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Identity in language learning and teaching

Research agendas for the future

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Introduction

While cognitive approaches remain important in second language acquisition (SLA), the social turn in SLA has gained momentum since Firth and Wagner's (1997) call to consider the social aspects of language learning (Douglas Fir Group in press 2016). This timely expansion of the field has afforded a host of non-cognitive approaches such as identity, language socialisation and conversation analytic perspectives to flourish as SLA and applied linguistics researchers explore viable ways to examine language development. Of these 'alternative' approaches to SLA (Atkinson 2011), the strong interest in an identity approach has been particularly encouraging, resulting in a vast body of work on identity and language learning and teaching over the last two decades (Norton and Toohey 2011). Given this positive trend, it is daunting to consider which research agendas would most productively extend this line of research in the future. At the same time, we are excited by the opportunity to collaborate on a topic that is of much interest to both of us and to which we have dedicated many years of scholarship. In the sections that follow, we map out what we consider to be some of the most interesting research on identity in recent years, and discuss its relevance for future research. In this process, we consider not only extensions of existing research, but also new areas that have promise for the future. Our first section addresses current and future issues in relation to four broad categories: (i) theoretical developments; (ii) interdisciplinarity; (iii) research populations; and (iv) methodological innovations. These categories were selected on the basis of our interpretation of contemporary trends in identity research, which we anticipate will continue to generate robust interest in the years to come. As demonstrated in the following sections, we do not confine ourselves to one research agenda for the future, but consider a number of promising research directions, given both the breadth and depth of interest in this topic. It is important to note, however, that there is considerable overlap between the themes, directions and sections, some of which we address in the chapter. We hope this structure will help readers to navigate a complex research terrain that remains vibrant and productive.

Current issues and future directions

Theoretical developments

Globalisation

As recent identity research suggests, identity needs to be interrogated in the face of globalisation and the hybridising and intersecting movements of people (e.g. Heller 2011; Higgins 2011; S. Shin 2012). These processes have led to increasing multilingualism in schools and society and the production of what Higgins (2015: 373) has called ‘millennium identities’, to index ‘the mechanisms that produce linguistic and cultural hybridity in the current era of new millennium globalization’. At the same time, the forces of neoliberalism (see Block *et al.* 2012; Duchêne and Heller 2012), which entail deregulated markets, heightened individualism and the marketisation of activities and institutions, have had concomitant effects on the identities of language learners and teachers. As Foucault (2008) notes, individuals who are required to navigate market-driven spaces are *Homo economicus*, ‘an entrepreneur of one’s self’. Morgan and Clarke (2011) illustrate how business ideologies have infiltrated language education, in which social actors are often described as ‘stakeholders’, while Piller and Cho (2013) view neoliberalism as a covert language policy mechanism driving the global spread of English.

This dynamic research will be enriched in coming years by research conducted in diverse post-colonial sites where multilingualism is the norm (e.g. Barton and Lee 2012; Kerfoot and Bello-Nonjengele 2014; Norton 2015). In this regard, two 2014 journal special issues suggest intriguing directions for future research. A special issue of the *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* (May 2014) sought to complement the focus on urban multilingualism, characteristic of much current identity research, by highlighting the diverse ways in which indigenous peoples are affected by the conditions of late modernity. In a similar spirit, a special issue of the *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* (Norton 2014) grappled with the ways in which language learners and teachers in African communities are navigating complex identities in changing times. Two particularly active sites of research are South Africa and Uganda, where researchers are undertaking exciting research in the domains of the home (e.g. Lemphane and Prinsloo 2014) and school (e.g. Early and Norton 2014). Such research responds to calls to restore agency and professionalism in periphery communities (e.g. Bamgbose 2014) and gives due recognition to local vernacular modes of learning and teaching. Future research on identity in language learning and teaching will continue this important trajectory.

