Review of "English-Language Pedagogies for a Northeast Asian Context: Developing and Contextually Framing the Transition Theory"

Title	English-Language Pedagogies for a Northeast Asian Context: Developing and Contextually Framing the Transition Theory
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Sociocultural theory (SCT) foregrounds how a language is gradually learned and taught through social and cultural mediation. This theory has drawn our attention to the development and application of it in a varied domain of language pedagogies and literacies. This burgeoning interest has yielded a myriad of publications (e.g. Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007; Lantolf, 2008; Martin-Beltrán, Daniel, Peercy, & Silverman, 2017). Despite this, only a handful of relevant ethnographically grounded work alongside critical discourse analysis develops SCT in order to frame English as an additional language (EAL) pedagogies in a transnationally and transculturally situated context. Dimitrios Michael Hadzantonis's "English-Language Pedagogies for a Northeast Asian Context: Developing and Contextually Framing the Transition Theory" attempts to fill this gap.

Accordingly, the book comprises seven chapters: Introduction (Chapter 1), Identity in South Korean Social, Cultural, and Pedagogical Spaces (Chapter 2); Language Development in a Northeast Asian Context (Chapter 3), Sociocultural Theory (Chapter 4); Strategies, Styles, and Mechanism Grounding the Transition Theory (Chapter 5); The Transition Model and Theory (Chapter 6); and Revisiting the Transition Theory (Chapter 7). These themes are structured around relevant conceptual frameworks such as "sociology, social anthropology, cultural studies, identity theory, somalogy *or psychology* [my addition in italics], and linguistics" (p. 1). At the outset, the foreword tells us a short personal narrative of depicting two old friends of the author initially disagreeing what means by an old or modern and a useful or useless Scrabble game. This foreword provides us with how the conceptions of the game and language are negotiated. It also suggests how the Scrabble game as a social and cultural artifact is interpreted differently. This social and cultural encounter signals what the book tells us.

The introductory chapter aims to delineate the underlying theories, intentions, and contribution of the entire book. In the remaining section of the chapter, the author brings up two critical issues such as equalities and subjectivities as well as development of expertise in language identities. Hadzantonis argues that:

> The notion of 'native' speaker positions and marginalizes students and their discourses through judg-mental approaches, reducing 'nonnative' speaker agency and worth. Much work on English-language development involves comparison with 'native' speaker, and scholarship still deemphasizes that languages develop in multilingual contexts. (p. 11)

This idea provides a fascinating insight into how to design language pedagogies whose goals are not native speaker-oriented. It also recognizes students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds as resources. The author also bravely problematizes such terms as *ESL*, *learning*, and *acquisition* because they fail to recognize students' incremental language expertise contextually situated in their personal, historical, and sociocultural discourses. Therefore, the author suggests a new term called *Development of (Expertise in) Language Identities* (DELI), which is used throughout the book.

Chapter 2 continues to elaborate on what DELI means from an identity perspective. The author delineates the (re)construction of South Korean identities within social, cultural, and pedagogical domains. To contextualize DELI in the country, Hadzantonis provides very thorough and critical narratives of how South Korean identities have been fluidly negotiated and hybridized in relation to neoconfucianism, nationalization and nationalism, transnationalization and transnationalism, modernization and modernity. The author also accentuates the needs for reappropriating knowledge as a cultural commodity and for contextually framing language pedagogy commodities in order to help South Koreans develop their language competence. In this way, English language pedagogies as a globalization discourse should recognize "fluid mixture of cultural heritage" (p. 49). Hadzantonis also brings up interesting issues such as identity negotiation and positioning, a dichotomy between native speakers/teachers and nonnative speakers/teachers, and inequalities in language education. Enmeshed in these concerns, he problematizes English as an international lingua franca institutionalized in South Korean English language pedagogies inasmuch as it brings about "unequal relations of power between speakers socialized into English as a primary discourse and those socialized into other languages as a primary discourse" (p. 72). Another fascinating account is that the author stresses that students' motives and desires for learning English should be considered as an investment in developing their language competence. In what follows, the author depicts identity-relevant phenomena embedded in social, cultural, and pedagogical contexts. Through this identity negotiation and positioning, as the author maintains, South Koreans are able to develop their English language competence.

