

Similar Positions in Classroom but Different Positions in Class: An Analysis of Narratives Based on Darwin and Norton's Investment Model

Rahele Mavaddat¹

*Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics,
Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran*

Seyyed Ayatollah Razmjoo

*Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics,
Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran*

Our little minds are not able to bear such a large number of informative utterances given by instructors. Thus, I suggest you to control information load at the beginning of the class and not overemphasize the importance of students sitting in the last row. Those who sit in the last row have always lagged some chairs behind the world.

I, as one of the present researchers, usually collect my students' feedback either during or at the end of each semester in order to see what they think about the English course and my practice. Although students usually provide their feedback in written form and anonymously, there are always some students who mention their names. The above text represents part of the feedback provided by one of my students, under the *pseudonym* of Sam, at the end of an ESP course, namely English for students of Anesthesiology. I knew Sam since the previous year when I used to teach a General English (GE) course to him and his classmates. He was usually a polite and well-behaved sophomore with fairly good grades. However, he was not very active and had not attended a few of his classes this semester.

His other classmates were mostly satisfied with everything in the course as their evaluation feedback indicated. Although he had made some comments on and appreciated my knowledge and instructional practice, too, I was a bit confused, astonished, and even shocked by the way he had imagined himself in my as well as the other instructors' classes. He had assumed himself lagging behind his classmates and the world! Could it be why he used to sit in the last row? And if so, how about my other students at that specific location in the classroom? Could his occasional non-attendance at my classes be an indicator of his lack of interest in investment in learning English?

¹ mavaddatr@gmail.com

After my class, I thought about these questions for a while. Then, I recalled one of my other students, Arash, a pseudonym, who was a freshman studying Civil Engineering. He used to sit in the last row in the classroom, too. But, unlike Sam, he was very active, self-confident and proud of himself. Although he was very proficient at using English, he used to attend all of his English classes and seemed to be heavily investing in learning the language. Overall, I could see that he considered himself to be at the top, in every aspect, of his class. In my opinion, Sam and Arash seemed the exact opposite of each other because they clearly differed in the way they positioned themselves in class and in their levels of investment in learning English.

So why did the two students view and position themselves much differently than their classmates? And what made them have very different levels of investment in learning the language? These were the questions for which I tried to find some convincing answers by benefitting from Darwin and Norton's (2015) model of investment and through exploring the two students' language learning experiences. It is also worth mentioning here that the study was conducted through the help of one of the professors at Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics, Shiraz University, Iran, as my coauthor who contributed to the work through his active involvement in planning and conducting the study and his great help with the review and revision of the manuscript.

Abstract

This study, prompted by a critical incident within the language classroom, is based on Darwin and Norton's (2015a) model of investment and an analysis of narratives of two Iranian EFL learners with different levels of investment in their language learning. The findings revealed that success in and continuity of language learning in different phases of participants' lives depended not only on their investment in language learning but also on their willingness to learn the language and motivation for it. Furthermore, emotional and temporal kinds of capital were found significant in determining participants' success or failure in language learning. Additionally, the concept of demotivation was proved inadequate for explaining one of the participants' loss of motivation for language learning over a particular period of time. Finally, a model was designed concerning the interactive effects of willingness to learn, motivation, and investment in applied linguistics.

Keywords: capital, identity, investment, motivation, willingness to learn

Received on March 25, 2019

Accepted on July 12, 2020

1. Introduction

The sociological construct of investment is a complement to the psychological construct of motivation (Norton & De Costa, 2018). A learner may be highly motivated, but not heavily invest in the language practices of a given classroom which are racist or sexist (Norton, 2013; Norton Peirce, 1995). Therefore, investment in language learning entails one not only to ask if language teachers and learners are motivated enough to learn a second language but also to investigate if they have made good investment in the language and literacy practices of a specific classroom and/or community. Norton (1997), cited in Boxer (2006), has described investment, in relation to second language acquisition, as "the relationship of social identity to power differences between learners and mother tongue speakers" (p. 678).

1.1 Theoretical Framework

Based on the model of investment in applied linguistics (Darvin & Norton, 2015a, which is represented in Figure 1, learner investment occurs at the intersection of the three constructs of identity, ideology and capital.



Fig. 1. The Model of Investment in Applied Linguistics
(Adapted from Darvin & Norton, 2015a)

1.1.1 Ideology

In the proposed model, ideology is defined as a normative set of ideas and the sociopolitical contexts of different communities are examined to show how legitimated authority acts so that the ordinary people misrecognize the arbitrary as the natural order. In other words, it can help individuals lay bare the systematic patterns of control and power which have been made invisible. The use of the investment model in applied linguistics enables the researcher to examine the relationship between communicative practices and systematic patterns of control and to show how dynamics and structures of powers within communicative events position learners in multiple ways and grant or refuse them the right to speak (Darvin & Norton, 2015b).

1.1.2 Capital

Capital is defined as power and can be classified in three different types, namely, economic, cultural, and social. Someone's economic capital has been referred to their wealth, property and income. Cultural capital has been defined as knowledge, educational credentials, and also appreciation of specific cultural forms and social capital has been described as connections to networks of power (Darvin & Norton, 2015a). It is the ideology and the immanent structure of the social world that determines the value of the capital and distribution of different types of capital; therefore the chances of success or failure. Therefore, values are dynamic and continually negotiated in different sites of struggle (Darvin & Norton, 2015a). Learners usually operate across transnational contexts and enter online and offline spaces equipped with the different types of capital they possess and occupy new spaces through using these types of capital and turning them into something valuable in their new context and through acquiring new sources of capital.

