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Language Motivation in a Reconfigured Europe: Access, Identity, Autonomy

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In this paper, I propose that we need to develop an appropriate set of conceptual tools for examining motivational issues pertaining to linguistic diversity, mobility and social integration in a rapidly changing and expanding Europe. I begin by drawing on research that has begun to reframe the concept of integrative motivation in the context of theories of self and identity. Expanding the notion of identity, I discuss the contribution of the Council of Europe's European Language Portfolio in promoting a view of motivation as the development of a plurilingual European identity and the enabling of access and mobility across a multilingual Europe. Next, I critically examine the assumption that the individual pursuit of a plurilingual identity is unproblematic, by highlighting the social context in which motivation and identity are constructed and embedded. To illuminate the role of this social context, I explore three inter-related theoretical frameworks: poststructuralist perspectives on language motivation as 'investment'; sociocultural theory; and theories of autonomy in language education. I conclude with the key message that, as with autonomy, language motivation today has an inescapably political dimension of which we need to take greater account in our research and pedagogical practice.

Keywords: autonomy, identity, motivation, plurilingualism, sociocultural context

Introduction

It is generally recognised that the study of language learning motivation underwent something of a sea-change during the 1990s, when it emerged from a long history of domination by the social–psychological research tradition. Though originating in a North American context, the social–psychological approach to L2 motivation dates back to a foundational period in the evolution of communicative syllabus design prompted by European integration in the early 1970s. The Council of Europe's 'threshold level' syllabus specifications (van Ek, 1975) were developed to meet the needs of migrant workers and facilitate professional mobility. The social–psychological model's central concepts of instrumental and integrative motivation closely paralleled the professional and social communicative purposes according to which learner needs were identified (Richterich & Chancerel, 1980) and syllabus specifications defined. Moreover, social–psychological perspectives on motivation offered an illuminating framework for studying communicative needs and language development among migrant populations in Europe, such as in the Wuppertal (ZISA) study of the acquisition of German by migrant workers (Meisel, 1977; Meisel *et al.*, 1981).

During the 1990s, however, in a move towards what Dörnyei (2001) has called more 'education-friendly' approaches to L2 motivation, research attention has increasingly turned to classroom motivational processes and cognitive theories of motivation. This move has been prompted by a perceived need to bring language learning motivation research in line with the cognitive revolution in mainstream motivational psychology. The move has brought with it considerable enrichment and diversification of motivation concepts under scrutiny. Yet one might also argue that it has somewhat shifted attention away from the broader sociopolitical context of language learning and language use during a period of significant European expansion and reconfiguration.

In this paper, I propose that we need to develop an appropriate set of conceptual tools for examining motivational issues pertaining to linguistic diversity, mobility and social integration in a rapidly changing and expanding Europe. I begin by drawing on research that has begun to reappraise the social–psychological concept of 'integrative motivation' in relation to the lingua franca status of English, and to reframe it in the context of theories of self and identity. Expanding the notion of 'identity', I discuss the contribution of the Council of Europe's European Language Portfolio (ELP) in promoting a view of motivation as the development of a plurilingual European identity and the enabling of access and mobility across a multilingual Europe. While acknowledging the value of such motivational ideals, I critically examine the assumption that the individual pursuit of a plurilingual identity is unproblematic, and draw attention to the social context in which motivation and identity are embedded and co-constructed, or constrained. To illuminate this socially situated nature of motivation, I explore three interrelated theoretical frameworks: firstly, poststructuralist perspectives on language learning motivation as 'investment' (Norton, 2000); secondly, Vygotskian sociocultural theory; and thirdly, theories of autonomy in language education. I conclude with the key message that, as with autonomy, language learning motivation today has an inescapably political dimension of which we need to take much greater account in our research and pedagogical practice.

