

Socio-Cognitive Approach in Second Language Acquisition Research

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【Abstract】 In the area of second language acquisition (SLA), which dates back to behaviorism-orientated discipline for second or foreign language learning and/or teaching, a new trend including social elements has been highlighted recently. The purpose of this paper is two-fold ; the first is to explicate how this new approach has come into existence followed by introducing the mainstream SLA and socially-oriented approaches and their differences, and the second is to explore the significance or meaningfulness of the new approach in the research area of SLA.

【Keywords】 second language acquisition (SLA), socio-cognitive approach, mainstream SLA, socially-oriented approaches

1. Introduction

Second Language Acquisition

The term ‘second language’ literally refers to only the second language and does not include ‘foreign language’ and these two concepts are obviously different. A second language means a language used on the daily basis ; but a foreign language is not used by the learners as a communicative tool for their survival. For instance, ‘English’ is a second language for a Japanese living in the United States but is a foreign language in Japan where English is not the official language. In the abbreviated form, they are often called ESL (English as a Second Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) respectively. Due to the different contexts, namely where English is spoken or is not spoken, ESL and EFL must be learned and/or taught differently. However, ‘second language’ in Second Language Acquisition has been used for all the languages other than native languages (e. g., Mitchell et al. 1998). The term Foreign Language Acquisition (FLA) does exist but only for specific context.

Second Language Acquisition (SLA, hereafter) research came into existence in the 1950s as a result of efforts to improve efficiency in language teaching by

using the behaviorist background. Accordingly, language learning was regarded as habit-formation and verbal behaviors, which are observable, were studied. Contrastive Analysis, which compares the foreign language with the native language, was carried out in order to facilitate learners to learn the target language. Fries wrote in his book *Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language*, “The most effective materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner” (Fries 1945, p. 9, cited in Dulay et al. 1982, p. 98). In sum, SLA research in 1950s and 1960s were theorized by behaviorism and linguistically endorsed by structuralism.

The next stage of SLA research was strongly influenced by Chomsky’s nativism (1957) despite the fact that Chomsky has never even hinted at the possibility of including the second language acquisition in his generative theory from a nativistic point of view. In the SLA study, Corder (1967) crystallized the significance of learner’s errors and Selinker (1972) delineated the characteristics of ‘interlanguage’ which he called learners’ developmental language. SLA researchers started to look at ‘interlanguage’, that is learners’ language, as a meaningful evidence of development and Error Analysis

replaced Contrastive Analysis. The notion of Universal Grammar (UG) derived from the belief in Language Acquisition Device (LAD) as postulated by Chomsky and is still active in the SLA research in the form of grammaticality testing.

The third stage is closely connected to a socio-cognitive approach, the theme of this review article. Hymes (1972) defied the dual system of 'competence and performance' projected by Chomsky by introducing the notion of 'communicative competence', which is the hybrid of competence and performance or competence for performance. In contrast with Chomsky's using the ideal of native speakers of English, Hymes put the emphasis on the real data going on in the real world, which is called 'society' as a container and 'culture' as contents. Sociocultural reality in Hymes's term is included in this theoretical framework. According to Hymes, a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate (p. 277). A child acquires not only grammatical competences but also competences regarding performance such as in what way to speak or when. What concerns Hymes, as an anthropologist, is language in use and consequently socio-cultural elements started to be valued in SLA research.

After developing through these three aforementioned stages, SLA research diversified and currently is interdisciplinary, involving multiple study areas starting with linguistics, psychology, sociology, anthropology and any hybrid of them. The purpose of this review is to explicate and locate the socio-cognitive approach that Atkinson (2002) postulates, and to examine its significance for SLA research. The first section that follows explicates the rationale for including the social elements in the SLA research. The second section outlines the mainstream SLA research, the position the mainstream SLA researchers take and the discrepancy from the socially oriented approaches that caused a dispute in academic journals from 1990 through to 1997. The third section indicates the constructs consisting of Atkinson's sociocognitive approach preceded by the outline of this approach. The last section examines the significance of socio-cognitive approach in the SLA research including its pedagogical implications.

