematic variation in learning. Moreover, "children who speak the same language (even as native speakers) do not necessarily take information from talk or texts in identical ways" (Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986, p. 170) due to their prior experiences and individual variation in language-learning strategies, etc. LS research has also found cross-cultural variation in the kinds of support and input caregivers provide for young children to assist their L1 learning (e.g., Demuth, 1983;

Miller, 1982; Ochs, 1986). However, in all societies studied so far, speakers accommodate to language-acquiring children in some fashion.

With regard to the *impact of language on socialization*, LS research has shown that children learn culture largely through participating in linguistically marked events, the structure, integrity, and characteristics of which they come to understand through verbal cues to such meanings. The acquisition of syntax, semantics, and discourse practices – including the organization of discourse – are especially fundamental to children's socialization in framing and structuring their development of both linguistic and cultural knowledge. From a cultural standpoint, "discourse practices provide a medium through which worldview and social activities are constituted" (Schieffelin, 1990, p. 20). In particular, language and discourse practices encode a cultural group's indigenous epistemology (Gegeo, 1994), which involves "cultural ways of conceptualizing and constructing knowledge about the human and natural worlds" (Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo, 1999). Second language classrooms exhibit and teach – with varying degrees of explicitness – a set of cultural and epistemological assumptions that may well differ from that of the L2 learner's native culture. Such differences have been well documented for linguistic and cultural minorities in a variety of settings (e.g., Boggs, 1985; Heath, 1983; Philips, 1983; Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo, 1994), and have often been shown to be problematic for child and adult second language or second dialect learners.

4   Cognitive Issues in LS

Schieffelin and Ochs base their distinction between language acquisition and socialization on Hymes's (1972) distinction between linguistic and communicative competence. Since the early 1990s, however, it has become clear that social identities, roles, discourse patterns, and other aspects of context all affect the process of L1 and L2 acquisition (including motivation [see Peirce, 1995a] and consciousness [Schmidt, 1990]). The interdependence of worldview and language (long a subject of intense study by anthropologists and linguists) has also been shown (Chaudhry, 1991; Ervin-Tripp, 1964; see Hill, 1992, for an extended discussion). All of these issues concern cognitive processes. As the foregoing discussion indicates, LS provides a perspective and set of strategies additional to experimental research for understanding cognitive processes in language learning because such processes are built and shaped through interaction in sociocultural contexts over time, and are recoverable from discourse data (see Watson-Gegeo, 1992). Here we sketch out some of the theoretical lines informing current LS research that view cognition as a social phenomenon.

The work of LS researchers on cognitive processes (Ochs, 1986; Watson-Gegeo, 1990; Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo, 1999) is supported and informed by recent advances in several lines of theoretical work in psychology and cognitive anthropology. Neo-Vygotskians (Rogoff, 1990; Wertsch, 1985) have built on

Vygotsky's (1962) argument that children develop higher-order cognitive functions, including linguistic skills, through social interaction with adults or more knowledgeable peers, eventually internalizing these skills and functioning independently. The most important interactions take place within a child's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), that is, slightly ahead of the learner's independent ability (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).[2]

What the learner constructs are representations of activities, events, and meanings. Drawing on schema/script theory (Schank and Abelson, 1977), her twenty years of naturalistic and experimental research on children's language development, and cross-cultural LS studies, Nelson (1996) argues that children's knowledge of language and the world develops in the everyday routines in which they participate and from which they construct "Mental Event Representations (MERs)," that is, thematic and script-like representations of behavior and events, some individual and others socially shared. In common with LS researchers, Nelson is concerned with both how children acquire language, and how language itself structures other kinds of cognitive development. Nelson agrees with Gibson's (1982) argument – an aspect of his "ecological realist approach," grounded in research on cognition in early infancy – that infants' perceptual, conceptual, and enactive systems are not simply innate, but "tuned" through experience to the sociocultural world in which they live. Gibson's work on perception has informed recent LS studies on the earliest stages of language development, that of focusing attention and moving from gesture to speech (e.g., Zukow-Goldring, 1996; Zukow-Goldring and Ferko, 1994). Nelson sees such "tuning" as involving the formation of MERs.