Integrative Motivation: Changing Perspectives

Perhaps the principal legacy of the social–psychological tradition in L2 motivation research has been to illuminate understanding of the motivational role of attitudes towards target language speakers and their culture. This attitudinal dimension has been embodied in the theoretical concept of 'integrative orientation', defined by Gardner and Lambert (1972: 132) as 'reflecting a sincere and personal interest in the people and culture represented by the other group'. Over the years, there has been much debate about the precise definition of this concept and its weak versus strong forms (i.e. a general interest in versus a desire to integrate into the target language community). Recently, however, scholars have begun to highlight the problem of applying the concept of integrative orientation when there is no specific target reference group of speakers. This problem arises in particular in the case of English as a target language, given its status as an increasingly global

language (Crystal, 2003) and a lingua franca employed as a common means of communication between speakers from different language backgrounds. To what extent is it meaningful to talk about 'integrative' attitudes when ownership of English does not necessarily rest with a specific community of speakers, whether native British or American English speakers, or speakers of different World English varieties (Jenkins, 2003)?

One response to this problem is to expand the notion of integrativeness to refer to a generalised international outlook or attitudes to the international community at large. Such an expanded notion seems to be embodied in Yashima's (2002: 57) concept of 'international posture', which she defines with reference to Japanese learners of English as 'interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural partners, and [...] openness or a non-ethnocentric attitude toward different cultures'. As Yashima comments, the concept of 'international posture' encompasses both intercultural friendship and vocational interests, and thus combines aspects of both integrative and instrumental orientations (p. 57). She speculates that this more generalised attitudinal construct may be an important dimension of the motivation to learn and communicate in English, and reports some research evidence to support this speculation (Yashima, 2002; see also Yashima *et al.*, 2004).

The concept of 'international posture' thus considerably broadens the external reference group for integrative attitudes from a specific geographic, linguistic and cultural community to a nonspecific global community of English language users. Yet, precisely because it is a global community, the question arises whether it is appropriate to conceptualise it as an 'external' reference group, or as part of one's internal representation of oneself as a *de facto* member of that global community. It is this theoretical shift of focus to the internal domain of self and identity that marks the most radical rethinking of the integrative motivation concept. A key study that has prompted this shift of focus is Dörnyei and Csizér's (2002) large-scale longitudinal survey of Hungarian school pupils' attitudes to learning foreign languages during the 1990s. Commenting on the salience and multifaceted composition of an integrative motivation factor in their survey data, Dörnyei and Csizér speculate that the process of identification theorised to underpin integrativeness might be better explained as an internal process of identification within the individual's self-concept (p. 453), rather than identification with an external reference group. Dörnyei (2005) develops this speculation further by drawing on personality psychology and exploring the theory of 'possible selves'. According to this theory, possible selves 'represent individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming' and so 'provide a conceptual link between the self-concept and motivation' (Markus & Nurius, 1987: 157). As Dörnyei (2005) suggests, a vision of oneself as a proficient L2 speaker might be one facet of one's ideal self or possible self in the future. Identification with this vision of oneself in the future may provide the motivational basis for learning the L2, rather than identification with (or integrativeness towards) a particular group of target language speakers.

While Dörnyei draws on personality psychology to reframe L2 motivation in relation to different self-domains in the self-concept, Lamb (2004) anchors his reappraisal of integrative motivation in current discussions of the effects of globalisation on individual identity (e.g. Giddens, 2000). Lamb (2004: 3) argues that, as English loses its association with particular Anglophone cultures and becomes identified with the powerful forces of globalisation, the desire to 'integrate' loses its explanatory power. Drawing on self-report data from school students learning English in Indonesia, Lamb speculates instead that the motivation to learn English may partly be determined by the pursuit of a bicultural identity – that is, a global or world citizen identity on the one hand, and a sense of local or national identity as an Indonesian on the other. Individuals may thus aspire to 'a vision of an English-speaking, globally involved but nationally responsible future self' (Lamb, 2004: 16), while changes in their motivation to learn English may partly be explained with reference to changing perceptions and reconstructions of their identities, particularly during the formative years of adolescence.