Identity and investment

The sociological construct of investment, conceptualised by Norton in the mid-1990s (Norton Peirce 1995; Norton 2013) as a complement to the psychological construct of motivation (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2009), continues to engage scholars in the field of language education and applied linguistics (Anya 2011, forthcoming; Chang 2011; Mastrella and Norton 2011; Motha and Lin 2014). In addition to asking ‘Are students motivated to learn a language?’ Norton suggests the following: ‘Are students and teachers *invested* in the language and literacy practices of a given classroom or community?’ As Kramsch (2013: 195) notes, ‘In the North American context, *investment* in SLA has become synonymous with “language learning commitment” and is based on a learner’s intentional choice and desire.’ The construct was the subject of a special issue of the *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* (Arkoudis and Davison 2008; Norton

and Gao 2008), which examined the construct in the Chinese context. More recently, Norton and her students have been exploring the relevance of the construct to the African context, finding it helpful in explaining the relationship of Ugandan multilingual students to the affordances of digital technology (Norton *et al.* 2011; Norton and Williams 2012). While Blommaert (2010) argues that resources shift their value, meaning and function as they travel across borders, largely as a result of how they are taken up in hierarchical contexts, Norton and Williams (2012) argue that the construct of investment provides further insight into this ‘uptake’ given that investment indexes issues of identity and imagined futures in our increasingly digital world.

As Darwin and Norton (2015) note, the world has changed considerably since Norton first developed the construct of investment. In this new transnational world, characterised by technological innovation, mobility and unpredictability (Blommaert 2013), learners constantly navigate online and offline identities in fluid and complex digital spaces. To capture this changing global context, Darwin and Norton have developed an expanded model of investment, which occurs at the intersection of identity, capital and ideology. Through this critical lens, researchers and practitioners can examine more systematically how microstructures of power in communicative events are indexical of ideological structures that impact communicative practices and other social processes. By providing a multilayered and multidirectional approach, the model seeks to demonstrate how power circulates in society and constructs modes of inclusion and exclusion through and beyond language. The model was presented for debate and critique at a 2014 symposium in Lausanne, Switzerland, which was focused on the application of the construct of investment to Francophone language education contexts. Based on this symposium, a special issue of the journal *Langage et Société* is underway (Bemporad forthcoming). Such expanded conceptions of investment will prove productive for language and identity scholarship in the future.

Social categories

In the context of globalisation, the social categories of ethnicity, race, gender and class require greater research, particularly with regard to how these identity inscriptions intersect (see Block and Corona, this volume). While Feinhauer and Whiting (2012) explore the implications of community practices for the ethnic identity of Latino students, Motha’s (2014) work reminds us that the teaching of English remains contested territory, inscribed by race. In a study that crosses ethnic, gender and sexuality divides, for example, Appleby (2012) found that White Australian men teaching in Japanese language schools struggled to negotiate a particularly complex contact zone, which may have limited their professional and pedagogical aspirations. Also in Japan, Kamada (2010) examined the hybrid identities of adolescent girls who were ‘half’ Japanese, illustrating how they struggled to negotiate desirable identities when confronted by marginalising discourses. Focusing on ethnicity in the United States, Anya (2011) found that African-American college students who wished to learn a second language were drawn by the desire to connect with and learn more about Afro-descendant speakers of their target languages. Future work on ethnicity and its intersection with other identity categories will also continue to address the long-standing native and non-native speaker distinction, which continues to be resilient in mainstream second language identity research (e.g. Trofimovich and Turuševa 2015). However, this enduring interest in ethnicity needs to be seen in relation to the neoliberal turn, which, as Pujolar and Jones (2012) show, has resulted in the marketisation of ethnolinguistic ‘authenticity’ to generate income.