1.1.3 Identity

In the model of investment, identity has been defined post-structurally and is considered as multiple, a site of struggle, and dynamic over time and space

(Darvin & Norton, 2015a, 2015b). Norton (2013) has defined identity as "the way a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (p. 4). She has further stated that language is the place where the possible and actual forms of organizations along with their social and political consequences are defined and contested. It is also the place where one's sense of themselves, i.e. their identity is constructed.

"Language and identity intersects through language choice and language use" (Vasilopoulos, 2015, p. 62). Learners form identities through negotiating meaning in their interactions with others (Wenger, 1998, cited in Samadi Bahrami, 2012) and, at the same time, they need to reframe their relationships to others to claim more powerful identities from which to speak (Norton, 2016). They do this inspired by a desire for a better future, i.e. by their imagined communities and through habitus, as a system of principles for generating and organizing practices and representations by which people can make sense of the world (Darvin & Norton, 2015a). This way, the multiplicity of identity can be harnessed by both learners and teachers in the interests of enhanced language learning and human possibility (Norton, 2016).

2. Literature Review

The shift of focus from investment to motivation, as represented by Darvin and Norton's (2015a) model of investment, was more than just a subtle shift from one construct to another. It seems that the sociocultural construct of investment has received welcome attention of not only scholars in the field of motivation for language learning, but also that of researchers in the field of identity, ideology and language learning. This might justify the increasing number of studies on identity and language learning in recent years.

2.1 Identity and Investment in Language Learning

Chen, Zhao and Tao (2020) investigated beliefs about learning languages other than English (LOTes) among university student in China and found that most of their participants did not heavily invest in learning LOTes and considered learning them as a leisure activity. Accordingly, they were not motivated enough to continue learning LOTes after the end of their LOTE courses.

Considering the fact that critical inquiry is only possible through casting a light on the nature of what is considered as normative, Darwin and Norton (2015a) presented their model of investment in applied linguistics. After discussing each of the components of the model in detail and how they are related to each other and to language learning, the researchers explained how the model could be applied through two exemplar case studies. Finally, the researchers recommended that the effects of the systematic pattern of control and relation of powers on a person's level of investment in language learning be paid attention to and examined macro-structurally.

Eslami and Wharton (2015) investigated the lived experiences of two adult female ESL learners in the US. The researchers found that participants' identities and roles, namely as a sister, employee, or wife, had either motivated them for or kept them from learning English in different periods of their lives. Furthermore, investing in English language learning had enabled participants to raise their social and cultural capitals and gain greater personal agency and empowerment. The researchers stated that being aware of language learners' needs and motives can help educators to prepare learners for life with a new language.

Mohammadian and Norton (2017) investigated the role of English language institutes (ELIs) in Iran and the reasons for which they appeal to Iranian EFL learners. The researchers found that ELIs, as places in which

learners can reimagine their future identities, can help in broadening learners' horizons and providing a wider range of opportunities to them. The researchers asserted that Iranian ELIs provide learners, and especially female learners with a number of identity options to choose from, identities which are made possible through learners' communicative commands and increases in their economic, social, and also cultural capital.

Norton and De Costa (2016) provided a theoretical toolkit which can be helpful in understanding how theories of identity, affected by the advances in technology and transnationalism, have shifted and evolved over time and which can guide researchers in benefiting from different research agendas and tasks arising from this changing world. The researchers also presented nine research tasks, along with some exemplar key studies and further introduced a methodology toolkit which includes narrative inquiry, conversation analysis, linguistic ethnography, and corpus linguistic. These tasks and analytical tools, in the two researchers' opinions, can help future identity researchers through framing "the exciting trajectory of research on identity and language education" (p. 14).

Razmjoo and Mavaddat (2015) found that a number of Iranian English major BA and MA students are not highly committed to their discipline and they do not end up in fields related to their prime academic interests. Accordingly, the researchers hypothesized that this might be attributed to students' identity orientations, namely whether they are personally or socially orientated (Check, 1989), their attitudes towards the degree of fairness of evaluation procedures through which their performances are judged, and their outcome satisfaction. The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between participants' judgment of procedural justice and rule compliance on the one hand and their judgment of distributive justice and outcome satisfaction on the other hand. The generated structural equation model

showed that the relationship between participants' justice judgment and outcome satisfaction was of a direct type and could not be attributed to the mediating effect of identity orientations.

Samadi Bahrami (2008) tried to show how language learners' personality enrichment, identity construction, investment in learning, and proficiency development are related to and affect each other by conducting a study on personality development through investment in second language learning. The researchers concluded that "cultural elements are infused in language and if they (i.e., students) are to learn the language in its totality, they have to facilitate their language learning efforts with some means to recognize these cultural peculiarities and then gain them" (p. 99).

Vasilopoulos (2015) examined language learning investment and identity negotiation of 10 adult bilingual Korean-English speakers in Korea who had several years' experience of living in an English-speaking country. Based on the study findings, participants used natural L2 expressions and identity only in their language classes and professions, and in communication with peers of the same experience and English-speaking tourists visiting Korea. Overall, strategic language choice and language use enabled participants to construct and negotiate their identities to appropriately position themselves (i.e., to blend in with or to distinguish themselves from people, in their local context).

3. Methods

This study was prompted by a critical incident in the last class session of one of the present researchers. According to Richards (2005), critical incidents are unanticipated events that can educate teachers about different aspects of teaching and learning and make them aware of "the underlying beliefs and motives" (p. 114) in their classrooms. A critical incident can lead to reflection (Bruster & Peterson, 2013). Regarding this, a critical incident or a 'small

story', as it is called by Norton and Early (2011), in one of the present researcher's classes made her reflect on her praxis.