In short, there is growing recognition of the impact of globalisation on language learning motivation, and of the need for theoretical refinement of motivation concepts. The general thrust of this theoretical refinement would appear to point towards questions of self and identity. This is a direction that is in keeping with current discussions of the global spread of English, where two key issues identified have been 'intelligibility' and 'identity'. As Crystal (2003: 21–22) explains, the need for mutual intelligibility is a strong argument in favour of a global language such as English. Yet this need must coexist with the need for cultural and linguistic identity, typically embodied in national or regional languages, or, as Graddol (2001: 27) suggests, embodied in local forms and hybrid varieties of English. For the individual language learner, a key motivational question is whether the pursuit of mutual intelligibility and participation in the global community are perceived as somehow a threat to, or an enrichment of, one's linguistic identity and sense of self.

The European Language Portfolio: Promoting a Plurilingual Identity

In the context of European integration and reconfiguration, a concerted effort is being made to foster the enrichment view. Such a view underpins the Council of Europe's active promotion of 'plurilingualism' (or full and partial competences in more than one language) as a primary objective in education for democratic citizenship (Breidbach, 2003). Plurilingualism is an attribute of the individual rather than community, and is deemed to have a significant influence on the development of a European sense of identity (p. 8), since it enables participation in democratic, social and political processes within the multilingual context of Europe.

Promotion of a plurilingual identity is fundamental to the conception of the Council of Europe's ELP. The ELP is a standardised instrument for documenting individual language learning and is the product of a Council of Europe initiative to promote language learning, plurilingualism and mobility among the citizens of its member states. A primary function of the

ELP is to 'motivate learners by acknowledging their efforts to extend and diversify their language skills at all levels', and to enhance their motivation 'to improve their ability to communicate in different languages' (Introduction to the ELP, no date). Parallel with its motivational and pedagogic function, the ELP also has an important reporting function:

> The European Language Portfolio aims to document its holder's plurilingual language proficiency and experiences in other languages in a comprehensive, informative, transparent and reliable way. The instruments contained in the ELP help learners to take stock of the levels of competence they have reached in their learning of one or several foreign languages in order to enable them to inform others in a detailed and internationally comparable manner.

To date, 64 ELP models have been officially validated by the Council of Europe for use in over 20 European countries in various educational sectors ranging from primary to tertiary and adult education. These include ELP models developed for use in several East European as well as West European countries. In this sense, the ELP and the ideals of plurilingualism, mobility and diversity that it embodies are gaining pan-European recognition and acceptance. Moreover, from a pedagogic perspective, there is growing empirical evidence to suggest that the ELP is an effective tool for promoting reflective learning, motivation and autonomy (see, for example, Lazenby Simpson, 2003; Little, 2002; Ushioda, 2003a; Ushioda & Ridley, 2002).

The reporting function of the ELP is fulfilled by the Language Passport component. As Little (2002) explains, the Language Passport summarises the individual's composite linguistic identity according to the Council of Europe's common reference levels of language proficiency (Council of Europe, 2001). By utilising this Common Framework of Reference, the Language Passport is thus intended to facilitate access and mobility in professional and educational spheres across Europe. In principle, then, the Language Passport validates the individual's plurilingual identity and confers rights of participation in particular linguistic communities of practice, in much the same way that a travel passport validates the individual's nationality and identity and confers right of entry into a particular geographical region.

Poststructuralist Perspectives on L2 Motivation

While acknowledging the value of promoting a plurilingual European identity, however, we need to recognise that such an identity and the rights of participation reified in the Language Passport will, in practice, always remain subject to local negotiation. While the Language Passport may provide a means of entry into particular linguistic communities of practice, the quality of enabled participation will depend very much on local attitudes and power structures. As Block (2002: 124) wryly comments, Gricean cooperative principles are often far from default conditions in interactional settings between native and non-native speakers. For example, in a longitudinal study of L2 learning by migrant workers in Europe, Bremer *et al*. (1996) expose a

number of linguistic gatekeeping strategies deployed by native speakers in their institutional interactions with non-native speakers.

