ドルネイによる L2 Motivational Self System についての考察

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An Overview of Dornyei's L2 Motivational Self System

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Abstract

　第二言語習得（SLA）において動機づけが重要な役割を果たしている中、どのように作用し、研究されるべきかは常に議論の対象となってきた。言語学習環境のグローバル化が進むにつれ、動機づけに関する既成概念への疑問が呼び起こされ、いくつかの新理論が提唱された。その一つがドルネイによる L2 Motivational Self System 理論である。この理論では、動機づけと、言語学習者がそうでありたいと願う可能自己（Possible Self）とを関連づけ、また可能自己がどのような形で学習経験による影響を受けているのかという仕組みとも結びつけている。本稿では、ドルネイの理論を概観し、言語学習への潜在用途を考察する。また継続して調査されるべき理論の見地、特に文化を超えた展開方法や可能自己（Possible Self）をより正確に定義し、定量化する方法を検討する。

Introduction

　There have been a lot of theories over the years concerning the nature of motivation and the role it plays in learning a second language. While it is generally accepted that motivation is an important factor in second language acquisition（SLA）, how it works and how it can be studied remain subjects of discussion and research.　Adding to the complexity of the subject, the changing global environment has brought many established theories into question, forcing scholars to reconsider what motivational processes are involved with language learning in this modern age（Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009a）. Recent communication technology has made it possible to connect with people nearly anywhere on the planet and one result is that international media is growing at a tremendous rate. Additionally, People are more mobile now than ever before and the traditional, fixed sense of national identity is becoming more fluid with the growth of the global community.　Along with the spread of globalization, new varieties of English have evolved and the environment of many language learners has dramatically changed.

　One significant development in motivation studies that has been made in consideration of the contemporary, global linguistic environment has been Dornyei's *L2 Motivational Self System*（2009; Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009a）. Looking at current notions of self and identity,

Dornyei has proposed a three-part system to explain motivation in terms of possible selves and their interaction with language learning environments. In this system, motivation is connected primarily to two self-concepts, an *ideal self* and an *ought to self*, which are potentially shaped by the learning experience. These three concepts, the *ideal self*, the *ought to self*, and the *learning experience* are the three parts of Dornyei's system. The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of this *L2 Motivational Self System* and look at potential areas for further research as this theoretical system becomes more established within the SLA community.

Possible Selves

While concerned with motivation for learning a foreign language, the *L2 Motivational Self System* developed out of current ideas of self and identity within the field of social psychology, particularly the concept of possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Possible selves represent peoples' images of what they might become in the future. These future self-images draw upon people's hopes and dreams about how they would like their lives to unfold. As such, these possible selves function as "'future self-guides', reflecting a dynamic, forward-pointing conception that can explain how someone is moved from the present toward the future (Dornyei, 2009: p. 11)."

Markus and Nurius (1986) contrasted three types of possible selves: selves that people would like to become, selves that people could or most likely will become, and selves that people do not want to become. While Markus and Nurius were not focused specifically on motivation, Higgins (1987) built upon their ideas in developing what he called the self-discrepancy theory of motivation. In Higgins' model, the self that someone would like to become was recast as the *ideal self* as it reflects the qualities that a person would like to possess. Similarly, the self that someone would not like to become was looked at as the self that caused action based on a belief of what ought to be done to avoid acquiring undesired qualities; it was termed the *ought to self*. The self that one would most likely become was linked to a person's present self-concept and termed the *actual self*. According to Higgins, motivation comes about when a person desires to reduce the perceived discrepancy between their *actual self* and their *ideal* and *ought to selves* (Higgins, 1987: p. 321).

Dornyei's *L2 Motivational Self System* basically takes Higgins' ideas of the *ideal* and *ought to selves* as future self-guides and looks at them in the context of motivation in second language learning. According to Dornyei (2009, Dornyei & Ushioda, 2009a), students will have *ideal L2 selves* and *ought to L2 selves* which they will contrast with their *actual L2 selves*. Perceived discrepancies between these *selves* will result in motivation to conform to the qualities of the future self-guides.