Accordingly, this study was conducted using a narrative inquiry of two Iranian EFL learners' language learning experiences. Narrative inquiry is based on the idea that stories can be helpful in understanding human lives and communicating the meaning of human experiences (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2019; Riazi, 2016). A narrative inquiry "generates the kind of data that are essential for research as praxis, in which there is a productive and sustainable relationship between theory, research, and classroom teaching" (Norton & Early, 2011, p. 417). Narrative inquiry can be well-adjusted with the post-modern concern with identity and help in understanding how people organize their experiences and identities and reveal them to both themselves and the other members of their community (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014). This study is a study of multiple narratives with a focus on analysis of narratives related to biographies (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014) of two EFL learners.

3.1 Participants

Participants of this study were two Iranian young male EFL learners under the pseudonyms of Sam and Arash. Sam, 22 years old, was a junior student studying Anesthesiology in Bahar Paramedical School, a *pseudonym*, the Fars Province, Iran. Arash, 19 years old, was a freshman studying Civil Engineering at Bahar Higher Education Center, a *pseudonym*, the Fars Province, Iran.

Due to the nature of this study, which was based on a critical incident in class, purposive sampling procedure, which can be adopted to select deviant or critical cases (Rubin & Babbie, 2011), was used for the selection of participants.

3.2 Instrument

Of the three types of qualitative interviews, namely informal interview, formal interview, and standard interview (Hatch, 2002), the present researchers benefited from formal interview in conducting this study. Accordingly, participants were semi-structurally interviewed and a number of background and guiding questions were designed by the researchers based on their knowledge and real-life experiences as EFL learners and teachers. Some guiding questions, too, which were adjusted with the two components of identity and capital in Darvin and Norton's model of investment, were adopted from Darvin and Norton (2015a), and Eslami and Wharton (2015). Adhering to the principle of simultaneous data collection and analysis, where analysis of each interviewee's data informs collection of data in the next interviews (Lingard, Albert, & Levinson, 2008) and inspired by Razfar (2012), who has focused on the bidirectional relationship between teachers' beliefs about the nature, function, and purpose of language teaching and their practice, the researchers designed some other questions on ideology, as the third component of the investment model, after conducting the first interviews with the two interviewees.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

As Warren (2002) has recommended, the interviews were scheduled in convenient places at convenient times for participants. The researchers first guaranteed the confidentiality of the information provided by participants. Participants were then asked to talk about their language learning perspectives, experiences and stories. They were allowed to speak in Persian, as their mother tongue or English, as their second language. At the end of each interview, the interviewees were asked if they would like to add anything else, based on the idea that this and similar simple questions had resulted in rich data in the previous literature (Dörnyei, 2011).

Typological analysis framework as a model of qualitative data analysis (Hatch, 2002) was used to analyze the obtained data. Hatch (2002) believes that typological analysis is suitable for studies which rely on interviewing as the sole or primary instrument for data collection. Typological analysis is described as dividing the overall data set into groups or categories based on some predetermined typologies which are generated from theory, common sense, and research objectives. Considering typological analysis, the analytical steps in this study included:

- 1) Identifying typologies to be analyzed;
- 2) Reading the data and marking entries related to the typologies;
- 3) Reading entries by typology and recording the main ideas in entries on summary sheets;
- 4) Looking for patterns, relationships, and themes within typologies;
- 5) Reading data, coding entries according to patterns identified and keeping a record of what entries went with which elements of the identified patterns;
- 6) Deciding if the patterns were supported by the data, and searching the data for nonexamples of the patterns;
- 7) Looking for relationships among the identified patterns;
- 8) Writing the patterns as one-sentence generalizations;
- 9) Selecting data excerpts that supported the generalizations.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of data analysis and the relevant discussion in two sections, namely Sam's Story and Arash's Story.

4.1 Sam's Story

Sam decided to speak in Persian during the interview session. He was 22 years old, a student of anesthesiology at Bahar Paramedical School, a pseudonym, the Fars Province, and used to work to earn a living. He was born into a middle-class family in a small village and of his family members, only two of his brothers got higher education. After finishing primary school, he attended a boarding junior high school in a nearby town because his

brothers, who had attended the same school before, believed this could guarantee his success in life.

4.1.1 Sam's Learning of English Before Grade 12

The boarding school was far away from the town center where the town's only English language institute was located. Therefore, Sam could not attend the institute's classes because it would take him a great deal of his time commuting between school and the language institute.

Sam believed that English courses at school were not effective. His English teachers did not devote enough time to students, effectively teach them, and make it clear why they needed to learn English. According to Sam, "if they had done so, we would have put more time into learning English". To him, English textbooks were not effective either.

As Falout (2012) has stated, access to supportive social networks of power can cause learners to stay motivated. Furthermore, as Norton and De Costa (2018) have stated, the levels of capital available to a person can have a link to their imagined identity and an assumed imagined community might be challenged by limited access to capital. Confirming these, the present researchers strongly assert that the formation of an imagined community and its components would be impossible without provision of the necessary capitals. Indeed, English language teachers should create communicative events to make learners motivated for using the language and should remind learners of the usefulness of English in order to instrumentally motivate them and make them determined to study the language (Jung, 2011).

Sam did not have any access to such networks and even his English teachers and textbooks were not helpful to him. Accordingly, he was not able to form any vision of his future use of English and could not create any imagined community in which English plays a major role.