The application of Nelson's work for L2 socialization and SLA lies in the concept of MERs as cognitive structures built out of experience and the language-learning process. The construction of MERs is the building of new neuronal networks or links between networks, from the standpoint of cognitive science.

Nelson's (1996, p. 12) view that "Human minds are equipped to construct complicated 'mental models' that represent . . . the complexities of the social and cultural world" echoes cognitive anthropologists' work on culturally shared knowledge organized into cultural models (D'Andrade and Strauss, 1992; Holland and Quinn, 1987; Shore, 1996; Strauss and Quinn, 1997). Quinn and Holland (1987, p. 24) define cultural models as "prototypical event sequences in simplified worlds." Such models underlie most of what human beings do within cultural frames, including our academic notions about teaching and learning, our assumptions about what constitutes science and how language works, etc. They are also reflected in the metaphors we select to describe experience (Lakoff, 1984; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Children learn cultural models as they learn the language(s) that constitute their "native" repertoire. School "culture" typically reflects the sociopolitically dominant culture in a society, although much about school is not "native" to any cultural group (and is an outcome of institutional cultural history).

The issue of differing cultural models is highly salient not only for SLA theory, but also for the L2 classroom. In our own experience as teachers,

competing and diverse cultural models at varying levels – for pedagogy, inter-action, conversational inferencing and exchange, affect expression, epistemo-logy (knowledge construction, worldview) – must be simultaneously dealt with by both instructor and students when teaching/learning a second language.

While Vygotsky focused on the individual child in interaction with peers and adults, the work of Lave and her collaborators has been more group-oriented, examining the development of learners' cognitive skills in the context of communities of practice (Chaiklin and Lave, 1993; Rogoff and Lave, 1984). Lave and Wenger (1993) are concerned with a particular form of parti-cipation in such communities, "legitimate peripheral participation." Building on the "radical shift [in the human sciences] from *invariant* structures to ones that are less rigid and more deeply adaptive," with structure "more the variable outcome of action than its invariant precondition" (Hanks, 1993, p. 17), Lave and Wenger emphasize the central importance of learners' access to participa-tory roles in expert performances of all knowledge skills, including language. The term "legitimate peripheral participation" describes the incorporation of learners into the activities of communities of practice, beginning as a legitimated (recognized) participant on the edges (periphery) of the activity, and moving through a series of increasingly expert roles as skills develop. Capacities and skills are therefore built by active participation in a variety of different roles associated with a given activity over a period of time, from peripheral to full participant. Lave and Wenger thus move beyond the Vygotskian notion of "internalization" into a more criticalist perspective on learning. As a theory of social practice related to the work of Giddens (1979) and Bourdieu (1977), their formulation speaks to the "relational interdependency of agent and world, activity, meaning, cognition, learning, and knowing," emphasizing the inher-ently socially "situated negotiation and renegotiation of meaning in the world" (Lave and Wenger, 1993, pp. 50–1).[3]

Lave and Wenger's theoretical framework helps us understand the complex sociocultural/cognitive process of L2 learning in classroom and community contexts, and how learners are brought into or excluded from various activ-ities that shape language acquisition. They draw our attention to the import-ance of studying access, negotiation and renegotiation, and roles in L2 learners' movement from beginner to advanced L2 speaker status. These issues and processes have critical importance for linguistic minorities and immigrants, who may face social and political hostility or exclusion, and may react with resistance.

The theoretical perspectives briefly sketched here disagree on many points, and much further research is needed to develop anything like a unified theory. However, they all do agree on a fundamental premise: the necessity of understanding cognitive development – including language learning – through an integrated approach in which experience and sociocultural contexts play formative rather than secondary roles.

As Jacobs and Schumann (1992, p. 293) argue, proposed models of SLA must be "neurobiologically plausible." The foregoing perspectives are

compatible in their broad outlines with recent brain research emphasizing the key role of experience and socialization in shaping cognitive development (e.g., Edelman, 1987; Harth, 1993). Connectionist models (Gasser, 1990; Rumelhart, McClelland, et al., 1986; Sokolik, 1990; see also Rivers, 1994; Schmidt, 1988) especially seem promising for further exploration, due to their emphasis on multiply connected networks, parallel distributed processing of information, and learning as the strengthening of connections through frequency. These models show the essential relationship between cognitive development and experience, and are congruent with notions like MER, cultural model, and legitimate peripheral participation.