Neoliberalism and globalisation also serve as analytical tools in new conceptions of social class, as highlighted in Block's (2014) recent work. Much of the identity work on class thus far (e.g. De Costa 2010a; Norton 2013) has drawn on Bourdieu's (1991) constructs of capital and habitus, which conceive of class as relational and emergent. However, as Block (2014) points out, an explicit discussion of class in identity research is less common. A welcome addition to this debate is a special issue on social class, edited by Kanno and Vandrick (2014), in the *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*. The contributions in this volume provide a lens through which scholars can examine the extent to which language learning and teaching either reproduces or disrupts economic and social inequities. While recognising that the emergence of the neoliberal post-industrial work order may render traditional notions of 'middle class' and 'working class' defunct (Savage *et al.* 2013), Darwin and Norton (2014a) argue that class differences continue to impinge on the life trajectories of migrants, in visible and invisible ways. They draw on research with migrant learners in Canada to illustrate how migrants operate with a 'transnational habitus', continually negotiating their class positions (see Duff 2015 for a fuller discussion of transnationalism). While working with vulnerable migrants in educational contexts and other settings will continue to be a significant area of research in applied linguistics, we anticipate that more research will be conducted on middle and upper-class transnational learners, or what Vandrick (2011) has termed as 'the new global elite'. To date several studies (e.g. De Costa 2012; H. Shin 2012) have explored how such learners engage in identity negotiation as they traverse cultural and physical borders. Work on this group of learners and teachers promises to be significant because it highlights the material conditions of globalisation and its structures of inequality, a symptom of the overlapping contemporary trend of neoliberalism.

Towards greater interdisciplinarity

Social theory across disciplines and fields

The field of language education/applied linguistics was a latecomer to groundbreaking debates in the humanities and social sciences, beginning in the second half of the twentieth century and arising from Saussurian and post-Saussurian theories of language. What has been called the 'linguistic turn' in contemporary thought, poststructuralist theories have been influential in a wide range of disciplines associated with meaning-making. In poststructuralist theory (see Norton and Morgan 2012), language is seen as central to the circulation of discourses, which are systems of power/knowledge that define and regulate our social institutions, disciplines and practices. In poststructural terms, language is not only a linguistic system but also a social practice in which meanings are debated and identities negotiated. A recent special issue on poststructuralism in the journal *Applied Linguistics* (McNamara 2012) highlights the enduring importance of this area to the field. Future research, however, will be enriched by increased interest in theories of human agency, which is the subject of an exciting book by Miller (2014). The central argument Miller makes is that, while many scholars draw on poststructuralism to theorise learner identity in non-essentialist terms, 'agency' is often treated as an essential feature of the learner. Working with a comprehensive corpus of interview data from migrants who had become business owners in the United States, Miller theorises agency as performatively constituted in discursive practice. Such ideas are more fully developed in a 2015 co-edited volume, which focuses on interdisciplinary approaches to agency (Deters *et al.* 2015).

While poststructuralism will continue to impact future research on identity, language and learning, an interdisciplinary research agenda also arises from diverse areas within language

education/applied linguistics itself. The comprehensively edited volume *Multiple perspectives on the self in SLA* (Mercer and Williams 2014) includes, for example, developmental perspectives (Ushioda 2014), neurophilosophical perspectives (Northoff 2014) and complexity perspectives (Mercer 2014). The 2015 special topic issue on identity in the *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* (Mackey 2015) is equally interdisciplinary. An interdisciplinary research agenda can also be advanced through pairing identity with related constructs to promote a greater understanding of how identity is inextricably linked, for example, with technology (e.g. De Costa 2011), stance (e.g. Jaffe 2009) and strategy (e.g. Cohen and Griffiths forthcoming). In addressing the particularly under-researched construct of affect, Kramsch (2009: 2) notes that SLA researchers have paid more attention to the processes of acquisition than to the ‘flesh-and-blood individuals who are doing the learning’. Future affect-inflected identity work will go beyond examining the inner worlds of L2 learners from a psychoanalytic perspective (e.g. Granger 2004) to embrace an anthropological understanding of affect (e.g. McElhinny 2010; Benesch 2013; De Costa 2015). Identity research will also be enriched with reference to other SLA theories. For example, the Douglas Fir Group, organised by Dwight Atkinson, Heidi Byrnes and Jim Lantolf, have completed a series of workshops, beginning in 2013, which aimed to provide a transdisciplinary approach to second language acquisition. The participants in the group represent different areas of the field, and the identity approach (represented by Norton) makes an important contribution to the outcome of these deliberations (Douglas Fir Group in press 2016).