All of these can reflect the importance of teachers' scaffolding practices to help learners form an imagined identity and create an imagined community of their own, or build a vision, as what Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) called, of their future self and community. According to Hadfield and Dörnyei (2013), building a vision can be the single most important part of any course which aims at creating meaningful learning experiences, leads to change and helps learners "reduce the gap between [their] present and ideal self" (p. 12) .

4.1.2 Sam's Learning of English at Grade 12

The English learning conditions remained the same for Sam until grade 12, when a supportive male relative became his English teacher. The teacher was very knowledgeable and kind. All of these increased his motivation and caused him to study a lot and to get the highest English exam scores. This experience can be helpful in highlighting the importance of emotional capital in ensuring successful learning experiences. Indeed, the higher and deeper confidence is with someone, the more likely they are to invest their emotional capital in you [and your success] (Fannin, 2018). Bourdieu, cited in Cottingham (2016), considers emotional capital as a part of embodied cultural capital, but the question which arises from this view is that whether the relationship with social networks of power, characterizing social capital, can have an emotional facet or not. Indeed, to the present author's knowledge, it is not crystal clear where this construct stands in Darwin and Norton's model of investment.

Then, Sam took the University Entrance Exam and his good performance in the English section of the exam had a major role in his success for gaining admission to university where he could start studying Anesthesiology. Practically considered, this was the first time learning English had a major influence on Sam's life and identity. He stated,

Similar Positions in ...

Since the time I entered the university, my local people have a friendlier attitude towards me. Now, they call me 'doctor' and ask me to give them some information about their doctors' prescriptions and instructions for the use of their drugs [which are in English]. To impress them more, I sometimes use some English terms in my speech.

4.1.3 Sam's Learning of English on the GE1 Course

Then, Sam took the GE1 course to fulfil general education requirements but he had some problems in his English classes, problems which were mainly caused, as he said, by the instructor:

The classroom was teacher-centered and we had a strict female instructor who used to suppress our energy. Every session, she called us over to front of the class and asked us some questions about the previous lessons. If we couldn't answer, she reprimanded us in presence of all our classmates, including girls, and gave us a negative point. It seemed that the more we studied, the less we obtained. And we didn't know what the problem was. By and by, students, especially the male ones disgusted the instructor and the English course. She gave me seven or eight negative points that semester and I didn't attend six of my classroom sessions because I preferred sleeping in my dorm room over attending the class.

One cannot reach their real potential without investing in and nurturing their relationships with the relevant others. Furthermore, as one's emotional capital is finite, the way they invest it, can have a major role in determining their success or failure rate (Fannin, 2018). Regarding language classroom, the nature of the relationship between teacher and learners and the howness of interaction in the classroom can affect students' motivation and achievement (Ghafarpour, Moinzadeh, & Eslamirasekh, 2018). Accordingly,

building good teacher-learners relationship can be considered as a necessary precondition which help learners benefit from teacher's different kinds of capital.

Students' disgust with the English instructor and at English language learning reached its highest point when they found about their total score at the end of the semester. As Sam stated: "Our English scores were unexpectedly low!"

At the beginning of the next semester, students found the same instructor would teach them the GE2 course and strongly opposed this decision. After they found that the university authorities did not reconsider their decision, all the eight male students decided to withdraw from the course. Moreover, the course had become too disgusting for the boys to demand it during the next year.

As Falout (2012) has reported, decreased test scores can be among the factors which demotivate students. Sam's experience can highlight the importance of students' satisfaction with their evaluation procedures. It can also show that language learners' experiences are important because they can alter their learning aims and activities. Therefore, teachers should not ignore the sociocultural reality which affects student's identity formation both in and outside the classroom and should have a deep awareness of students' different expectations, beliefs, identities, voices, fears, and anxieties (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

4.1.3.1 Counter-motivation Process

Based on the present researchers' experiences, what Sam and his classmates experienced in their language classroom was something beyond demotivation and can be considered as counter-motivation which can occur despite one's high level of motivation for learning a language at the beginning of the learning process. To justify the reasons for the use of the term counter-

motivation, the readers are invited to read the following sections on the nature of counter-motivation and demotivation processes and the fundamental differences and similarities between the two.

Demotivation occurs when there is a decrease in motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011) and a demotivated learner “is someone who was once motivated but has lost his or her commitment/interest for some reason” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 138). Language learners experience a feeling of dislike for English in the process of demotivation and some of them might blame themselves for their learning setbacks (Falout, 2012). Teachers and teacher-related factors, such as lack of enthusiasm and competence, improper teaching styles and methods, favoritism, lack of appreciation, low scores, and admonition have a great responsibility in demotivating learners (Jung, 2011; Meshkat & Hassani, 2012; Sher Ali & Hussain Pathan, 2017; Xie, 2018).

Concerning counter-motivation, however, teacher-related factors are most probably related to affective challenges in the classroom. Furthermore, the blame for a counter-motivated learner's feeling of dislike for English language learning is most likely placed on the teacher. Sam engendered a feeling of dislike for English and underwent an unnerving experience of losing confidence and great emotional suffering and he thought his instructor was responsible for all of this.

Like demotivation, counter-motivation might coexist instrumental motivation. But even when a counter-motivated learner has an instrumental motivation, it is highly probable that the level of investment which they make in their learning will not be more than what is needed for meeting their minimum requirement. As an example, one of my counter-motivated students, who had talked to me about her bitter experience of language learning before, answered only as many items in her final exam as she thought were required for passing the course.