The rationale for socio-cognitive approach

As is suggested in some literature from disciplines other than SLA-related areas (Berger et al. 1966, 1967,

1989 ; Searle 1998), language is projected as an important apparatus for our living space that constructs our community and society on a larger scale. Language cannot be taken from the context where we live ; in other words, language coexists with us wherever we may be. And we human beings are social or created to be social. It is almost impossible for human beings who use language to live alone without any contact with the outside world, namely society. Language and society including culture cannot be separate but coexist. In learning or teaching language, however, the contexts—social or cultural—that language carries, are excluded.

On the other hand, language functions as an indispensable tool to build up our mind. We think using language or language itself may build up our thought. It is true that sometimes we have an image or picture in our mind in order to figure out some concept in our thinking but language may assist the visual or aural image in our mind. Vygotsky, a Soviet psychologist who was influenced by phenomenology, explored in what way our thinking mechanism and language are related in our environment, in his book titled *Thought and language* (1986). Vygotsky's psychology was taken up in SLA research and pedagogy (e.g., Lantolf 2001), which will be reviewed later using a sociocultural approach.

The term 'sociocognitive' is proposed by Atkinson as the hybrid of the social and the cognitive. The social is related to what is going on in the outside world ; the cognitive is related to what is going on in the inside world. Atkinson (2002) elaborated on how these two notions are intertwined in SLA, based on the belief that language and language acquisition are social and cognitive. Sociocognitive, made up from socio and cognitive, covers both the social (including cultural) and cognitive phenomena, which are closely related to language and language learning/acquisition as Atkinson argues. Therefore, this approach contributes to the field of SLA by focusing on mechanical features of language learning/teaching and acquisition from a psycholinguistic viewpoint.

II. Mainstream SLA research vs. Socially-oriented approaches

Mainstream SLA research

Mainstream SLA research is currently from the 1970s and 1980s and Ellis, R chose seven theories in his 1986 book that may delineate the outline of mainstream SLA.

Seven theories from 1970s and 1980s

Ellis' book (1986), the purpose of which is provision of a thorough account of SLA, gives seven theories of SLA. As this book was first published in 1985, theories from the late eighties are not included, but the discipline of SLA was perceived as established by Ellis (1986). The researchers who established SLA in 1980s are regarded as mainstream SLA researchers, though the first three theories are classified as socially-oriented according to some researchers (e.g., Mitchell et al. 1998, Norton 1995). The seven theories are as follows.

(1) Acculturation Theory-Acculturation is defined by Brown (1980 a : 129, cited by Ellis 1986) as 'the process of becoming adapted to a new culture'. Acculturation is determined by the degree of *social* and *psychological distance* between the learner and the target language culture (Ellis 1986 : 252). The main figure of this theory is Schumann who studied the process of one adult Spanish speaker's acquisition of English as a second language (L 2, hereafter) (Schumann 1978). As Ellis pointed out, this theory doesn't shed light on how L 2 knowledge is internalized and used. This criticism is similar to that given by the mainstream SLA researchers to the socially-motivated SLA research in 1990s. In fact, some literature (e. g., Mitchell et al. 1998) compares this theory with the newer socially motivated theories.

(2) Accommodation Theory-Similar to Acculturation theory, Giles uses *perceived social distance* and regards 'motivation' as the primary determinant of L 2 proficiency as Gardner postulates (1979). Key variables in Giles's theory are as follows.

1. Identification with ingroup
2. Inter-ethnic comparison
3. Perception of ethno-linguistic vitality
4. Perception of ingroup boundaries
5. Identification with other social categories

Ellis (1986) evaluates this theory as 'black box' because it does not explain assembly mechanism nor the developmental sequence, finding the strength in that this encompasses language use and language acquisition in the same framework. This evaluation may be shared with the new type of socially motivated approaches.

(3) Discourse Theory-This theory, proposed by Hatch (1978), has the following principles.