Literacy and digital literacy

Another important interdisciplinary link with identity research in applied linguistics is research on literacy. Scholars such as Moje and Luke (2009), Janks (2010) and Cope and Kalantzis (2012) have influenced much research on the relationship between literacy and learner identity. An extension of research on literacy and identity is that of multiple literacies and their relationship to language education (Prinsloo and Baynham 2008; Cummins and Early 2011) and digital literacy (Lam and Warriner 2012; Thorne *et al.* 2015; Darwin, this volume). Darwin and Norton (2014b), for example, describe the ways in which digital storytelling can expand the range of identities available to migrant language learners, creating a Third Space that acknowledges and affirms multidimensional identities. In the virtual world, the ability to construct functional selves through digital interaction is not uncommon, as Thorne *et al.* (2015) point out.

However, as informative as work on digital literacy and digital identities has been, it is not without shortcomings (Warschauer and Matuchniak 2010). As Snyder and Prinsloo (2007) note, much of the digital research on language education has focused on research in wealthier regions of the world; there is a great need for research in poorly resourced communities that can impact global debates on new technologies, identity and language learning. In this regard, the work of Toohey *et al.* (2012) is noteworthy. In an innovative video-making project with school children in India, Mexico and Canada, Toohey *et al.* found that the making of videos offered language learners opportunities for meaning-making that extended beyond their particular second language capabilities. Further, the authors argued that video-making could enhance the participants’ awareness of audience, sequencing and rhetoric, leading to ‘activities of critical reflection and agentive self and collective expression’ (*ibid.*: 90). Also needed in this changing landscape are new tools to expedite future research on identity and digital literacy. To ensure analytical rigour, identity researchers could adopt more sophisticated analytical tools (see Martinec and van Leeuwen 2009; Thorne 2013) to investigate how

identities are mediated along multimodal and Internet-mediated lines, a theme to be discussed more fully later in this chapter.

Scales

Also of interest to language and identity studies in applied linguistics is the construct of scales (Lemke 2000; Blommaert 2010). While Lemke (2000) has invoked the notion of timescales to illustrate how a particular event on some local timescale (e.g. fractions of a second, minutes) may simultaneously also be part of many other processes on longer timescales (e.g. days, months, years), Blommaert (2010) has shown how regularities of indexical identities and relationships to these timescales help to create power in interaction. These conceptions of scales serve as a metaphor to examine how identities develop over time and space. Both of us have long understood the value of tracing the trajectories of language learners to understand how the investments that drive language learning arise from learners' personal histories. Such longitudinal identity research will be enhanced by a scalar approach, which investigates how identity development is the result of intersecting timescales acting on an individual and the individual's movement across multiple social spaces. Such an approach to examining identity has been used by sociolinguists (e.g. Norton and Williams 2012; Canagarajah 2013), linguistic anthropologists (e.g. Wortham and Rhodes 2012; Mortimer and Wortham 2015) and SLA researchers (e.g. De Costa in press). Calling for greater attention to the level of practice, Wortham and Rhodes (2012), for example, recommend investigating identity formation through examining critical points in the activities engaged in by learners across space and time scales. Thus future identity work needs to conceptualise talk as locally constructed discursive practice, which is in line with the practice turn in applied linguistics (e.g. De Costa 2010b, 2014a; Pennycook 2010). This practice turn coincides with the growth of interest in English as a lingua franca (ELF), discussed below, a construct that Park and Wee (2011) suggest can be fine-tuned through a practice approach.