But perhaps, the most significant difference between demotivation and counter-motivation is that there is at least one emotionally bad incident as a climax in the language learning story of counter-motivated learners. One that exceeds their tolerance level and stirs a feeling of hatred towards the language. Sam and his classmates were treated in contempt and did not expect such low scores at all. Thus they, despite having instrumental motivation for passing the course, took step to protect their social identity from further damage by their strategic withdrawal from the course and putting it on the back burner until the last minute.

Finally, counter-motivation can have long-term, if not permanent, effects on learner's attitude and behavior and might even occasionally reappear after learner is remotivated. It can even lead to long lasting indifference to language learning and very likely to stop the learning process, especially in a Foreign Language context where language learning is of no immediate use to learners. This might justify why stimulating remotivation process can be more difficult for a counter-motivated learner than a demotivated one.

4.1.4 Sam's Learning of English on the GE2 and ESP Courses

After one year, I, as one of the present researchers, entered the Paramedical School and started teaching the GE2 course to Sam, his eight male classmates and some other students from the lower grade.

I also taught the two graduate ESP courses offered the next semester. Now the eight male students were divided into two different groups based on their majors and again, the majority of their classmates were lower-grade students. This new learning context helped me manage the class more effectively.

A number of factors have been enumerated as language learners' remotivators, factors such as reminding learners of their causes and targets for language learning, making the act of learning enjoyable, raised test

scores, personal favor on language teacher, and new learning environment (Jung, 2011; Ushioda, 1998).

I tried to provide an enjoyable learning environment for learners through practicing what I had learned in my postgraduate training programs, building good rapport with my students, clarifying the evaluation process, focusing on all language (sub)skills, and increasing students' autonomy through encouraging peer scaffolding and provoking classroom discussion. All of these could help in generating students' remotivation.

As Sam stated,

Considering the GE1 course, I sometimes didn't go to the class. But I enjoyed the GE2 and the ESP courses. I had a partial job then but I tried to change my shift and attend the language class. The ESP course was especially useful to us. It was related to our field of study and practical and helped us learn more about our major. Furthermore, the instructor had made us involved in our learning by posing some challenges, by asking us to interpret reading passages ourselves, and by making us involved in classroom discussion.

4.1.5 Sam's Investment in Language Learning

Sam was better at reading, as the main focus of academic English courses in Iran (Hayati & Mashhadi, 2010), than the other language skills. Regarding English language subskills, although he had an almost large vocabulary, he believed that knowing the correct pronunciation of English words was not essential because everyone might pronounce a word in a different way in the operating room, where it is more essential for an anesthesiologist to effectively operate and use anesthesia equipment and work as quickly as possible. Considering this, it can be observed that one's identity is

determining not only in the selection of a specific language to learn, but also in the amount of investment they make in each language (sub)skill.

When Sam was asked about why he used to sit in the last row of classroom, he stated,

Instructors always expect much from those sitting in the front row and I was a bit naughty, so it was the best place for me. But it didn't mean I looked down on the class. Indeed, we were spending our last semester there in Bahar Paramedical School, and we had some bad experiences with the GE1 course before. We were waiting to serve our apprenticeship in a larger place. All of these had made us impatient. But now I can understand how necessary it is for students to focus their attention on their instructor. Since the time I am serving my apprenticeship at a hospital here, I have met some distant relatives living abroad and found some new friends who always recommend me to learn English. Now I know that I can continue my education or work abroad. I am busy right now but I will pursue the matter in this coming summer.

As it was aforementioned, counter-motivation might show its long effects even after learners' remotivation.

Sam's decision to postpone going to an EFL institute, as he referred to it several times during the interview session, and searching for the way he could continue his education abroad could reveal an instance of procrastination, as "the tendency to put off or completely avoid an activity under one's control" (Tuckman, cited in Stöber & Joormann, 2001, p. 50). Procrastination might be related to worry (Stöber & Joormann, 2001), or to maladaptive perfectionism, as a personality trait which can be shown by a person's doubts about an action or behavior (Akyol & Sali, 2013). Anyway,

it might be impossible to exactly determine if Sam was perfectionist or had a worrisome problem unless further research will be done.

At the end of the interview, Sam showed me a book titled *Learning English in 30 Days* and stated that after leaving Bahar Paramedical School, he had started learning English. The book's title could indicate that Sam was still on the wrong language learning road. And his selection of the word 'start', here and in several other places in the interview, could reveal that he was not benefitting from his previous language learning experiences.

The obtained findings also showed another gap in relation to Darwin and Norton's model of investment, a gap which can be filled through temporal capital, as a determining factor for one's success or failure in language learning.

To clarify this, it should be noted that the process of English language learning for Sam was not constant and he believed that he had not spent enough time on or set a strict daily schedule for learning the language. Now, he used to study English usually late at night which he believed was not a good time for learning English. He further believed that his school English teacher had not devoted enough time to them. Moreover, he had not had enough time to commute between school and the towns' only EFL institute located far away. He had to work now and he thought lack of time did not permit him to pursue his interest in learning English more actively. Finally, his future life would provide him with enough time, as he expected, for learning English.

Even if we ignore the effects of language learners' age on their acquisition of language (sub)skills and probably different effects of the second culture on identity formation of language learners at different ages, all the above can make it clear that putting temporal capital into language learning investment has great significance.

Overall, it seemed that Sam's main motivation for learning English had always been instrumental and learning English had not caused a substantial change in his personal life and identity.

4.2 Arash's Story

Arash spoke English in the interview session. He was 19 years old and the only child of his family. His parents had no academic education and his only uncle used to work in a London company as a successful engineer.