This gatekeeping role of the native speaker community in enabling (or constraining) full linguistic participation and acculturation by non-native speakers has, of course, been implicit in much of the research conducted to date within the social–psychological tradition. Most notably, some 20 years ago, Genesee *et al*. (1983) identified the degree of expected motivational support provided by native speakers as a potential influence on the L2 motivation of non-native speakers entering the L2 community. However, it is only in recent years within the framework of poststructuralist and critical theory that this important angle has begun to receive significant attention. At the heart of the poststructuralist perspective on language learning and use is recognition of inequitable power relations in L2 learners' struggle to participate in interactional settings in desired social and professional communities of practice. These inequitable power relations pose severe constraints on the processes of individual L2 motivation – that is, on the degree to which an individual 'invests' in an L2.

The motivational concept of 'investment' was originally developed in Norton Peirce (1995), and is defined in Norton (2000: 10) in terms of the 'socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language, and their often ambivalent desire to learn and practice it'. When learners invest in an L2, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will enhance their 'cultural capital', their conception of themselves (or identity) and their desires for the future (Norton, 2000: 10f.). Language is thus viewed as a form of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1991), and also as a site of identity construction (Pavlenko, 2002: 293). A person's investment in a language may be mediated by other investments that may conflict with the desire to speak, such as fear of being marginalised as an immigrant (Norton, 2000: 122f.), or resistance when one's professional status or cultural background is not valued or access to desired symbolic and material resources is denied (Norton, 2001).

This poststructuralist perspective thus greatly problematises the notion of pursuing an enriched bicultural, global or plurilingual identity, which I have identified as an undercurrent in recent discussions of L2 motivation and integrative orientation. As Norton (2000) and Pavlenko (2002) argue, this pursued identity is not unified and coherent, but is multiple, complex and a site of struggle. It is in a constant state of flux, being locally constructed, negotiated and re-formed each time through a person's participation in community practices. Of course, the dynamic, reconstructed and changing nature of identity (with its repercussions for L2 motivation) is also a fundamental aspect of both Dörnyei's (2005) analysis of L2 motivation in terms of a theory of 'possible selves', and Lamb's (2004: 16) speculations on identity development and reconstruction among adolescent learners. A critical insight that poststructuralist theory brings to bear, however, is that the pursuit of an enriched linguistic identity is never simply in the hands of the motivated individual learner. How linguistic community practices position or marginalise non-native language users, how they facilitate or constrain their attempts to learn and use the L2, and how they engage their identities, will affect

learners' investment in the language. In short, a crucial principle underlying this argument is that individual motivation and the pursuit of particular identities are processes that are dynamically co-constructed (or constrained) through interaction. One theoretical tradition that can illuminate this perspective in particular is Vygotskian sociocultural theory.

A Sociocultural Theoretical Perspective on L2 Motivation

Though Vygotskian sociocultural theory broadly informs Norton's work on motivation (see especially Norton & Toohey, 2001; Toohey & Norton, 2003), as I have argued elsewhere (Ushioda, in press), its potential richness as a conceptual framework for analysing L2 motivation remains rather under-developed (see also Oxford, 2003 for a related discussion). This is despite its increasing influence in other major domains of language teaching research, such as task-based language learning (e.g. Swain *et al*., 2002) and the literature on autonomy (e.g. Little, 1999). I should like to suggest two possible reasons for the lack of interest in Vygotsky's theory among L2 motivation scholars.

One reason may be that the motivational dimension of sociocultural theory itself remains relatively undertheorised (Ushioda, in press). Central to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of mind is the principle that higher-order cognitive functions are internalised from social interaction with more competent others (Vygotsky, 1978: 52–57). Vygotsky (1986: 252) drew attention to the motivational basis of these cognitive functions and argued that '[t]hought is engendered by motivation, i.e., by our desires and needs, our interests and emotions'. However, as DiPardo and Potter (2004: 318) recently note, scholars working in the Vygotskian tradition outside Russia have primarily appropriated the cognitive aspects of his theory, thus leaving the affective dimension relatively undertheorised. This is in contrast to the research path taken by Russian neo-Vygotskian scholars who have sought to integrate cognitive, motivational and social aspects of development through the lifespan into an internally consistent theory (for discussion, see Karpov, 2004).