Research populations

Teacher identities

An area of identity research that is gaining momentum is that of language teacher and language teacher education (e.g. Clarke 2008; Hawkins and Norton 2009; Kanno and Stuart 2011; Norton and Early 2011; Varghese 2011; Sayer 2012; Menard-Warwick 2013; Cheung *et al.* 2015). As Clarke (2008) reminds us, identity researchers need to recognise the fluidity of identities and consider how identities are situated in and emerge from the local context. The importance of such a situated understanding of identity is explicated in Sayer (2012), who explored the ambiguities and tensions three Mexican EFL teachers faced while positioning themselves as legitimate language teachers and English speakers. Similarly, Kumaravadivelu (2012) has called for a reforming of teacher identities in the globalised world. Specifically, he has invoked the need for an epistemic break in the dependency on 'Western' knowledge of production and methods common in the Anglophone world. Such challenges are being taken up by emerging scholars such as Andema (2014) from Uganda and Carazzai (2013) and Sanches Silva (2013) from Brazil, who are exploring ways in which globalisation is impacting language teacher identity in tertiary language education programmes. The call to decentre and decolonise teaching is relevant in a neoliberal era that emphasises accountability and adherence to common

standards. Two forthcoming journal special issues on teacher identity, in the *TESOL Quarterly* (Varghese *et al.* 2016) and the *Modern Language Journal* (De Costa and Norton forthcoming), will broaden the debate in this exciting area.

Lingua franca speakers

Lingua franca speakers are another population of interest to future identity researchers in applied linguistics. Many aspiring lingua franca languages compete for world dominance and there is growing interest in lingua franca languages (McGroarty 2006). In line with this interest in lingua franca languages is a greater exploration of non-native speaker identities (see discussion above), and a number of scholars have started to examine how non-native language learners develop and enact identities from an English as a lingua franca (ELF) perspective (Cogo and Dewey 2012; De Costa 2012; Liang 2012; Park 2012). For example, Liang (2012) examined how EFL students in Taiwan interacted with international speakers of English in the real-time, multiplayer virtual world. As observed by Clark (2013), in contrast to the teaching of English as a foreign language (EFL) or English as a second language (ESL), which positions English language learners as different from and/or deficient compared to speakers of standardised varieties of English, those working in an ELF paradigm do not view the English used by English language learners as deficient but as a flexible linguistic resource. However, ELF is not without its critics (see e.g. Prodomou 2008; Saraceni 2008; O'Regan 2014), who have raised a number of concerns regarding ELF, such as whether or not ELF can be viewed as a variety of English, which has led to a lively debate in the field. Recently, Baker and Jenkins (2015) offered a rebuttal, by asserting that more recent ELF research (e.g. Seidlhofer 2011) has focused on the processes and practices of ELF users. Despite continuing disagreement on ELF in the field, the explosive growth of contexts where English and other major languages, such as Spanish, Arabic and Chinese, are used as a lingua franca points to the scope for researchers in applied linguistics to explore identities within these contexts and to consider how linguistic practices in these settings enable language learners and teachers in periphery communities to assert their agency.

Heritage language learners

Another population of increasing interest to identity researchers is heritage language learners (see Duff 2012; Kagan and Dillon 2012; He 2014; Leeman 2015). Common in such research is a commitment to reclaim the local by venerating the languages spoken in students' home communities. For example, Leeman *et al.* (2011) describe a critical service-learning university programme that sought to build heritage language speakers' language awareness through community-based opportunities to enact and strengthen identities as language experts. In their comprehensive review of second language identity, Miller and Kubota (2013) note, however, that the term 'heritage' remains slippery and contested, and needs greater clarification. To support this position, they draw on the study of Blackledge and Creese (2008), which investigated a school context in which Bengali students in the United Kingdom claimed hybrid heritage identities, rather than the essentialist heritage identities imposed by the school programmes. Miller and Kubota (2013) make the case that researchers and teachers cannot underestimate learners' agency with respect to whether and how learners identify as heritage language learners, and what implications this might have for curriculum development. The work of Rampton, Leung and Harris is helpful in this respect (see e.g. Leung *et al.* 1997; Harris 2006; Rampton 2006).

Study abroad learners

Study abroad is another promising research context, especially given the growing number of such programmes offered by universities (see Kinginger 2011; Magnan and Lafford 2012). According to Magnan and Lafford (2012), to facilitate student linguistic success abroad, candidates ought to engage in social computing networks with their future host families before arrival on site, receive extensive departure training about the target culture, live in interactive home stay situations, and participate in service learning and internships to practise the target language. Following these observations, one way in which study abroad identity research can be developed is through tracing a learner's identity transformation across the different contexts identified by Magnan and Lafford. As discussed, such a longitudinal approach would also enhance our understanding of how identities change over time and space.