4.2.1 Arash's Learning of English

Arash's parents thought that learning English could help him have a better future. Therefore, they pushed him to attend a well-known English language institute when he was 10. Soon, however, he became interested in learning English and found it as one of the most exhilarating experiences of his life. Arash played the piano and learning English helped him to learn more about music and especially music from other cultures. Listening to English songs had helped him satisfy his curiosity about other cultures to some extent. Moreover, through English, he had been able to make a lot of online friends.

Arash was a successful language learner who used to spend between 9 and 12 hours per week on practicing and studying English and watching English movies which he found very effective in developing his English language proficiency. As recommended by one of his language institute teachers, he used to carefully watch short scenes from a movie and tried to write every single word uttered by the characters in a particular notebook. Sometimes he used to listen to particular utterances several times and if he still could not understand them, he activated the English subtitles and tried to find out about his reading comprehension problems. After writing the complete utterances in his notebook, he tried to look up new words in dictionary and learn everything about them. Then, he tried to practice what he had learned for a long-term learning. This was repeated for every single part

until the movie finished. Indeed, this watching technique had helped him acquire many new words along with their correct pronunciation and learn about lots of grammatical points. Furthermore, in Arash's opinion, listening and writing were the most important English language skills and had the major roles in his acquisition of the language.

After several years, he took a diploma in English and right now, he was a Civil Engineering student who spoke English fluently. Although he stated that he, as a university student now, did not have enough time to attend an English class, English language learning was still a continuous experience for him and lack of time did not prevent him from developing his language proficiency. Thus, he adapted himself to his new conditions and pursued his learning through watching English series, which, as compared to movies, took less time.

4.2.2 Arash's Learning of Russian

Then, Arash started learning Russian as his third language. He used to learn it through chatting online with some Russian boys of the same age who mainly did not speak English fluently. When he was asked why he had selected Russian as his third language, he stated: "because I really like the way Russians speak."

Arash's answer can be linked to the concept of Willingness To Learn (WTL) which involves a desire to learn, experiment, see or do something which has not been seen or done before. WTL is related to that kind of learning which is typically reactive, nearly spontaneous and unplanned and can precede goal-directed, self-regulated, and intentional learning. Accordingly, a person who is willing to learn is open to new experiences and other people, open-minded, ready to tinker and desires to learn new things. (Van Eekelena, Vermunt, & Boshuizen, 2006).

WTL is totally different from motivation for learning. Some scholars, however, have wrongly inserted some distinctive characteristics of the concept of WTL, namely a desire to do something, attitudes towards something, and even willingness to do something into the definition of motivation. For instance, Garner and MacIntyre, have defined motivation as a "desire to achieve a goal, effort extended in this direction, and satisfaction with the task" (cited in Mitchell, Myles, & Marsden, 2013, p. 23). And as Richards and Schmidt (2002) have mentioned, some researchers have referred to motivation for learning a second language as "a combination of the learner's attitudes, desires and willingness to expand effort in order to learn the second language" (p. 343). Indeed, WTL, unlike motivation, can explain both planned and unplanned learning (Van Eekelena, Vermunt, & Boshuizen, 2006). In addition, motivation is a complex process which involves initial planning, goal setting, and intention formation among other things (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

A few months later after the interview sessions, I found that Arash, who was now an English instructor in a distinguished language institute had stopped learning Russian. When I asked him about the reason, he told me that Russian was of no use to him. Whether Arash had only a willingness to learn Russian or a temporal instrumental motivation to learn it, his experience of learning Russian can make it clear that willingness to learn a language had not guaranteed his investment in learning the language in the long run. Therefore, the continuity of investment in learning a language may depend on provision of continuous motivation for language learning.

4.2.3 Arash's Investment in Language Learning

In Arash's opinion, language, no matter oral or written or first or second, primarily functioned as a means to connect. According to him: "Knowing a language makes you want to meet more people and do more business. It

makes you a team player. We cannot share our thoughts and emotions without knowing a language".

Arash's view of language had an emotional aspect attached to it and emphasized the affective function of language. Moreover, the language learning process was as a life-changing experience for Arash and had helped him develop his personality and be a better person. According to him, "knowing a language can give one an equal position in communication, no matter what language it is or where they are from". Knowing English language had helped him to get familiar with foreign music which, in turn, provided him with a clearer manifestation of an imagined community. Furthermore, it had helped him understand what was happening around, connect with and learn from people of different countries, connect with women and understand how they feel and behave, respect other individuals' opinions, and behave well in society.

Ideologically considering, he thought his high school EFL textbooks were not that much respectable. They contained no information about other nations' traditions and there was no western cultural representations in them. Language institutes' EFL textbooks, on the other hand, were mostly authentic. Thus, Arash, through being familiarized with these authentic sources, could more easily identify the problems in his high school textbooks and value the originality of language institutes' textbooks. However, EFL language institutes had their own problems. According to Arash,

Learners cannot learn about native English speakers' real life in language institutes. Teachers write something on the board and expect students to copy it down in their notebook. They don't make learners speak and search online for what they don't know.

Arash solved this problem through watching English movies and series which contained authentic conversations and a lot of new words, and through chatting online with friends.

As it was aforementioned, temporal capital can be as a major factor in determining one's success or failure in language learning.

Concerning the relevance of temporal capital to Arash's language learning experience, he believed that he had started learning English at the best time of his life when he had already acquired his first language and had a lot of free time. This could also explain Arash's native-like English accent.

