A study was conducted in China to find out how secondary school students felt about learning English as a foreign language.

ZHU XUEMIN[1], DR. LUBNA ALI [2a], DR. VELVIZHI [3b]

[1]PhD Research Scholar in English, Lincoln University College, Malaysia

[2,3]Professor in Lincoln University College, Malaysia

Contact Details: [a] lubnaali@lincoln.edu.my, [b] velvizhi219@lincoln.edu.my

Abstract

"Several factors can be cited as to why this study is relevant: As a first step, this study shows that social status plays an important role in rural Chinese students' ability to learn English, as well as the extent to which English can be viewed as cultural and other capital. Students from rural China are frequently confronted with mitigating factors that frequently impede their progress to higher education, necessitating that they work harder during their educational journeys than their urban counterparts. Teachers in rural areas may benefit from tracing their paths in terms of 'investment' in the future, as this will help to highlight flaws in the current system that can be addressed by the individual teacher. Class-based "Social capital explains a person's interest and commitment to English language study."

Second, this study allows students to share their own stories of joy, disappointment, and fear as they progress through their English learning journey. Finally, this study allows us to look at how students in rural China think about English acquisition in terms of their current economic and social resources. Teachers in rural areas may be able to help their students overcome the disadvantages of studying English in rural areas thanks to this study. In the absence of adequate economic and social capital, it is reasonable to assume that these factors influence students' self-perceptions (standards, respect, and values) as well as academic success. It also sheds light. on how educational contexts are reproduced (see Bourdieu, 1971 and 1990; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Apple, 1995; Giroux, 1990). All those who believe that schools serve to perpetuate class hierarchy and inequality.

Keyword: Acquisition of English, Education Standards, Context of Education

INTRODUCTION

English language globalization is a global phenomenon that has influenced English education around the world (Gil & Adamson, 2011). No country is exempt from this rule, including China. The government's strategic plan for national economic growth includes increasing English instruction as a key component of educational reform in China (Gao, 2012a; Qiang, Huang, Siegel, & Trube, 2011). Administrative promotion of English study was originally envisioned as a clear portal to 'western' technical knowledge; however, English is now inextricably linked to China's construction of its 'narrative of self-identity.' This transition has influenced both informal and

formal English education. Recently, the Chinese government has taken steps to codify and institutionalize this influence, promoting the use of English as a type of "soft power' to gain access to the global market."

Since then, English teachers and students across China have been directly impacted by previously unprecedented shifts in economic, educational, cultural, and racial power. Globalization has resulted in an increase in the use of the English language as a medium for capital accumulation, connection to the lives of a larger global population, and the formation of ties across geography, time, and location. As a result, my research focuses primarily on the relationship between English and students' capital, as well as the investment of students' identities in the study of English over time and across geography.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since 1978, China's economy has rapidly expanded, and social reforms have been sweeping across the nation. Economic reform is under threat due to rising socioeconomic disparities, and the rigid social-status hierarchy that emerged from a state socialist economy is no longer adequate to represent China's growing social and economic fragmentation (Bian, 2002). The Chinese government closely monitors social disparities in order to maintain economic growth and create a "harmonious society." Following Marxist class analysis, the term social stratum has replaced social class. It's a new term that describes how China's social structure evolved in the 1990s (Anagnost, 2008). When addressing social inequalities without assuming societal animosity, the term "social strata" is used. Rather than class-based conflict, socioeconomic disparities are expressed as cultural differences in a hierarchy of patriotic affiliation. (Anagnost, 2008).