Role of Imagination in L2 Selves

A key aspect of being able to become motivated by future self-guides is a learner's ability to fully imagine these guides (Dornyei,

2009). Markus and Nurius (1985) suggest that possible selves are experienced as an actual reality for individuals with links to sensory qualities such as sight, sound and smell. An individual's ability, then, to incorporate sensory experience to more fully imagine them self as they master a foreign language will contribute significantly to their desire to learn the language.

Al-Shehri (2009) has attempted to provide some empirical evidence for the connection between imaginative capacity, possible selves, and learning motivation. Drawing on neurological evidence that people with high visual capabilities also demonstrate strong imaginative capacities, Al-Sheri (2009: p. 165) asked whether those language learners who process information and experience with a preference for the visual channel "might also reflect a marked capacity for visualization or imagination." Using survey data gathered from second language learners in Saudi Arabia, Al-Sheri concluded that learners who demonstrated a visual preference for learning also demonstrated the clearest conception of their *ideal selves* as well as the highest levels of motivation within the survey group. While the ability to fully imagine possible selves most likely involves other senses besides vision, the results of this study are intriguing and could inspire further investigations into the sensory aspects of possible selves.

The Learning Environment and Conditions for the Motivational Impact of L2 Selves

Along with the *ideal* and *ought to selves*, the third part of Dornyei's system involves the actual language learning experience (Dornyei, 2009: p. 29). The learning experience includes things such as the teacher, the school or place of learning, and the students' peers and community. It is here that educators have particular responsibility and potential for affecting learner motivation, for better or worse. Dornyei (2009) calls attention to six conditions that have been demonstrated to have significant motivational impact on the *ideal* and *ought to L2 selves*. These conditions also suggest to educators ways in which they can help students achieve higher levels of motivation.

1) Availability of an elaborate and vivid future self-image

As mentioned earlier, imagination plays an important role in the creation of possible selves. Students ability to fully and vividly perceive their self-guides will affect how well they can be motivated by them. Additionally, there might be situations where there are no L2 possible selves in existence for some learners. So first, the L2 selves must exist. Here can be seen the importance of helping learners construct and refine their possible selves.

2) Perceived plausibility

As Dornyei writes, "possible selves are only effective insomuch as the individual does indeed perceive them as *possible*, that is, realistic within the person's individual circumstances (2009: p. 19)." This condition suggests an important consideration for educators might be ways in which they can help students see how they can use the language they are learning and how mastering the language is, in fact, possible.

3) Harmony between the ideal and ought to selves

There are situations where students' desire to learn is affected by pressure from their peer communities. As an example, high school students are sometimes hesitant to perform well in class as they want to conform to expectations of their peer group which might view success in school somewhat negatively. In terms of possible selves, this can be seen as the desire to learn (*ideal self*) conflicting with the desire to socially conform (*ought to self*).

4) Necessary activation/priming

Not only must students have clear and plausible possible selves, they must be actively engaged with these selves. Learners must be given experiences that cause them to remember the importance of their *ideal* and *ought to L2 selves* and the importance of achieving them. A task for instructors, then, is to create lesson content that helps students stay focused on their language aspirations.

5) Accompanying procedural strategies

Similar to how successful athletes need coaching and successful training programs, L2 learners need "a roadmap of tasks and strategies to follow in order to approximate the ideal self (Dornyei, 2009: p. 21)." It becomes important then, for educators to help students put together a practical set of steps to help them realize their goals. When students have only a vision of their learning goals but no concrete steps to achieve them, they can become discouraged and unable to attain their desired outcomes.

6) Offset by feared self

Dornyei suggests that when a desired L2 self is offset by a feared L2 self, a condition is created for effective motivation. For example, students might be able to imagine doing well on a test but oftentimes, what makes them study hard is the fear of not getting a good grade. Learning environments where both negative and positive motivational affectors work together have a strong potential, then, to facilitate successful learning.

In summary, the L2 Motivational Self System looks at motivation as arising in learners from the perceived discrepancies between their *actual selves* and their *ideal* and *ought to selves*. The degree to which learners are able to conceive and aspire to their *ideal* and *ought to selves* greatly depends upon their experiences as learners. Educators need to help learners create, activate, and believe in the potential of these possible selves. Additionally, practical direction needs to be given to learners regarding how to go about realizing these possible selves.