Innovative methodologies

Narrative inquiry

As observed by Early and Norton (2013), narrative inquiry can illuminate how identity is negotiated, given that narratives are co-constructed and shaped by social, cultural and historical conventions (see Barkhuizen 2013). Focusing on oral narratives, De Fina and Baynham (2012) add that narratives create a space for immigrant voices, further justifying why narratives are important in the articulation of identities. Block (2010) has suggested three distinct ways of dealing with narratives: thematic analysis (focus on the content of what is said); structural analysis (focus on how narratives are produced); and dialogic/performative analysis (focus on 'who' the utterance is directed to and the purpose of the utterance). This third analytic approach highlights the need to consider the positionings adopted by the interlocutor and to engage in rigorous analysis of the narratives. The significance of positionings is also emphasised by Talmy (2011), whose social-practice orientation of interviews focuses on how identity is performed in this particular speech event. We foresee future narrative-based identity work as continuing this recent line of methodological practice. We also anticipate a wider range of narratives being adopted, ranging from narratives of classroom life (Nelson 2011) to autoethnographies (e.g. Canagarajah 2012) and plays (Darvin 2015).

Conversation analysis

As an analytical tool, ethnomethodological conversation analysis (CA) allows researchers to explore discourse identities and social identities, thereby enhancing our understanding of how identities are ascribed through an analysis of the sequential development of talk. More recent 'applied' CA research has begun to open up new understandings of how spoken interactional practices can help sustain social identities in this way (e.g. Mori 2012). Congruent with recent studies that explore how researchers' own identities and agendas are implicated in the construction of interviewees' responses, Mori's (2012) conversation analysis of a multilingual speaker of Korean, English and Japanese revealed that the speaker co-constructed her ever-shifting identities vis-à-vis membership categories such as American, Korean or Korean-American. Such an interpretation of identities as being fluid in complexion is consistent with Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) 'interactionist approach to identity', which calls for an examination of how subjectivities emerge as individuals engage in activity of all types. As is evident from the chapters in this volume, identity studies analyse interaction in contexts beyond classroom discourse. For researchers

examining the identities of second language learners/teachers or bi/multilingual students and teachers, there may be more scope for multi-site research that looks beyond the confines of the language classroom to identity work in other settings, such as in family interactions (e.g. De Fina 2012).

Corpus linguistics

While some researchers have focused on interaction data, others have adopted a corpus approach to investigate how identities are represented in written discourse (e.g. Hyland 2012). For example, Hyland (2012) explored the regularity and repetition of what is socially ratified by analysing consistent rhetorical choices associated with the constructs of proximity and positioning. Within ELF research, Cogo and Dewey (2012) have applied corpus procedures to describe the linguistic features that are characteristic of the identities associated with ELF speakers. Given the growing sophistication of concordance tools and the availability of corpora, applied linguists now have greater access to data from all around the world through websites, blogs and social networking sites (Friginal and Hardy 2014), which allow identities in the digital era to be examined in increasingly creative and rigorous ways. Importantly, such a systematic examination of how academic identities are mobilised in writing can help students become experts in the genres of their discipline (Nesi and Gardner 2012) and thus inform pedagogy and curriculum design. Given these developments, it is predicted that the application of corpora and corpus-based methods will further illuminate identity research.

Ethics

In line with the ethical turn in applied linguistics (e.g. Ortega 2012; De Costa 2016), there has also been a notable shift towards reporting on researcher reflexivity when working with language learners (e.g. Cameron *et al.* 1992; Tremmel and De Costa 2011; De Costa 2014b) and language teachers (e.g. Norton and Early 2011). In their work with Ugandan teachers, Norton and Early (2011) explicated the different researcher identities that were negotiated by them while working with their local counterparts. While engaging in these acts of reflexivity may not entirely erase the inequalities that exist between the researcher and the researched, it at least represents an attempt to bridge the power differentials that may exist when carrying out identity research. One way to exercise reflexivity and ethical practices in a multilingual setting as articulated by Creese *et al.* (2009) is to represent the multiple voices of the communities being studied. Identity research conducted in a multitude of settings would increasingly need to take into account the ethical issues associated with research and make transparent the reflexive acts of the researcher.