1. SLA follows a natural route in syntactical development.
2. Native speakers adjust their speech in order to negotiate meaning with non-native speakers.
3. The conversational strategies to negotiate meaning, and the resulting adjusted input, influence the rate and route of SLA in various ways
4. Thus, the natural route is the result of learning how to hold conversation.

Ellis (1986) says Hatch's interest is not the rate or the level of L 2 proficiency but how the language is realized like both acculturation and accommodation theories. This theory does not address the learner's learning mechanism or strategies like the above two theories. Ellis (1986) quotes Hatch's words to give her a credit for including the cognitive side of SLA as follows.

While social interaction may give the learner the 'best' data to work with, the brain in turn must work out a fitting and relevant model of the input. (1983a : 186) (cited by Ellis 1986)

Hatch's above words may be associated with the notion of 'social mind' postulated by Gee (1990) and strongly supported by Atkinson (2002).

(4) The Monitor Model (Krashen's theory)-This model consists of five hypotheses-the acquisition/learning hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the monitor hypothesis, the input hypothesis and the affective filter hypothesis. As Ellis (1986) points out, Krashen's theory was the most comprehensive but it has been criticized. Currently only a few SLA researchers use this theory. However, the input hypothesis was modified and extended by Long, who is currently one of the mainstream SLA researchers. Long, in his doctoral dissertation in 1980, conducted a study of interaction between native speakers (NS hereafter) and non-native speakers (NNS hereafter). Based on this study, he established the 'Interaction Hypothesis'. Krashen's Input Hypothesis, focusing on 'input', proposes that a sufficient amount of comprehensive input enables learners

to acquire or learn their target language(1982). Krashen, who is a neuro-psychologist, did not take outside elements into account. Long's Interaction Hypothesis pays attention to the interaction between NS and NNS, shedding light on the dynamic mechanism of verbal interaction. Long argues that learners learn language via negotiating the meaning of utterances from the interlocutors(Mitchell et al. 1998). Long's Interaction Hypothesis has kept on attracting many researchers in SLA. Gass and Varonis(1994, cited by Mitchell 1998), for instance, studied NN-NNS pairs undertaking a problem-solving game and linked Long's interaction hypothesis with language acquisition. Gass and Varonis are also main figures in the mainstream SLA research.

- (5) The Variable Competence Model-This model was established by Ellis, Tarone, Widdowson, and Bialystok, all of whom are main figures in the mainstream SLA research. The aim of this model is to account for the variability of language-learner language(interlanguage), and the process of learning language both internally and externally(Ellis 1986). Gregg argued that variation is a performance phenomenon, and that there is no variability in the learner's underlying competence (Gregg, 1990, cited in Mitchell et al. 1998).
- (6) The Universal Hypothesis-This hypothesis is from the Chomskian tradition, providing an account of how the linguistic properties of the target language and the learner's first language may influence the course of development(Ellis, 1986). The problem pointed out by Ellis(1986) is that this hypothesis ignores variability.
- (7) Neurofunctional theory-The basic proposition of this theory is that there is a connection between language learning and the neural mechanism. Neurofunctional accounts have contributed to understanding age difference, formulaic speech, fossilization and pattern practice (Ellis 1986).

Socially-oriented approaches

What follows is to delineate some socially-oriented approaches in SLA, that is, sociocultural theory, language socialization theory and social identity theory, all of which came into existence in 1990s. The first three theories in the previous section can be categorized as being sociolinguistic approaches but may well be in the

mainstream SLA because the direction of research is towards the individual.

Sociocultural theory

Since Lantolf and Appel published a book titled 'Vygotskian approaches to second language research' in 1994, sociocultural theory has become ubiquitous in SLA research. In some literature on Vygotsky's psychology (e.g., Vygotsky 1986), the term 'sociohistorical' is used instead of 'sociocultural'. Kasper told us in 2001 that Lantolf told her that it is OK to use the word 'sociocognitive' instead of 'sociocultural' for Vygotskyan's framework. In SLA-related literature, 'sociocultural' is the predominantly used term; however, the most appropriate term might be 'sociocognitive', which Atkinson(2002) exclusively uses for his framework. Atkinson's socio-cognitive approach, the constructs of which will be explicated in the next section, also includes Vygotsky's approach using Rogoff's apprenticeship theory(1990) and Lave and Wenger's theory of community of practice(1991).