Areas of Further Consideration

Dornyei's system, with its focus on individual qualities of learners, has been regarded as practically useful with potentially numerous applications for educators (MacIntyre, MacKinnon, & Clément, 2009). That being said, however, there are still many areas of the system that need to be further investigated.

Cross Cultural Variation

One area that warrants further investigation is how self-concepts vary across cultures

(Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009b; MacIntyre et al., 2009). Dornyei (2009) developed his system using data gathered for Hungarian students and an important question is whether the possible-self model will work similarly when looking at learners from other cultures and other parts of the world. MacIntyre *et al* called attention to the fact that many consider Eastern and Western concepts of self to be different. In the West, "cultures are more likely to view the self as independent, distinct and separate from others while Eastern cultures view the self as interdependent, deeply intertwined with others (p. 55)." Just how these differences in cultural self-concepts affect the formation of possible selves is yet to be fully understood.

In an effort to determine how well Dornyei's system held up in other cultures, Taguchi *et al* (2009) examined English learners in Japan, China, and Iran. Using survey data collected from middle school, high school, and adult learners across the three nations, they claimed that Dornyei's three part system did, in fact, successfully explain learner motivation in the three countries and went on to suggest that the model, first developed in Hungary, appeared to be a valid prototype for which to understand motivation in international contexts.

While the overall structure of the L2 Self model did hold up in Taguchi *et al*'s study, they observed that the various components of the system were given different value depending on the individual countries. For example, in China, it was observed that the *ought to self* played a very important role in

motivation as knowledge of English is considered "a must for anyone who wants to compete in the global marketplace (p.69)." Because many Chinese believe they have to learn English in order to be successful, motivation tends to remain strong all the way through school into adulthood. Similar results were also observed in Iran. In Japan, however, motivation was seen to decrease as students moved onwards in grade level. This tendency suggests that there is less social pressure amongst the Japanese for people to be proficient in English; in general, the *ought to L2 self* isn't as strongly developed.

The Nature of Possible Selves

When considering the *ideal* and *ought to selves,* there is debate about whether there can be only one of each type in an individual or whether someone can possess multiple possible selves. Markus and Nurius (1986) consider there to be multiple possible selves whereas in Higgins' (1987) self-discrepancy theory, there is only one *ideal self* and only one *ought to self*. According to Higgins, each of the two possible selves is then composed of many different facets. So are the L2 possible selves independent selves or are they facets of larger, singular possible selves? There is simply not enough information yet to say for sure (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009b).

Another question related to the nature of possible selves concerns how they change over time (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009b; MacIntyre et al., 2009). It is generally assumed that possible selves develop slowly over time but there is, so far, no solid data as to wheth-

er this is true or how it is done. Similarly, information about what kind of factors contribute to the development of the possible selves will have important implications for education (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009b).

Along with how possible selves change over time, more needs to be understood about how they are originally formed. Dornyei (2009: p. 38) suggests that in younger children, possible selves are most likely not yet fully developed and so the L2 Self model might not be an appropriate approach for young learners. Again, more needs to be understood about the nature of possible selves.

Measuring the Possible Selves

Once more is known about the nature of possible selves, researchers will be in a better situation to examine them. Until now, the primary mode of data collection has been through various kinds of qualitative surveys (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009b; MacIntyre et al., 2009). One problem with qualitative research is that "both the data collection and analysis methods vary greatly from one study to the next (MacIntyre et al., 2009: p. 53)."

Al-Sheri's (2009) study, mentioned earlier, looked at possible selves from the point of view of imagery processing and gathered data accordingly. While the data was still based on qualitative surveys, the study did demonstrate a novel approach to understanding possible selves. Novel approaches such as this could be vital in coming to a broader understanding of possible selves and, also, arriving at new ways to measure them. The development of reliable, empirical methods of

studying possible selves will be a crucial step in getting the L2 Self model more firmly established mainstream SLA research.

Conclusion

Dornyei's *L2 Motivational Self System*, with its focus on possible selves and the learning experience, provides a useful model from which to consider motivation in this modern age. As language communities change in the face of globalization, a system that looks at motivation from the point of view of the learner and his or her individual interaction with the learning environment can potentially be empowering for both researchers and educators.

While there is still a lot of work to be done, Dornyei's system is promising and developments thus far point to the worthiness of further efforts to establish possible selves as a viable theory within current SLA motivation research.

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