5   Methodological Strategies in LS

Among discussions of ethnographic methods in ESL and SLA (Davis, 1995; Edge and Richards, 1998; Lazaraton, 1995; Peirce, 1995b; Ramanathan and Atkinson, 1999; Watson-Gegeo, 1988), only one (Watson-Gegeo, 1992) addresses an LS perspective. To understand the cognitive and social complexity of language learning, LS studies may combine ethnographic, sociolinguistic, discourse analytic, quantitative, and experimental methods, as needed. Studies should begin with careful ethnographic documentation of the process of learning language and culture in the learner's everyday and/or classroom settings. LS studies are longitudinal, following language development and socialization over a period of several months to a year or longer, with the analyst writing up results at significant points coinciding with identified developmental stages, or with the semester or school year in classroom studies. Interactional events are recorded on a schedule ranging from daily to bi-weekly for routine events, and an effort is also made to record non-routine and unplanned events. Infrequent events may be culturally loaded or marked, that is, carry important symbolic meaning and have a highly significant impact on learning. The LS ethnographer takes careful observational fieldnotes as recordings are being made. Some studies include recordings made in the researcher's absence, to help assess the effect of observer presence on interactions, and to capture interactions that might not take place in front of outsiders due to privacy or other concerns.

  Audio- and videotaped recordings are indexed and transcribed, using one of several transcription schemes designed for psycholinguistic studies of language acquisition, or one or another form of discourse analysis. The way transcripts represent interaction is widely recognized as a theoretical as well as methodological issue. Choice of transcription layout, for example, may profoundly bias the analysis in terms of which speaker is seen to initiate an interaction, or how contributions by a language learner are interpreted with regard to contingency and other aspects of discourse organization (Edwards and Lampert, 1993; Gumperz and Berenz, 1993; Ochs, 1979). Participants in an analyzed interaction are also interviewed to disambiguate problematic utterances and exchanges, and to explore their understandings of the interaction at the time.

An adequate LS analysis requires examining events and behavior in light of both the history of relationships and other aspects of the immediate context (micro-context) and relevant sociocultural, historical, political, and other institutional processes (macro-context) (Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo, 1995, p. 61). This holistic approach meets the psycholinguistic criteria of ecologically valid research, and addresses the interaction of individual and social context in cognitive development of concern to Vygotsky, Nelson, and LS research generally. It also reveals the important interplay of structure and agency, in which knowledge systems and social systems are "both the medium and the outcome of the practices that constitute those systems" (Giddens, 1979, p. 69).

6   Language Socialization For and In SLA

What can LS bring to SLA research? As implied above, we believe that LS suggests a different view of learning, language, and cognition from more traditional SLA approaches. Here we examine each of these three constructs in turn, focusing on key concepts often essentialized and/or simplified by SLA and ESL researchers.

The view of *learning* offered by LS suggests a more complex model than input-output mechanistic theories advanced in much of the SLA literature. For that reason, an LS perspective can help resolve the modularity problem (mentioned earlier) by emphasizing and clarifying connections among language learning and teaching processes, including the role of interaction in language learning, and how learning and teaching are shaped by levels of sociocultural, political, and historical context.

For example, an LS perspective is consistent with many of the critiques – in *Beyond the Monitor Model* (Borasch and Vaughan James, 1994) and elsewhere – leveled at Krashen's (1985)[4] distinction between "acquisition" and "learning," rejecting the idea that acquisition occurs almost exclusively in "naturalistic" (non-school) settings and learning in "formal" (classroom) settings, and that as "learned" language is only accessible through conscious use of "the Monitor," it will never have the automaticity of acquired language. Rather, LS regards language learning as similar to other kinds of learning. Human beings may come endowed with certain species-specific predispositions to learn language, but all cognitive development is constructed in and profoundly shaped by sociocultural contexts, whether they be home, community, or school. Formative contextual factors for SLA include local "theories" of how learning occurs, the sorts of situations in which learners are allowed and/or expected to participate, the roles they can take, and the linguistic, sociolinguistic, and discoursal complexity of oral or written language forms to which they are exposed. Moreover, in virtually all societies some form of knowledge or skill is directly taught to adults and/or children, sometimes in highly formal, even ritualistic contexts that may exert a powerful effect on learning. Some SLA research shows that naturalistic and classroom learning results are identical (Ellis, 1989),