Summary

The world has changed considerably since the 1990s, when scholars in applied linguistics were developing theories of identity that sought to capture the complex relationship between the language learner and the social world. Identity was theorised as a site of struggle, constructing and constructed by particular language and literacy practices. Learner investment was explored with reference to learner identity and imagined but often-localised futures. Relations of power, frequently inequitable and often invisible, were the subject of much research and inquiry. Two decades on, the digital revolution has shifted our understanding of time, space and our place in

the world. Using social media, transnational learners can connect the past, present and future in unprecedented ways and do not necessarily have to leave town to 'study abroad'. Both learners and teachers can explore transnational identities that were not socially imaginable two decades ago and access to conversations is now negotiable both on and off-line. While identity can be a site of struggle, the digital offers a wider range of identity options for learners and teachers. This brave new world, however, remains complex and unequal and, as we have indicated, Darwin and Norton's (2015) model of investment represents one attempt to navigate the complex relationship between identity, capital and ideology.

The transformed relationship between structure and agency, time and space, and learning and teaching invites new agendas for future research, four of which we have identified in this chapter as particularly exciting. First, we discussed how theoretical developments on identity would be enriched by changing conceptions of globalisation, investment and the identity inscriptions of race, class, ethnicity and gender. Research conducted in post-colonial sites has much to offer such advances in theory. Second, we examined how in the coming years research on identity will extend links across various disciplines and build on developments within language education, applied linguistics, the social sciences and humanities. We also argued that the interest in social theory, digital literacies and scales would continue to advance. Third, we considered how future identity research would be enriched by a focus on diverse research populations such as teachers, lingua franca speakers, heritage language learners and study abroad learners. Finally, in order for new research agendas to be mapped out, we suggested that current methodologies needed to be revised and new ones added to the methodological toolkit. We proposed that there would be increased interest in narrative inquiry, conversation analysis, corpus linguistics and ethics. In the new digital landscape, the identities of researchers themselves may possibly provide one of the most intriguing agendas for future investigation.

Related topics

Positioning language and identity: poststructuralist perspectives; Ethnomethodological and conversation analytic approaches to identity; Language and identity in linguistic ethnography; Linguistic practices and transnational identities; Identity in post-colonial contexts; Class in language and identity research; Ethics in language and identity research; Intersectionality in language and identity research; Language and identity in the digital age; Language and identity research in online environments: a multimodal ethnographic perspective.

Further reading

- Cheung, Y.L., Said, S.B. and Park, K. (eds) (2015). *Advances and current trends in language teacher identity research*. Abingdon: Routledge. (Situating against a changing teacher education landscape, this volume presents contemporary research on teacher identity as understood through various theoretical orientations and methodologies.)
- De Costa, P.I. and Canagarajah, S. (guest eds) (in press). 'Special issue. Scalar approaches to language teaching and learning', *Linguistics and Education*. (This collection of papers explores how our understanding of language teaching and learning can be enhanced through a scalar lens.)
- Kanno, Y. and Vandrick, S. (guest eds) (2014). 'Special issue. Social class in language learning and teaching', *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*, 13(2). (The contributors to this special issue examine how the identity category of social class can inform language learning and teaching in the age of globalisation and neoliberalism.)

- Mackey, A. (ed.) (2015). 'Identity', *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 35. (This issue brings together leading identity scholars who illustrate the multiple ways in which identity has been investigated in various strands of applied linguistics.)
- Norton, B. (2013 [2000]). *Identity and language learning: extending the conversation*. 2nd edn. Bristol: Multilingual Matters. (The second edition of Norton's highly cited 2000 book on identity and language learning provides a comprehensive analysis of how identity research has developed in the interim years. The book concludes with an insightful Afterword by Claire Kramsch.)

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