A second reason why the influence of sociocultural theory has not firmly penetrated the L2 motivation field may be that it necessitates a different strategy of inquiry from that which has predominated in the field. As I have argued in Ushioda (2003b), research on motivation in educational psychology and language learning has largely evolved in a positivist tradition, with the focus on motivation as an individual difference variable in linear models of learning behaviour. From the perspective of sociocultural theory, on the other hand, motivation is not located solely within the individual but is socially distributed, created within cultural systems of activities involving the mediation of others (Rueda & Moll, 1994: 131f.). As I suggest in Ushioda (in press), this calls for a more holistic 'ecological' (van Lier, 2000) strategy of inquiry that explores motivation 'as it is constructed and expressed in and through interaction' (McGroarty, 1998: 600) in a particular teaching–learning or interactional context, where 'context' is not a separable variable but rather 'is in part productive of, and in part produced by, collective and individual human activity' (Thorne, 2000: 236).

In short, sociocultural theory redirects our attention from the concept of motivation as an individual difference variable, obliging us instead to expand the unit of analysis beyond the individual to embrace the interaction between the individual and the social setting (Ushioda, 2003b: 92). As van Lier (1996: 110–111) writes, from a Vygotskian perspective there is a dynamic interdependence between individual and sociocultural forces that coalesce in the individual learner's motivation. This dynamic interdependence may be largely positive in supportive social or pedagogical settings, leading to the healthy growth and co-construction of individual motivation (for detailed discussion, see Ushioda, 2003b). In non-supportive settings, by contrast, tensions may arise between internal desires and external regulatory forces, so that individual motivation becomes controlled, suppressed or distorted (p. 93).

By expanding the unit of analysis in this way, sociocultural theory illuminates the key motivation concepts of 'identity' and 'access' that I have highlighted in this paper. In addressing the sociopolitical and linguistic repercussions of European reconfiguration, the Council of Europe has, through its ELP and Common European Framework of Reference, contributed significantly to promoting the ideal of an enriched plurilingual identity and to facilitating mobility and access. Yet the underlying processes of motivation through which identities are locally reconfigured and access to desirable social and professional communities of practice is negotiated reside not just within the individual but are socially constructed through participation in interactional settings. Where inequitable power relations prevail, as in supervisor–subordinate interactions in the workplace, there is very real potential for conflict, resistance, marginalisation, denial of access, restricted identities and nonparticipation or loss of motivation. These are the kinds of motivational phenomena that have been problematised most extensively to date by Norton (2000) (see also Norton & Toohey, 2001; Norton Peirce, 1995; Toohey & Norton, 2003), and by Pavlenko (2002) (see also Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2003), and that oblige us to reflect critically on the ideals of plurilingualism, mobility and diversity embodied in the ELP.

Insights from Theories of Autonomy

Ultimately, this critical perspective on the socially constructed process of the motivation to learn and use a second language might best be framed within a theory of autonomy. After all, the autonomy of the individual as language learner and language user is the principle that explicitly unifies the dual pedagogic (motivational) and reporting functions of the ELP (Little, 2002). The autonomy of the individual as language learner and language user implicitly underpins Norton's concept of motivation as 'investment', with its focus on identity and human agency (Norton & Toohey, 2001; Toohey & Norton, 2003). Moreover, as with motivation, the autonomy of the individual as language learner and language user is socially constructed, and potentially socially constrained, shaped by particular sociocultural environments and co-constructed through interaction with representatives of the surrounding culture (Little, 1999; see also Pavlenko, 2002: 292–295).