and that instruction even accelerates learning, ultimately leading to higher levels of skills (Long, 1988). Other studies with an overtly LS perspective (cf. Willet, 1997) show the facilitative effects of routinized classroom speech in child SLA. Additional evidence comes from the Canadian French immersion programs (Long, 1996; Swain, 1981). Although students in these programs spent years in an environment Krashen would probably see as ideal for language acquisition, they failed to achieve nativelike proficiency in all aspects of their productive French skills. Finally, connectionist models of cognitive function (mentioned above) and second-generation cognitive science research seriously undermine the compartmentalized, serial processing suggested in Krashen's acquisition/learning dichotomy (Rivers, 1994, p. 73).

The view of *language* offered by LS goes beyond single, isolated and idealized utterances to focus on discourse practices. Language is seen as integrated into sociocultural behavior, and both the result and creator of context and structure. As with learning as a construct, an LS perspective can help SLA theory move beyond its traditional study of language in modular, individualistic terms.

Even when sociolinguistic concepts have been borrowed into SLA, for example, they have tended to be modularized in the way that Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) modularize Gumperz's notion of communicative competence into a series of discrete categories: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic, with a strong emphasis on rules. Ellis and Roberts (1987, p. 19) rightfully point out Gumperz's (1984) argument that communicative competence is not about "rules," but about "creating conditions that make possible shared interpretation" (their wording). Thus Gumperz emphasizes the connection rather than the division between grammar and contextualization, in contrast to some SLA theorists who would like to divorce communicative competence from issues of acquiring language structure.

While Gumperz's formulation emphasizes conversational cooperation, helping to move our understanding of language beyond idealized notions, LS today is more in tune with Peirce's (1995a, p. 18) argument that SL learning studies should include "an understanding of the way rules of use are socially and historically constructed to support the interests of a dominant group within a given society." This formulation is especially relevant to L2 or FL classrooms, where certain social and linguistic identities and uses are rewarded (or discredited), and taught together with accompanying sociopolitical behaviors, values, expectations, and rights. Peirce's argument is that such matters affect the learner's motivation or investment in learning. But as Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo (1994) show, issues of power are central to the quality of the instruction itself – and thus to both language structure and language use – in English language instruction in Third World classrooms, such as in the Solomon Islands, where disadvantaged populations often experience poorly trained teachers with minimal English skills.

LS also alters our view of *cognition* to one recognizing that language and other forms of cognitive development and knowledge are constructed in and

emerge through practice and interaction in specific historical, political, and sociocultural contexts. Thus, LS rejects the traditional SLA view that cognition happens solely "inside the head" of an individual. This perspective also implies that language and other types of cognitive development are likely formed in a bottom-up fashion rather than top-down, as more Chomskian-conceived models of language suggest.[5]

Formal strategies, such as routines and formulaic speech, which focus learners' attention (in the sense meant by Schmidt, 1990), are one example of how cognitive development involving language is formed bottom-up. Such strategies have been shown to be used by caregivers in many societies to guide children's L1 acquisition and facilitate their cognitive development. The LS and L1 acquisition literatures emphasize the role of formulaic speech and routines in children's linguistic and cognitive development. Formulaic speech is also a much studied topic in SLA, but here again researchers have tended to treat the concept narrowly. For Krashen and Scarcella (1978), "prefabricated routines" are short, fixed-format, and equated with automatic speech. The L1 (e.g., Peters, 1983) and LS literature (beginning with Watson, 1975) have shown routines to be variable, flexible, and graded according to a learner's linguistic and interactional competence (Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo, 1986b). Such grading is a major reason that routines function to scaffold language acquisition. In this respect, research on routines has helped to clarify how classroom discourse is its own register in comparison with caregiver–child discourse. L1 routines occurring outside classrooms do involve substitution into slots, but they also involve more, especially negotiation and creative manipulation by children as their skills increase. None of this is allowable in most classrooms, including L2 classrooms, probably because, as Pica (1987, p. 12) points out, attempts by students to restructure social interaction in the classroom "may be misinterpreted as challenges to the teacher" (emphasis removed).