Following Spinoza, Vygotsky postulated that the explanation of the thinking process is not found in the internal structure but in the interaction between thinking bodies(humans) and objects(Lantolf and Appel 1994). Piaget's theory of cognitive development also puts an emphasis on interaction in our thinking process. According to Rogoff(1990), Piaget's interaction theory is independent of the outside social world and consequently the process of cognitive development is a lonely one, in contrast to Vygotsky's emphasis on the effect of mediation from external world. Lantolf took Vygotsky's psychology for SLA research and pedagogy, based on the belief that the primary symbolic tool for mediating our mental activity is language(Mitchell et al. 1998). The notion 'mediation', which is the key concept for Vygotsky's theory, is eventually a key for SLA as well. Lantolf mentioned 'the most fundamental concept of sociocultural theory is that the human mind is *mediated*' (2000 : p.1 Italics : original) The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD, hereafter) is another key notion for Vygotsky's theory. The ZPD is deciphered as 'the domain of knowledge or skill where the learner is not yet capable of independent functioning but can achieve the desired outcome given relevant help' in Mitchell et al. (1998, p. 146).

Activity theory, which Lave and Wenger elaborated into a theory of community of practice(1991), was

developed by Vygotsky's successor A. N. Leontiev (Lantolf and Appel 1994).

Within the sociocultural framework, as Mitchell et al. (1998) mentions, the learning process is seen as social (inter-mental) and individual (intra-mental) and learners are seen as active constructors of their own learning environment. Regarding the rate and route of second language learning, Mitchell et al. (1998) mentions that Vygotsky's theory has not explicitly contributed to solving the specific problems; however, in some data-based studies such as Morita (2000) and Duff Uchida (1997), this framework functions as a vital tool embodying their studies orchestrated with language socialization.

Language socialization theory

According to Ochs (1990), socialization is an interactional display, whether it is covert or overt, to a novice—regarding the expected way of thinking, feeling, and acting (1990, p. 2). Ochs mentioned that social interactions are sociocultural environments, following Wentworth (1980 : 68, cited by Ochs 1990) and that through social interactions, people (children in Ochs 1990) come to internalize and gain performance competence in the socioculturally defined context (Vygotsky 1978, cited by Ochs 1990). Language socialization is a concept developed by Ochs and Schieffelin for both socialization through language and socialization to use language. According to Schieffelin and Ochs (1986), language socialization involves sociological, anthropological and psychological approaches for the study of social and linguistic competence in a social group (p. 163). Since the 1990s, the framework of language socialization has started to be used for studying SLA (e. g., Poole 1992 ; Duff and Uchida 1997). As elaborated in Ochs (1990), Vygotskyan's psychology is intertwined in this framework and SLA researchers embedded Vygotskyan's psychology in their studies. Therefore, the framework of language socialization does include Vygotskyan's theory. In an actual study on SLA, both socialization through language and socialization to use language could be realized. For instance, students in law may socialize and/or identify themselves to be a member who majors in law in the process of appropriating language for law.

Schieffelin and Ochs also introduced other theories for language socialization. The first one is 'symbolic interactionist' which follows the idea that reality, such as

concepts of self and social roles, is constructed through social interaction (1986, p. 165). As Schieffelin and Ochs (1986) suggest, this theory is in the same line as Piaget's interactionism which delineates the child as an active constructor of the development. Rogoff (1990) clarifies the difference between Vygotskyan's and Piagetian's theories. Their directions are opposites though both value interaction between the inside and outside worlds in a process of constructing concepts of selves or identities. Another theory, that is, phenomenology, follows the idea that 'members' perceptions and conceptions of entities are grounded in their subjective experiences and that members bring somewhat different realities to interpersonal encounters.' (1986, p. 165).

