

# Investment, identity, and ideology

Foreign Language Acquisition &  
Communication I  
Class 8-②





# Pre-class Questions

---

- How do you identify yourself?
- What components do you refer to for your identity?

## Definition of identity in Norton (2013, p.4)

“the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future”

Norton (1997, p.410): it relates to the desire to be recognized, affiliated, and to be secure and safe.



## Complexity of identity [Multiple, nonunitary nature of the subject (Norton, 1997: 411)]

- Identity is not only the individual conception of the self, but also the individual's interpretation of **the social definition of the self, both within his or her inner group as well as the larger society** (Lee, 2003:138).
- Individual identity is multi-faceted and impermanent since human beings identify themselves by being affiliated to different groups and their **identities change depending on which social community they participate in.**
- *self identity, social identity, existential identity, and biological identity* (Hara,1995)
- One positions oneself in a particular group → *Social identity*: national identity, language identity, ethnic identity, cultural identity, and professional identity

## L2 learner identity

- L2 learning = gaining new identities
  - L2 learner identity, NSS identity, ELF identity, etc.
- Learning environment: ESL vs. EFL
- Power relationship between NSs and NNSs
- One's social setting (e.g., social norms, social values, social expectation, etc.) should influence learners' *Investment* in language learning.

# Language identity

- You cannot choose some identities (e.g., race, gender, language affiliation)
- Language affiliation : multilingual societies
- Majority language group vs. minority language group → In your country
- Dual functions of language: communication tool vs. identity marker
- Language choice relates to identity construction.
- People in Japan speak the Japanese language.
- Okinawan language/dialect, Ryukyu language, Ainu language
- Japan a monolingual nation. → Language ideology

# Ideology

- ...the working definition of an ideology as being any entrenched system of **beliefs** which structures social behavior, (Sergeant, 2008)
- “ideologies about language, or linguistic ideologies, are any sets of **beliefs** about language articulated by users as a rationalisation or justification of perceived language structure or use.” (Silverstein, 1979, adopted in Sergeant, 2008)
- These are conceptualisations which have become normalised, which are ‘taken for granted’, ... (Sergeant, 2008)

# Language policy as language/pedagogical ideology

- English = a language spoken in UK and USA
- One country, one language??
  - What language is spoken in Austria? Do they speak the Austrian (language)?
  - English and French in Canada
- The essentialism view of ‘language’ based on socially and politically defined boundaries
- Powerful language-ideological effect: language is an ideologically defined social practice.
- Some people can gain symbolic capital/power over others due to the dominant language they speak.
- “Legitimated authority enables the arbitrary to be misrecognized as the natural order.” (Darvin & Norton, 2015: 43)



## What is the unspoken assumption behind the phrases that people often say...

- 『今の世の中、英語ぐらい出来ないと...』
  - You better speak English in this current world.
- 『英語は、世界の共通語だから、英語ができれば、世界中の人と友達になれる。』
  - Since English is a common language, you can become friends with people in the world.
- 『英語は国際化社会で生きていくために必要不可欠だ。』
  - English is essential for surviving such globalized society.
- 『世界中どこへ行っても英語が通じるから英語ができると便利だ。』
  - English is a convenient language since everyone speaks it no matter where you go.

## Language skill is so powerful that it would change our life?!

- Capital (i.e., power) gain (Darvin & Norton, 2015: 44)
- **Economic capital:** wealth, property, and income
- Symbolic capital: values perceived legitimate (e.g., standard language, national language, NS English)
- Social capital: connections to networks of power
- Cultural capital: knowledge, educational credentials, and appreciation of specific cultural forms

# Language ideology in Japan and JLEs identity

- Historical factors:
  - No colonization, no invasion
- Social factors
  - National language (国語) = Japanese
  - Official language = Japanese
  - Native language = Japanese
- Lack of awareness of language identity
- Language/pedagogical ideology
  - strong desire for native accented English
  - lack of confidence in their own variety of English (i.e., the Japanese-accented English)
- L2 learning is a social activity. → language attitudes

## *Eikaiwa*: “English Conversation Ideology” (Kachru, 1997: 72)

- The ideology of “English conversation” is not the same as acquiring competence in speaking English;
- As Tsuda says (1992: 32), this ideology “...involves emotional attachment to and obsessive infatuation with Western, especially American culture.”;
- This ideology equates “the ideal speaking partner” with a “white middle class American” (Lummis 1976: 10);
- This attitude elevates a particular type of “native speaker” to a position of “cultural superiority” and cultivates specific attitudes toward the Caucasian race in general;
- “The ideology and structure of the subculture” of *eikaiwa*, says Lummis (1976: 7) is “racist”

## Learner identity in pedagogical and social setting

- SLA Assumption: learners are ready to learn a target language.
- L2 learning in classroom: stereotypical knowledge
- Constraint: history in a local community, social ideology  
 $\Leftrightarrow$  L2 learner motivation
- Multi dimensions of identity