As Weinert (1995) argues in her review of the research on formulaic language in SLA, linearly stored word sequences may in fact benefit learners in helping them to overcome cognitive constraints on acquisition. If this is true, then "it may be necessary to abandon the notion of a homogenous grammatical competence as separate from language use" (p. 199). In a recent study, Myles, Hooper, and Mitchell (1998) found that when pressed by communicative needs that went beyond classroom routines, the FL French learners they observed did not abandon the formulaic chunks they had previously depended on in classroom interactions. Instead, the learners seemed to analyze them, then use the analysis to construct required formal features, such as the pronoun system (p. 359). This finding adds to previous evidence that routines and other formulaic language are productive tools rather than fixed units in language learning.

An LS approach can also further our understanding of cognitive issues by providing a richer view of *context* than is currently the case in SLA research. Ellis and Roberts's (1987) approach to context, for example, claims to draw on Hymes (1974), but in fact follows Brown and Fraser's (1979) reductionist approach to Hymes's heuristic discussion of context, and also reduces the notion

of macro- and micro-contexts as used by LS researchers. Roberts and Simonot (1987) want to "deepen" context beyond such narrow uses, but reduce context to three levels in their own analysis. Their formulation leaves out many historical and sociocultural dimensions that, although they may not always all be essential to a given analysis, should not be precluded in advance.

In contrast, in LS, "context refers to the whole set of relationships in which a phenomenon is situated" (Watson-Gegeo, 1992, p. 51), including macro-levels of institutional, social, political and cultural aspects, and micro-levels involving the immediate context of situation. The history of macro- and micro-dimensions, including interactants' individual experiences and the history of interaction with each other, are also important to the analysis. In this respect, LS study aims to go beyond thick description (Geertz, 1973) to *thick explanation*, which "takes into account all relevant and theoretically salient micro- and macro-contextual influences that stand in a systematic relationship to the behavior or events" (Watson-Gegeo, 1992, p. 54) to be explained, with systematic relationship as the key for setting boundaries (Diesing, 1971, pp. 137–41; DeWalt and Pelto, 1985), and with attention to data collection to the point of theoretical saturation (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). An LS approach agrees with Roberts and Simonot (1987, p. 135) that language and society are "parts of a dialectic process in which language both expresses but simultaneously constructs social systems and structures." However, SL research has yet to embody this notion in its analysis.

Similarly, as by definition everything is always in a context, LS rejects the notion that language or discourse can be "decontextualized" or even "context-reduced" (Cummins, 1992), and that a distinction can be drawn between a "natural" and a "classroom" teaching/learning situation on that basis. The language/discourse used in schools is contextualized as school language, and minority and SL children who are not familiar with that kind of contextualization (the linguistic forms appropriate to the classroom, literacy activities, and the social class-based values and assumptions they encode) may be at a disadvantage compared to students who come already familiar with school-contextualized language forms and use.

Finally, LS can contribute to SLA research by expanding its *methodological tool kit* to include, as we have seen, a wider range of approaches and techniques, and an emphasis on integrating fine-grained longitudinal studies of language development in classroom and non-classroom contexts.

7 Existing LS Studies in SLA: Contributions and Shortcomings

L2 socialization studies so far have been variable in focus and uneven in quality. The first major study was Wong Fillmore's (1976) dissertation on five 5–7-year-old Spanish-speaking children acquiring English without explicit

instruction in a bilingual classroom setting. Wong Fillmore showed how these children used formulaic speech in conversation, analyzed the constituents of formulae to free them for productive use, and arrived at patterns and rules for constructing new utterances. Her study generated a continuing line of research on formulaic speech in SLA (for reviews see McLaughlin, 1984; Weinert, 1995). Since then only a handful of studies have self-identified as or been consistent with an LS framework (e.g., Harklau, 1994; He, 1997; Losey, 1995; Poole, 1992; Schecter and Bayley, 1997). Most studies have a variety of weaknesses, including the need to disambiguate cultural from situational effects, the need to interrogate key analytic concepts, unsupported interpretive leaps from data to cultural pattern, lack of contrastive examples where these are essential to assessing the quality of the analysis, and less than transparent procedures of data collection and/or analysis. The two most common problems are the lack of discourse examples to support the analysis, and failure to address cognitive implications in largely socioculturally based studies. These latter two points we make less as criticisms of prior work than as advisories of where L2 socialization research needs to go.