Chapter 3 is geared to detail five key issues. Firstly, the author explains traditional English-language educative practice in South Korea. He analyzes how this practice is shaped by three factors: language practices, language management, and language ideology (see Spolsky, 2009). Secondly, he attempts to problematize essentializing the agency of students, and moves to describe specific pedagogical styles of South Korea. Among others, these styles include the deployment of memorization and perseverance strategies, teacher's absolute authority, voidance of oral interaction, no critique of teacher's explanation and questioning or inappropriate behaviors, avoidance of direct eye contact, and student reluctance to speak. In the remaining sections, Hazadtonis pinpoints how modernity and Western education exert influence on Korean education in terms of English language pedagogy and assessment.

Chapter 4 specifically reviews sociocultural theory (SCT), which informs the book. The author argues that this framework is relevant to the complexity of English language pedagogies in South Korea in that it touches on both social psychology and social anthropology of the country. Hazadtonis touches upon key tenets of SCT, including: imitation; lower- and higher-order mental functions; genetic development; artifacts, tools, and signs; mediation; scaffolding; and the zone of proximal development (ZPD). He adds that social constructivism falls within the remit of SCT in that it recognizes the gradual development of individuals. I would suggest that the reader unfamiliar with SCT may read this seminal book: "Sociocultural Theory and the Genesis of Second Language Development" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

Chapter 5 discusses a myriad of issues on strategies, styles, and mechanisms. The author grounds his discussions on four strategies: cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective. For instance, he

spells out core dimensions of social strategies, which build his proposed Transition Model and Theory, further detailed in Chapter 6. These dimensions include language socialization, ecological approaches, student autonomy, agency as the capability of acting through sociocultural mediation, interaction and negotiation, teacher activation as persuasive and participative teachers, group dynamics, and interculturality. In the remaining sections, the author moves on to suggest possible approaches to language pedagogies, such as collaborative, task-based, content- and context-based, interactive, integrative and participatory, transition-based, and critical. This chapter makes the transition from underlying theories to the Transition Model and Theory.

Chapter 6, the nucleus of the book, attempts to expand SCT and propose the Transition Model and Theory, couched in the plethora of contexts, discourses, and identities. The model and theory embrace eleven strategies, such as Task Hierarchy, Group Hierarchy, Affective, Pedagogical, Social and Cultural, Teacher Pivoting, Top-Down (Circumlocutory), Multiple Texts, Transitional Modernities, Ecological, and the Self. The author describes each of the Transition model strategy dimensions. By closely reading this chapter, we can draw some distinctive features of the model and theory, including reception (input), production, collaboration, interaction, imitation and negotiation, teacher initiation, individual engagement, smack-group work, larger-group work, and whole-class interaction, anxiety manageability, situated practice, negotiating social and cultural identities, social and cultural mediation and negotiation, and equal agency. Chapter 7 elaborates such key points as negotiation of identities, spaces for intercultural communication, and contextually reframing language pedagogies. On the final notes, the author argues that "though many would disagree, [the author] consider Vygotsky, centrally, a social anthropologist, as he combined the workings of the body with social interaction" (p. 317). This denotes that the development of student language expertise or competence is better reconceptualized through a social anthropological lens.

The author makes use of extensive and relevant updated references, which demonstrate serious, yet 'thick' scholarship. In my view, this thick scholarship requires readers to have solid conceptual grounding in SCT from different perspectives (e.g. language ecology, language identity, sociocultural anthropology). The book lacks methodological accounts though the author has articulated how his ethnographic observation was undertaken, but a methodological section should have been added to the book. Some of the strategies in the Transition Theory are not well sketched. Despite these drawbacks, this well-written volume critically interweaves sound theoretical frameworks and social, cultural, political, economic, educational, and institutional domains of South Korea with English language pedagogies and DELI. It is also exemplary work within the remit of ethnography, critical discourse analysis, and narrative work accentuating how issues of sociology, social anthropology, cultural studies, identity theory, somalogy, and linguistics inform situated language pedagogies and language curriculum renewal. This collection of seven chapters provides us with a theoretically and contextually grounded guide to framing our language curriculum and pedagogy. Without any reservation, the current volume is of great value to policy makers, curriculum developers, researchers, textbook writers, and teacher educators involved in EAL pedagogies. To some extent, language teachers who have a passion for making innovation and change in their own pedagogic practices will find this book useful.

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