Socialization is the process of becoming an appropriate member of a certain society or community or a group of people. Therefore, in order to socialize ourselves to be such a member, we must equip ourselves with the identity. The notion of identity has also been highlighted in 1990's. What follows is explication on the framework of social identity and SLA.

Social identity in SLA

In Mitchell (1998), the definition of social identity is "That part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group(s) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel 1974, p. 69, quoted in Mitchell 1998, p. 168). In Mitchell's words, social identity is the sense of 'belonging' to a particular social group, whether defined by ethnicity, by language, or any other means (p. 168).

According to Gumperz (1982), social identity is in a large part established and maintained through language (p. 7). It is also pointed out that the viewpoint of social identity created through language practice is expanded to the issues of ethnic identity to include social identity as gender and social class in interaction with ethnicity (p. 21). In the area of SLA, Norton suggests that a comprehensive theory of social identity for integrating the language learner and the language learning context must be developed (Norton 1995). For Norton, social identity is not static but in flux and is subject to change. And it is constructed in a multiple way through language with context. Learners' identity is dynamic, negotiable, and socially contextualized, even within the framework of individual interactions (Mitchell 1998, p. 170).

III. Dispute between mainstream SLA and socially orientated approaches

Morita (2000), who studies discourse socialization, mentioned that 'there has been a growing interest in and calls for socially culturally, and historically situated L2 studies (e. g., Davis 1995, cited by Morita 2000), moving away from the previous focus on the individual mechanism. In this climate, some mainstream SLA researchers started to make their position explicit in an SLA research. Long (1990) made explicit the requirement for SLA research, followed by other researchers (e. g., Beretta 1991, Long, 1993). The mainstream SLA researchers implicitly criticized the new trends in SLA such as the multiplicity in theories and the relativistic positions that the new wave, namely socially oriented SLA researchers, took. In 1996, Block wrote an article criticizing each point that mainstream researchers made against the new wave. In a response to Block's article, Gregg, Long, Jordan and Beretta responded with an article full of harsh criticism in 1997. In the same year (1997), Firth and Wagner wrote an article blaming the mainstream SLA research because the social context was not sufficiently counted in analyzing discourse. In response to Firth and Wagner, Liddicoat (1997), Kasper (1997) and Gass (1998) wrote a paper respectively.

The possible causes for this nearly decade-long dispute may be summed up in two items as follows.

1. Difference between SLA and SL in use.

Mainstream SLA research deals with language itself, whereas the new wave of socio-oriented research concerns second language in use. When dealing with language only, social or cultural contexts are excluded. Therefore, the main interest of mainstream SLA researchers is the cognitive mechanism regarding the inner part of learner's mind (e.g., Long 1990). As the name of Long's interaction hypothesis suggests, the mainstream SLA researchers do take interaction with outside world into account. However, the focus is on individualistic cognitive mechanisms. On the other hand, socially oriented approaches include social and cultural factors based on the belief that language is a social practice.

The seeming flow in socially oriented approach does not provide concrete pedagogical tools which the mainstream and traditional SLA approaches are abundant in.

Mitchell et al. (1998) pointed out that Acculturation theory and Discourse theory do not have any detailed explication regarding how the learners can internalize the language items in their minds; namely how to acquire language. Therefore, these three approaches may share their features with the new wave of socially oriented approaches. Gass's response (1998) to Firth and Wagner's article, elaborated on the importance of the cognitive mechanism of language learners to facilitate their process of learning language.

2. Different 'worldviews'.

Block's article implies that socially-oriented approaches follow constructivism. According to Guba and Lincoln (1998), its ontology is relativistic and its epistemology is subjective; on the other hand, positivism or post-positivism that so-called mainstream SLA theories are based on is realistic both in ontology and epistemology. In sum, the ways in which the world is viewed are different. Consequently, mainstream SLA researchers (e.g., Long 1990) argue against many theories, being critical about relativistic views by citing Feyerabend's 'anything goes', which specifically means that anything is fine with relativism. Block's article (1996), which ignited the fury of the main SLA researchers, is mainly from his criticism of the position mainly expressed explicitly in Long's article (e. g., 1990) that SLA should not accommodate various theories. However, not all the mainstream SLA researchers take the same position as Long, Beretta, Gregg and others. For instance, Kasper (1997) evaluated Firth & Wagner's article in a positive way, though she pointed out they made a misinterpretation. Kasper (1997) appreciated their efforts in including social factors and showed her interest in ethnographic application and expectation that Conversation Analysis can play an important role in a language socialization approach. Liddicoat (1997) also emphasized the importance of considering the interaction in the social context for language learning in a response to Firth & Wagner.