Among the better studies, Duff's (1995) research on nine history classrooms taught in English in a progressive Hungarian secondary school took place during a shift from a ritualized student recitation format to a more open oral reports format. She focuses on the interactions between one experienced teacher and her students in two classrooms, where all speakers are acquiring English. Duff finds that error correction, as well as linguistic form and historical content of student oral reports, are mutually constructed by participants. Her findings illustrate how scaffolded involvement and student feedback together ensure the use of appropriate, comprehensible English. But she provides no example of a recitation format, the contrasting model for student oral presentations, making it difficult to assess some of her claims.

Willet's (1997) year-long study examines the routines that support four ESL children's participation in a mainstream first-grade classroom at an international school. She finds that communicative and linguistic competence are jointly constructed by the children and teachers, but especially among the children themselves. Her analysis of how the social context shapes routines and interactional strategies has implications for language acquisition. The children practice and experiment linguistically in important ways, including using syntax to construct meaning rather than merely stringing prefabricated chunks together. Her work echoes and extends Wong Fillmore's original argument for the implications of children's analysis of formulaic chunks in L2 learning. However, Willet's examples need far more analysis than she offers. Her data include marvelous cases of paradigmatic substitutions and other processes that are directly relevant to cognitive processes in SL development and to the points she makes about prefabricated chunks. The data clearly show a very strong connection between social and cognitive dimensions of language learning, even though Willet's analysis does not address this issue. Willet also needs to show how her findings in many ways replicate those in

several classroom ethnography studies in the educational research literature, with which SLA readers may not be familiar.

In a year-long ethnographic study of a 5-year-old Moroccan girl learning Italian in a nursery school, Pallotti (1996) examines features of the child's interlanguage development via lexical items and unanalyzed formulae, affect-marking suffixes, and "sentence producing tactics" (following Wong Fillmore, 1976). Only the latter are illustrated with discourse examples. Although her data are very thorough, Pallotti's otherwise excellent analysis exemplifies Tollefson's (1991, p. 38) concern that SLA research has "limited the term [context] to a narrow, neoclassical meaning, primarily verbalization patterned by 'strategies' of individual speakers within the 'context' of conversation" (in Pallotti's case, focused by Grice's conversational maxims). Pallotti recognizes that the nursery-school context of competition for the speaking floor shapes conversational strategies, but other aspects of context influential in language learning also need to be examined.

Four studies by Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995), Siegal (1996), Watson-Gegeo (1992), and Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo (1994) provide promising models for future LS research in SLA. Atkinson and Ramanathan (1995) compare the L1 and L2 language programs at the same university, examining attitudes and practices among teachers/administrators in teaching academic writing. Their study, which involves a great number of carefully analyzed data, finds that L1 and L2 students are taught different formal expectations for, and models of, writing. The L2 program promotes a deductive essay format, simplicity, and clarity, while the L1 program (into which ESL students are ultimately transitioned) emphasizes form dependent on rhetorical purpose, and preference for sophisticated, subtle thought and expression. Thus, the L1 program not only presupposes cultural knowledge ESL students lack, but holds expectations for writing they have not been taught. Presumably the researchers' next step will be to examine what happens in classrooms.

Siegal (1996) (see table 7.1) is an exemplary study focusing on the role of language learner subjectivity in the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence by a European woman learning Japanese in Japan. Siegal's sophisticated theoretical framing is matched by the thorough way in which she approaches data collection (some 150 hours of interactional and interview data) and analysis. She shows how power and positionality issues affect interactions between the white female student and her male Japanese language instructor. In imperfectly manipulating her interlanguage – including modality, honorifics, and topic control – to display politeness and create a voice for herself in Japanese, the student also creates examples of inappropriate language use. It appears that cognitively she may not have worked out which expectations take precedence, and this problem in turn affects the input to which she is exposed. We would have liked Siegal to more fully articulate the cognitive implications of her data, which we think are significant. It would also be useful to know how this woman's strategies and learning compare with others in the data set of 11 European women studying Japanese in Japan.