In the context of the arguments of this paper, the value of framing a focus on motivation within a theory of autonomy lies in the power of autonomy theory to illuminate a largely unexplored political dimension to the concept of language learning motivation. I draw attention here to Benson's (1997: 29) comment that learner autonomy represents 'a recognition of the rights of learners within educational systems', and 'a recognition of the rights of the "non-native speaker" in relation to the "native speaker" within the global order of English'. Benson here explicitly advocates a political version of the autonomy concept, as supported by theories from critical language pedagogy, rather than the more mainstream psychological concept of autonomy defined in terms of an internal capacity for taking responsibility for one's learning, or the narrower technical concept of autonomy defined in terms of learning-to-learn skills and metacognitive strategies. As I shall proceed to argue, this politicised notion of autonomy is relevant to our understanding of the motivation concepts of identity and access because it casts the spotlight, and thereby the responsibility, not just on the individual L2 learner/user but on society at large.

In his critique of the dominant psychological and technical concepts of autonomy in language education, Benson (1997: 29–30) exposes what he calls their 'political ambiguity'. By this he means their counterposition of individual capacities, responsibilities and strategies for self-direction against what are often social constraints on language learning and use (p. 30). As he suggests, taken to its extreme, such political ambiguity runs the risk of implicating autonomy-supportive teachers in espousing 'ideologies of immigration that insist it is the responsibility of the immigrant to adapt to the host community (primarily through language and culture learning) and never the reverse' (p. 31). For Benson, and for other commentators on autonomy who take a critical ideological stance (e.g. Holliday, 2003; Pennycook, 1997), however, the spotlight must be directed at the barriers and constraints within the specific sociocultural context in which the L2 learner/user is situated. On the one hand, this entails the need for L2 learners/users to develop critical awareness of the cultural constructions, ideologies and social positioning in the discourses to which they are exposed, to find cultural alternatives, and to develop their own voice and counterdiscourses (Pennycook, 1997; see also Canagarajah, 2003). On the other hand, a critical perspective on autonomy also challenges society at large to recognise and redress its own cultural barriers and prejudices in how it positions, interacts with and represents those from other cultures and language backgrounds (Holliday, 2003).

My argument here is that the political ambiguity ascribed by Benson (1997: 29–30) to concepts of autonomy defined in terms of individual characteristics and skills might equally be ascribed to concepts of language learning motivation defined in terms of individual differences. Defined as an individual difference variable, motivation is perceived to vary in strength and type from person to person, leading to different degrees of L2 learning success. Much of the research on motivation in education and language learning has consistently pointed to the ultimate importance of 'motivation from within' (Deci & Flaste, 1996), whether defined in terms of intrinsic motivation, internally regulated motivation, self-motivation, self-determination

or, in the field of language learning, integrative motivation (with its roots in strong personal interests in the target language culture). 'Motivation from within' is perceived to sustain the learning process more effectively than motivation that is externally regulated or controlled by the teacher (the 'carrot-and-stick' approach). There is considerable research evidence to support this view (see, for example, Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; also Ryan & Deci, 2000), and the educational message is clear: we need to find ways of fostering and supporting students' own motivation to learn. Indeed, this educational message has strongly underpinned my own work in the area of classroom language learning motivation (e.g. Ushioda, 1996).

My purpose is not to deny the importance of this message, but rather to re-evaluate it in light of the arguments of this paper so far. In essence, the message that L2 learners and users need to develop self-determined and self-regulatory motivational resources risks downplaying the inescapable role of the surrounding social context in supporting or constraining the development and exercise of these resources. This is where the political ambiguity of this view of motivational self-reliance lies. The deep-rooted desire to learn and use another language, find a voice, forge a plurilingual or global identity for oneself, access and participate in new social or professional communities of practice, will always be subject to local negotiation and conditions. As we have noted, motivation is never simply in the hands of the motivated individual learner, but is constructed and constrained through social relations with others. Like autonomy, language learning motivation viewed in this sense takes on a significant political dimension.