He further believed English courses at school were not sufficient for one to learn English because the amount of time which was allocated to them was limited and classrooms were usually overcrowded. Consequently, teachers did not have enough time to help students invest in learning English. This is in line with findings of Razmjoo and Mavaddat (2016) who found that temporal problems are among the most serious challenges which Iranian high school teachers of English face in their profession.

Finally, English language learning was a continuous process for Arash and lack of time had never impeded his progress in this regard.

With regard to his future plan, Arash was completely sure that he would complete his education, work, and save enough money for continuing his education abroad.

At the end of the interview, Arash was asked why he used to sit in the last row in the classroom. He replied: "I don't like to be kind of student who sits in front of professor and shows off but I do my best at class". He also mentioned that as he was a bit tall, he sat in the last row to make it possible for the other students to see the board.

Arash believes that sitting in the last row in the classroom can help him protect his social identity and enables him to introduce himself as a student

who, despite his high level of academic achievement, has no need to show off.

Overall, Arash, as the only child of his family, had received considerable general support from his parents. Furthermore, as he claimed, from the first time he had started learning English, he had changed a lot. The change process had been made possible for him through his use of the resources provided by networks of power, namely his parents, teachers, and friends, in his immediate context and through technological advances, such as cellular phones, computers, and internet.

5. Conclusions

The results of this study confirmed that language learners may make different levels of investment in language learning based on the identity they assume for themselves, the capitals they invest in their language learning, and ideologies which impact their language learning experiences (Darvin & Norton, 2015a). Based on the findings of this study, it can further be claimed that although learner's wise investment in learning the language, through strategic language learning, as in the case of Arash's learning of English, can have the most crucial role in determining one's success in the learning process, significance of the other two decisive factors of learner's WTL and motivation for learning the language should not be neglected. Concerning these three constructs and with regard to the findings of this study, the following model, as shown in Table 1, can be proposed.

Table 1
A Model of Interactive Effects of WTL, Motivation, and Investment in Applied Linguistics

	The existence or (changes in) nature of			Consequences/ changes in life	The continuity of the learning process	Case example
	WTL	Motivation	Investment			
Condition 1	+	+ Integrative	+ High and wise	Profound long-term changes in learner's identity, ideology, capital, investment and life	Continuous	Arash's learning of English
Condition 2	+	- (Instrumental if any)	-	No significant change	Discontinuous	Arash's learning of Russian
Condition 3	+	+ Instrumental	+ Low	Demotivation and probably small effective changes in (some aspects of) life	Continuous as long as learner has an instrumental motivation for language learning	Before grade 12
Condition 4	+	↑ Instrumental	+	Remotivation and effective changes in (some aspects of) life	Continuous as long as learner has an instrumental motivation for language learning	At grade 12
Condition 5	↓	+ Instrumental (very low)	↓	Counter-motivation and perhaps unpleasant changes in (some aspects of) life	Practically discontinuous	On the GE1 course
Condition 6	↑	+Instrumental	↑	Remotivation and effective changes in (some aspects of) life, probably occasional experience of negative feelings engendered by counter-motivation experiences before	Continuous as long as learner has an instrumental motivation for language learning	On the GE2 and ESP courses

Note. A plus sign indicates either the presence of the relevant factor or formation of it over a short period of time. A minus sign indicates either the absence of the relevant factor or loss of it over time. An upward pointing arrow indicates an increase in the relevant factor. A downward pointing arrow indicates a decrease in the relevant factor.

Considering the aforementioned model, the highest level of long-term success in the learning process can be achieved when a learner has all the three necessary conditions for learning the language.

Furthermore, to make a success of their investment in language learning, learner needs to benefit from emotional and temporal types of capital. Lack of emotional capital in the language classroom, in particular, can lead to learners' counter-motivation and cause long-term negative effects in the

learning process. Furthermore, the development of healthy relationship between teacher and learners in the language classroom can help learners benefit from teacher's different types of capital. This can also help learners build visions and accelerates the creation of an imagined community by them.

It is also worth mentioning here that a learner's perfectionism can impede his investment in learning the language. A good investor in language learning is one, who instead of yielding to difficult circumstances in the process of learning, adapts themselves to the adverse circumstances and makes the language learning process as continuous as possible.

Finally, this study was provoked by a critical incident which occurred in the last class session of one of the present researchers as an EFL instructor. After a deep analysis of the incident and the language learning experiences of participants involved, the present researchers found that selection of a specific position in classroom by a learner can be affected by their social identity. Regarding this, it would be a good idea to occasionally change students' seats in the classroom. This might prove effective in increasing students' investment in their learning.

References

- Akyol, A. K., & Sali, G. (2013). A study on the perfectionist personality traits and empathic tendencies of working and non-working adolescents across different variables. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 13(4), 2032-2042.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Sorensen, C., & Walker, D. A. (2019). *Introduction to research in education* (10th ed.). Boston: Cengage Learning
- Barkhuizen, G., Benson, P., & Chik, A. (2014). *Narrative inquiry in language teaching and learning research*. New York: Routledge.
- Boxer, D. (2006). Discourse studies: Second language. In K. Brown (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of language and linguistics* (pp. 677-680). New York: Elsevier Science.
- Bruster, B. G., & Peterson, B. R. (2013). Using critical incidents in teaching to promote reflective practice. *Reflective Practice*, 14(2), 170-182.