Two revolutionary articles—Block (1996) and Firth & Wagner (1997)—have some biased and/or wrong interpretations according to mainstream SLA researchers (e. g., Gregg et al. 1997, Gass 1998); however, their articles have revealed the distinction between the mainstream SLA and the new wave of SLA related research. In 2002, Atkinson published the article to elaborate his position

in the new wave of SLA research. What follows is a review of Atkinson's sociocognitive approach.

IV. Socio-cognitive approach in SLA research

When I learned the word 'behave' long time ago, I wondered if this word was made up from 'be' and 'have'. The 'be' is an intrinsic factor or what we are and the 'have' is an extrinsic factor or what we have. So 'behave' is the result of 'be' and 'have'. If the 'be' is related to the cognitive and the 'have' is related to the social, 'to behave' itself is related to socio-cognitive. Language and language acquisition are 'social and cognitive phenomena' as Atkinson (2002) points out. I believe that how the social and the cognitive are interpreted is crucial. As mentioned earlier, the term 'sociocognitive' is also used for Vygotskian's 'sociocultural. Here Atkinson's socio-cognitive (2002) is different. Atkinson's sociocognitive approach is based on the belief that 'language is social—a social practice, a social accomplishment, a social tool' (2002, p. 526). The constructs of Atkinson's approach are as follows.

Gee's 'social linguistics'

Gee's social linguistics is most influential in Atkinson's approach as he expressed in the section of acknowledgements (2002, p. 539). Gee's basic belief is that cognition is both in the head and in the world (Gee 1992, p. 12, quoted by Atkinson 2002). The question is where the mind is. Mainstream SLA researchers (e. g., Long, 1990, Gass 1998) believe the language acquisition occurs in the learner's individual cognitive system or inside the learner's head. It is impossible to look at directly the way in which the learners acquire the language, whether in the head or in the outside world. The notion of 'social mind' is that the mind is generated via social interaction or some effect from outside world or environment. Without any interaction with our outside world, our mind may not be enriched at all. Atkinson (2002) used an example of moving the city from Gee (1992, p. 12) to describe the way in which we use both inside schema and outside tool. Gee's 'social mind' is exactly the hybrid of 'the social' and 'the cognitive'. In other words, 'mind' is constructed by 'the social' and 'the social' is constructed by 'mind' as well.

'Grammar' vs. social interaction

Atkinson (2002) cited the grammar part from Cambridge's Studies in Interactional Linguistics series

(Ochs et al.) that social interaction organizes grammar and grammar organizes social interaction (p. 38 cited by Atkinson 2002). Even grammar is socially organized.

Connectionism

Connectionism is a neuro-computational model of learning by building up association potentials (Atkinson 2002, p. 529). Compared with the cognitive perspectives that mainstream SLA researchers use, connectionism deals with the micro-level brain system. According to Mitchell et al. (1998), connectionism was previously known as 'associationism' and has been applied to L2 learning quite recently (p. 79). In the connectionist view, learning occurs when the learners process one neural node to a linguistic node to establish regularity in their brains. By so doing, linguistic patterns are extracted and become strengthened by repeated association till learning occurs. This view is certainly cognitive but is different from the cognitive perspective that mainstream SLA research harbor, based on the Universal Grammar for instance. Ellis N. (1998) elaborates the way in which connectionism provides computational tools for conditions where emergent properties of languages arise (p. 631). Atkinson's socio-cognitive model in SLA takes connectionism as a cognitive phase of language learning. Atkinson (2002) argues that connectionism enables language per se to be an integral element of socio-cognitive activity with the ultimate purpose being to perform situated action in the world (p. 532).