Table 7.1 Studies by Siegal (1996) and Watson-Gegeo (1992)

Study	Focus	Data/Methods	Contributions	Weaknesses
Siegal (1996)	Role of language learner subjectivity in the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence in L2 within a richly described social, cultural, and historical framework	Seven types of qualitative data collected, including 116 hours of audiotaped conversation and 42 hours of interview material	Shows how subject's incomplete control of modality, honorific language, topic control, and intonation in her L2 interferes with the production of sociolinguistically appropriate language; examines the influences of social positions and a "foreigner" identity within Japanese society on interactions between native and non-native speakers	Examines only one subject, although additional subjects exist in data set; could make analysis of cognitive issues more explicit
Watson-Gegeo (1992)	Theoretical and methodological piece which focuses on the relationship between sociopolitical processes and cognition in language education and on the detailing of a rigorous model for LS studies	Review of Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo's L1 child socialization work, which includes multi-year ethnographic and discourse analytic studies conducted in nine families' home and community contexts	Demonstrates the importance of macro-level factors (e.g., national and provincial institutions which affect materials, pedagogy, and parental schooling experiences) in developing a richer understanding of child language acquisition	Additional classroom data are needed

Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo (1994) examine how institutional factors constrain Solomon Islands teachers' use of cultural teaching strategies in four rural primary classrooms where the teacher is teaching English (a language neither the teacher nor students know) through English or Solomon Islands Pijin (a language rural children do not know). The authors conducted a multi-year study of rural children's LS in home and community contexts before carrying out ethnographic and discourse analytic studies in kindergarten through third grade classrooms. The focus of the article is on teacher practices, but the analysis has language-learning implications in the way lessons are performed, such that many incorrect morphological, lexical, and semantic choices are modeled or directly taught by the teachers, leaving students confused or bored. In a fifth, contrastive classroom, the teacher teaches English to an attentive and enthusiastic class through the students' first language, using a culturally derived pedagogy. In doing so, he successfully builds on their culturally shaped cognitive expectations and skills. The arguments Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo make are suggestive, but they need to be supported by a longitudinal study of students' L2 development and learning outcomes across classrooms using differing pedagogical practices.

Watson-Gegeo (1992) (see table 7.1) is a primarily theoretical and methodological piece (based partly on the above classroom study) making a strong case for the connection between cognitive and sociopolitical processes in language education, and laying out a rigorous model for LS methodology. To illustrate her concept of thick explanation, Watson-Gegeo reviews Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo's longitudinal L1 socialization study in nine families, which showed that contrary to other studies of disadvantaged rural populations, Kwara'ae (Solomon Islands) children grow up in linguistically and cognitively rich home environments parallel in many ways to those of white middle-class Americans, yet fail school in large numbers. A classroom discourse study revealed significant differences in values and language use between home and school, submersion of the children's first language by a restricted version of English, and many other problems. Yet these problems alone did not seem to explain why some of the children best prepared for school were failing. Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo examined the complex institutional factors at the national and provincial levels that shape classroom materials, teacher practices, and parental experiences with schooling. These macro-level factors fold back into children's LS in family contexts, because parents recount their own negative schooling experiences, fears for their children's school success, and doubt about the value of schooling to their children in culturally marked "shaping the mind" sessions central to Kwara'ae children's cognitive and social development. Watson-Gegeo concludes that the complexity of the Kwara'ae case demonstrates the need to go beyond single settings and immediate environmental influences in order to understand children's language acquisition.

Finally, it should be noted that LS researchers face difficult space constraints when they publish their work in the form of articles. Qualitative and discourse data sufficient to support theoretical claims effectively, much less thoroughly

illustrate identified patterns in data, rarely fit into the 20-page format typically required by journals or edited volumes.

8   A Research Agenda for the Next Decade

We have argued that neither a strict cognitivist nor a strict socioculturalist position alone can fully illuminate the complexities inherent in SLA. Here we lay out some directions for LS research in the next decade that, if pursued, could result in LS studies making a major contribution to SLA theory. We are not arguing that all sociocultural research must focus on cognition, but rather that LS research has an important role to play in cognitive research generally and in SLA research specifically.