Conclusion: Casting a Political Perspective on Language Learning Motivation

Of course, in some domains of discussion in our field, language learning motivation has always had an overt political dimension. At the broad macro level of national language policy and planning, nation state formation, and linguistic nationalism, language issues have always been political issues (see, for example, Kymlicka & Patten, 2003a, 2003b; also Wright, 2000); and within such discourses, the motivation to learn and use particular languages has also, by implication, been cast in a political light. On the whole, however, discussion of language learning motivation in this politicised context tends to be confined to issues of language choice – i.e. the reasons why individuals or linguistic communities choose to learn, use or maintain particular languages (or choose not to do so). These reasons are generally classified according to the traditional social–psychological concepts of 'integrative' and 'instrumental' motivation. For example, in speculating on the possible demise of national languages in some regions of European nation states, Wright (2000: 190–191) distinguishes between the integrative motivation to learn and maintain regional and minority languages which give 'access to roots, tradition, identity and community', and the instrumental motivation to learn international languages such as English which give 'access to the wider world'.

Restricting discussion of motivation to issues of language choice makes sense, of course, when the primary concern is with larger questions of policy

and planning, such as the status and preservation of particular languages or linguistic communities. However, when our concern is with the experience of the individual language learner and user, it is clear that the politics of motivation relate not simply to questions of language choice but also to the day-to-day processes of engagement with language learning, language use and social context. Crucially, these processes of engagement do not just involve the individual L2 learner/user but directly implicate those with whom the L2 learner/user endeavours to interact. Earlier, in discussing sociocultural theoretical perspectives on motivation, I made the claim that we need to expand the unit of analysis beyond the individual to embrace the interaction between the individual and the social setting. To this I would now add the comment that we need increasingly to focus critical attention on this social setting in facilitating or constraining the motivation of the individual L2 learner/user.

I began this paper by proposing that we need to develop an appropriate set of conceptual tools for examining motivational issues pertaining to linguistic diversity, mobility and social integration in a rapidly changing and expanding Europe. Reviewing recent developments in the field, I discussed how the concept of integrative motivation is being reframed in the context of theories of self and identity, and explored how the Council of Europe's ELP has helped to encourage a view of motivation as the pursuit of a plurilingual European identity and transnational access and mobility. Drawing on theoretical perspectives that highlight the socially embedded nature of motivation, I critically examined the assumption that the individual pursuit of a plurilingual identity and access to desired communities of practice is unproblematic, and argued that, as with concepts of autonomy in language learning, the concept of motivation has an inescapably political dimension.

I should like to conclude here by suggesting that we need to take much greater account of this political dimension to motivation in our research and pedagogical practice. It seems clear from the direction of current thinking in the field that language learning motivation is increasingly becoming linked to theories of self and identity. It seems equally clear that questions of linguistic and cultural identity loom large in discussions of language policy, planning and language rights. As Kymlicka and Patten (2003a: 4) note, the outbreak of ethnic conflicts in Eastern Europe in the wake of 1989 and subsequent European reconfiguration have contributed in no small measure to bringing the question of linguistics rights and identity to the fore among political theorists. In this sense, the time seems ripe for closer integration between psychological and political perspectives on the motivation to learn and use particular languages. In relation to issues of language policy, planning and nation state building, such theoretical integration might help to illuminate the significance of motivation beyond basic questions of language choice. In turn, analysis of the context-embedded politics of language choice, language use and social interaction will certainly help to illuminate the psychological processes of individual motivation.

So far I have said relatively little about classroom issues. While classroom motivation has not been a major focus in this paper, we need little reminding that, as Dewey (1916/1966) implied in his treatise on democracy and

education, the classroom functions as a microcosm of the larger social world and should mirror its democratic and co-operative structures. In this sense, arguments about the socially embedded and political dimensions of motivation apply just as much to language learning and use in the classroom setting; though as a reviewer of an earlier version of this paper has commented, the political dimension may take on a rather lesser order of importance in foreign language settings than in second language settings where immigrant learners are subject to diverse social, economic and psychological pressures. An important feature of all classroom settings, however, is the unique capacity invested in the teacher (as an influential member of the classroom social microcosm) to develop her students' critical awareness of the very barriers, constraints and ideologies in the surrounding social context that limit their autonomy and motivation. For the classroom practitioner, taking account of the political dimension of motivation thus leads naturally to adopting a more critical pedagogy.

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