Neo-Vygotskian sociocultural theory-activity theory and small group activities

Leontiev, who was Vygotsky's successor, developed activity theory, which is made up from a series of proposals for conceptualizing the social context in which learning takes place (Mitchell et al. 1998, p. 148). Based on activity theory, situated learning and community of practice (Lave and Wenger 1991) have been developed. This framework is utilized into small group activities, for instance. Rogoff's apprenticeship theory (1990) is also influenced by activity theory. Atkinson (2002) includes some visions derived from the neo-Vygotskian sociocultural theory for his socio-cognitive approach, instead of the original Vygotskian psychological theory. In the section titled 'language acquisition as a sociocognitive phenomenon' (p. 532), however, Atkinson (2002) explicates his differentiated position from neo-Vygotskian theory that posits that formerly externalized/social knowledge is substantially reconfigured as

internalized/cognitive knowledge, arguing that the cognitive and the social are more closely related. (p. 532). More explicitly, Atkinson delineates the difference between his socio-cognitive theory and neo-Vygotskian sociocultural theory by citing Lantolf (2000), 'language appears, developmentally speaking, first on the interpsychological plane (i.e., as social speech) and only afterwards on the intrapsychological plane (i. e., as internalized or inner speech)' (p. 537). Atkinson's socio-cognitive model is that 'in actuality language always and everywhere exists in an integrated sociocognitive space', adding that 'language is always mutually, simultaneously and co-constitutively in the head and in the world' (p. 537).

V. Significance of socio-cognitive approach in SLA

Atkinson (2002) suggests four implications of a socio-cognitive approach to SLA (pp. 538-539).

Teaching is valuable.

As postulated by Lave & Wenger (1991), learning occurs through active and legitimate participation in community of practice. The novice or apprentice learns from the expert or master in the classroom as well as in the world outside the classroom (p. 538). For instance, the students learn the way in which L2 is used by participating in activities with their teachers or advanced peers.

SLA promotes more than just language.

Based on the belief that language is social, SLA is able to promote and/or reinforce various fields such as culture, identity and discourse. Therefore, SLA has 'real potential for changing the world' (p. 539).

Qualitative research approaches are advocated.

Following the belief in socio-cognitive approach that all the human beings are holistic in existence, qualitative research approaches such as ethnography are encouraged.

SLA involves the whole person.

For the last implication, Atkinson quotes Lave & Wenger (1991) that is, 'learning involves the construction of identities' (p. 53).

VI. Concluding remarks

Human beings are social as other primates are. Atkinson (2002) rephrases Halliday's words, 'all language is

language in use' (p. 526). Language in use is social because human beings socially interact via language. Therefore, SLA must deal with language in use. Some mainstream SLA researchers argue that SLA should only deal with language per se. (e.g., Gass 1998) In terms of efficiency, reductionistic mainstream SLA research may contribute to language learning more than socially-oriented approaches. The socio-cognitive approach postulated by Atkinson (2002) orchestrates the cognitive into the social based on the belief that our mind exists simultaneously both in the head and in the world. Pedagogically, as Atkinson (2002) suggests, dynamic type of class activities or what is called collaborative learning may be encouraged and endorsed by the socio-cognitive theory. Utilizing this multiple disciplinary framework, SLA research equipped with both social and cognitive factors, will be realized.

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第二言語習得研究における社会認知的アプローチ

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【要旨】 第二言語習得研究は、行動主義に基づく研究に端を発するが、近年、社会的要因を含めた研究が脚光を浴びるようになってきている。本稿では、社会認知的アプローチという新しい研究アプローチがどのように生み出されたか、また従来の第二言語習得研究がいかなるものであるか、社会的要因を中心に捉えたアプローチが従来のアプローチとどのような点で異なるのかを明らかにする。さらに、社会的要因に注目した新しい研究アプローチが第二言語習得研究においてどのような意義があるかを探究する。