   We recognize that the LS perspective is only now gaining attention in SLA, and that a great deal of basic research is needed. Nevertheless, given limited time and resources, certain areas of work especially suited to LS research are also most likely to be productive for SLA theory. In these areas, LS researchers can build on, deepen, and demonstrate the connections among findings from existing experimental studies, thereby helping to address the modularity problem referred to earlier. An example is research being done on interaction by Long, Doughty (1993) and others (see Gass, this volume; Long, 1996, for reviews), which does not explicitly include social factors in conceptions of cognition, but implicitly recognizes the importance of context. These studies usually omit an accounting of what came before and after a given interaction, as well as varying interactant roles, all of which may affect outcomes. A related area is formulaic speech, along the lines of Schmidt's (1983) study of Wes's use of memorized chunks in the world of work, service encounters, and ordinary conversational contexts. Although Wes continued to rely on formulae, of particular interest are L2 speakers who go beyond fixed-format chunks to productive acquisition, and who also learn the flexible and complex routines that structure so much of human interaction in any speech community. In these and other cases, an LS perspective allows for a richer look at the cognitive complexities inherent in L2 learners' necessarily being involved in the simultaneous processing of many levels of structure, meaning, and strategy in learning and communicating. Some factors include: the linguistic structure(s) being (imperfectly) acquired and the state of the learner's interlanguage at any given point; sociohistorical/ political factors in the interactional moment within a given but imperfectly understood speaking situation; and the learner's strategies for accomplishing a communicative goal given what she or he understands at that moment about language, culture, and situation.

   More generally, over the next decade, LS researchers should conduct rigorous studies clearly demonstrating how the social shapes the cognitive in L2 language learning, in both classroom and non-classroom environments. On the individual level, we need careful diary studies modeled on Schmidt's (1990) groundbreaking work on his own acquisition of Portuguese, paying specific

attention to the interaction of sociocultural and cognitive factors. Individual or small-sample longitudinal studies of immigrant L2 learners from time of entry into the receiving country and/or its schools, following learners over several months to two to five years, would illuminate the L2 learning process. Such studies involve intensive data collection and analysis during the first and second year, and data sampling for two to three subsequent years. Some issues these studies might help resolve include to what extent L1 socialization carries over into L2 socialization (e.g., with regard to literacy skills); the importance of peer group influence in how learners create an understanding of a second language; and the role of interaction and different types of input in facilitating L2 learning. Rich case studies of small samples chosen for their diversity and similarity with regard to significant social factors (gender, age, previous language learning experience, etc.) are essential to identify the variety of ways learning occurs. Specifically, what do learner strategies as used in everyday contexts reveal about how learners are building cognitive models of language and culture?

Finally, we note that although there is a growing literature on L2 acquisition in German, Japanese, Chinese, French, Spanish, and a few other languages, SLA research is still overwhelmingly concerned with ESL/EFL, for a variety of reasons. LS studies of non-English speakers learning a non-English and especially a non-European second language might well illuminate and clarify (or possibly complicate) our current SLA assumptions and models – leading, no doubt, to a few surprises and some new insights.

NOTES

1   Kasper (1997, p. 311), however, emphasized in her reply to Firth and Wagner the importance of doing language socialization research: "language socialization theory has a particularly rich potential for SLA because it is inherently developmental and requires (rather than just allows) establishing links between culture, cognition, and language."

2   For an excellent refutation of the assumption in some quarters of second language research that Krashen's (1985) construct of *i + 1* can be equated with Vygotsky's notion of the Zone of Proximal Development, see Dunn and Lantolf (1998).

3   With regard to classroom teaching/learning, and taking physics as the example case, Lave and Wenger (1993, pp. 99–100) point out that the "actual reproducing community of practice, within which students learn about physics, is not the community of physicists but the community of schooled adults." They are not saying that direct teaching is useless for teaching skills, as some have argued in SLA research. Their point applies more specifically to the artificial nature of much classroom pedagogy together with assumptions about internalization of skills that are the raison d'etre of much educational research and pedagogy.

4   While some SLA theorists might feel
we should omit any discussion of the
monitor model here because it has
been virtually discredited in whole or
part, we have found that Krashen's
ideas are still revered in many
university departments, teacher
training programs, and especially

school systems. Hence our concern
with including a language
socialization critique of the Monitor
Model.

5   For a careful deconstruction of
Chomskian theory based on
second-generation cognitive science,
see Lakoff and Johnson (1999).

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