- Cheek, J. M., Tropp, L. R., & Chen, L. C. (1994). *Identity orientations: Personal, social, and collective aspects of identity*. Paper presented at the August 1994 meeting of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles. Retrieved from <http://wellesley.edu/Psychology/Cheek/jcheek.html>.
- Chen, X., Zhao, K., & Tao, J. (2020). Language learning as investment or consumption? A case study of Chinese university students' beliefs about the learning of languages other than English. *Sustainability, 12*, 1-15.
- Cottingham, M. D. (2016). Theorizing emotional capital. *Theory and Society, 45*(5), 451-470.
- Darvin, R., & Norton B. (2015a). Identity and a model of investment in applied linguistics. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 35*, 36-56.
- Darvin, R., & Norton, B. (2015b). Identity, investment, and pedagogy in transcultural cosmopolitan times. Paper presented at Literacy in Transcultural, Cosmopolitan Times, Calgary, Canada. Retrieved from <https://werkklund.ucalgary.ca/ltct/files/ltct/darvin-norton.pdf>
- Dörnyei, Z. (2011). *Research methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Kubanyiova, M. (2014). *Motivating learners, motivating teachers: Building vision in the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2011). *Teaching and researching motivation* (2nd ed.). Harlow, UK: Longman.
- Eslami, Z. R., & Wharton, A. (2015). Investment and benefits of adult female English language learners. *International Journal of Business and Social Sciences, 6*(1), 49-58.
- Falout, J. (2012). Coping with demotivation: EFL learners' remotivation processes. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language, 16*(3), 1-29.
- Fannin, K. (2018). *The power of emotional capital in building influence and relationships*. Retrieved from <https://inteligate.com/team-strategy/emotional-capital-how-to-build-critical-leadership-wealth>
- Ghafarpour, H., Moinzadeh, A., & Eslamirasekh, A. (2018). I am good at it because I like its teacher: To what extent does teacher behavior motivate students to learn? *Teaching English Language, 12*(2), 67-87.
- Hadfield, J. & Dörnyei, Z. (2013). *Motivating learning*. London: Taylor & Francis Ltd.
- Hatch, A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

- Hayati, A., & Mashhadi, A. (2010). Language planning and language-in-education policy in Iran. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, 34(1), 24-42.
- Jung, S. K. (2011). Demotivating and remotivating factors in learning English: A case of low-level college students. *English teaching*, 66(2), 47-72.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding language teaching: From method to postmethod*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Taylor & Francis.
- Lingard, L., Albert, M., & Levinson, W. (2008). Qualitative research: Grounded theory, mixed methods, and action research. *Practice*, 337, 459-461.
- Meshkat, M., & Hassani, M. (2012). Demotivating factors in learning English: The case of Iran. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 31, 745-749.
- Mitchell, R., Myles, F., & Marsden, E. (2013). *Second language learning theories* (3rd ed.). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Mohammadian, M. & Norton, B. (2017). The role of English language institutes in Iran. *TESOL Quarterly*, 51(2), 428-438.
- Norton, B. (2013). *Identity and language learning: Extending the conversation* (2nd ed.). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Norton, B. (2016). Identity and language learning: Back to the future. *TESOL Quarterly*, 50(2), 475-479.
- Norton, B., & De Costa, P. (2018). Research tasks on identity in language learning and teaching. *Language Teaching*, 51(1), 90-112.
- Norton, B., & Early, M. (2011). Researcher identity, narrative inquiry, and language teaching research. *TESOL Quarterly*, 45(3), 415-439.
- Norton Peirce, B. (1995). Social identity, investment, and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(1), 9-31.
- Razfar, A. (2012). Language ideologies and curriculum studies: An Empirical Approach to "worthwhile" questions. *Journal of curriculum theorizing*, 28(1), 127-140.
- Razmjoo, S. A., & Mavaddat, R. (2015). On the relationship between justice judgments, outcomes and identity orientations among Iranian EFL learners: A structural equation model. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 3(2), 101-117.
- Razmjoo, S. A., & Mavaddat, R. (2016). Understanding professional challenges faced by Iranian teachers of English. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 6(3), 208-220.
- Riazi, A. M. (2016). *The Routledge encyclopedia of research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research*. New York: Routledge.

- Richards, J. (2005). *Professional development for language teachers: strategies for teacher learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (3rd ed.). London: Longman.
- Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. R. (2011). *Research methods for social work* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Samadi Bahrami, A. H. (2008). Personality development by means of investment in L2 and its impact on EF students. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills*, 5(3), 83-105.
- Sher Ali, M., & Hussain Pathan, Z. (2017). Exploring factors causing demotivation and motivation in learning English language among college students of Quetta, Pakistan. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 7(2), 81-89.
- Stöber, J., & Joormann, J. (2001). Worry, procrastination, and perfectionism: Differentiating amount of worry, pathological worry, Anxiety, and depression. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 25(1), 49-60.
- Ushioda, E. (1998). Effective motivational thinking: A cognitive theoretical approach to the study of language learning motivation. In E. A. Soler and V. C. Espurz (Eds.), *Current issues in English language methodology* (pp.77-89). Castelló dela Plana: Universitat Jaume I.
- Vasilopoulos, G. (2015). Language learner investment and identity negotiation in the Korean EFL context. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, 14, 61-79.
- Van Eekelena, I. M., Vermunt, J. D., & Boshuizen, H. P.A. (2006). Exploring teachers' will to learn. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22, 408-423.
- Warren, C. A. B. (2002). Qualitative interviewing. In J. F. Gubriem, & J. A. Holstein (Eds.), *Handbook of interview research: Context and method* (pp. 83-102). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Xie, J., Wei, T., Zeng, Y., Lobsenz, J., & Chen, X. (2018). Learner perceptions of demotivators in the EFL classroom: Experiences of failure on learning outcomes. *The Journal of ASIA TEFL*, 15(2), 491-50.