In the context of this study, the antagonism and conflict between different socioeconomic strata in China remains quite prominent. Market reforms in China are a good fit for the country's complex social strata because they encourage people to pursue their own interests and move up the social ladder (Liang 1997). People from different socioeconomic classes have unequal access to social capital, according to the theory of social reproduction. Nine of the study's participants are from working-class or peasant families, with one coming from a civil service family. As a result, their socioeconomic status influences the process of learning English, as well as the amount of time and effort they devote to it. Guanxi (in Chinese), a fundamental concept In Chinese society, it is nearly identical to the concept of social capital in Chinese. For example, guanxi, which literally means "connections and ties," is much more than that, as relationships are not always required to create it. A guanxi is a "adyadic, specific, and emotive tie that has the potential to promote favour transfers between the persons connected by tie" (Bian, 2006, p.312). Alternatively, it can be viewed as a type of social investment or social capital (Butterfield, 1983), which fosters a culture of connections while also providing individuals with easy access to specific resources, increased access to controlled information, credit grants, and protection from external competitors. (Lee, Pae, and Wong, 2001)."Guanxi is highly valued by many Chinese people."One The Chinese saying

"more link gives another path" emphasizes the importance of guanxi. Guanxi is "the informal relationships so vital" for obtaining clearance or access to almost everything in China (Tsang, 1998, p.64). Guanxi and class selection have a significant impact on students' investment in their English education within the context of their school.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As a result of the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, which was held in Beijing in 1978 under the motto 'Practice is the only real criterion to test truth,' "China has undergone rapid economic development and dramatic social reform, achieving significant growth both economically and socially." Socioeconomic disparities and China's strong social-status hierarchy, which arose from a state socialist economy, are posing challenges to the country's economic reform efforts (Bian 2002). China continues to have a dual-structured society, with a clear divide between rural and urban areas.

THE STUDY AIMS

To identify changes in attitudes towards converting English into cultural capital. Their social capital, as well as the evolution of their identities over time and space." Research Questions: • What impact do change identities have on motivation and investment in English learning?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aims to connect individuals' daily lives to the bigger picture. Narratives can help researchers interested in education processes understand the reality and make connections between their experiences and appropriate educational theories and practices. Furthermore, it is a first step toward gaining a better understanding of how participants in the study see their niche (Menezes, 2011) within the changing 'ecology' and their affordances (Gibson, 1986; Tudor, 2003; van Lier, 2004, 2008, 2010) in terms of language learning. and language use - whether in the classroom, outside of class, after graduation, or at work.

It is founded on the social idea that one's life story is a social construct composed of both social facts and one's own personal, experiencing world. Rosenthal (1993) describes narrative inquiry. People's daily activities are shaped by their narrative. Storytelling allows people to establish their own identities and those of others, as well as interpret their understanding of the past, present, and future.

Personal experience is viewed as a storey in narrative inquiry, which is a fundamental and essential method of analyzing and interpreting the world. If you want to study something, you must look at it.

Connelly and Clandinin (2006) describe a narrative inquiry process. This methodology's basic steps can be summarized as: One of the first steps in carrying out a research project is to collect data from participants. The researcher then transcribes and reads the stories. The researcher then (re)creates the stories, keeping the participant's "voice" in mind throughout. Using the first person, past tense, chronological order, and describing the plot, scenes, characters, etc. 6) If possible, provide the narrator's point of view.

Check with participants to see if they have a similar understanding. 7) Narratives are revised, and themes relevant to the research questions are highlighted; The categories and codes for each individual tale are amended with the study supervisor. (or other members of the research group), and a typology is constructed using the categories found in each narrative. Narrative researchers must go beyond simply summarizing or interpreting what a story has to say (see Chadse (2008), Carle (2000), and Connelly & Clandinin (2008)). (1990).

After collecting the participants' personal experiences, I used narrative inquiry to "recreate" their stories in order to better understand them. Researchers and participants have collaborated for a long time, in a specific location, and in social settings. Clondinin and Connelly (2000) present an illustration depicting the creation of milieus through a process in which the researcher and participants interact and discuss together. These stories were included in the analysis of this study.

used to shed light on the intersubjective positionings and perceived 'affordance' of language communities, which were frequently imagined in cases where actual use was unlikely. See Norton (2001).

My research focuses on a group of children from a rural Chinese school and their progress in learning English, specifically. I'm interested in tracing the links between such a trajectory and students' perceptions of current or future access to certain forms of social, cultural, and economic capital, as well as the relationship between investment in English learning and how it's directly and indirectly linked to their changing identities across time and space. Language and identity are intertwined. The main focus of the applied linguistics is a discipline.

Applied linguistics is concerned with the notion that language use is not only a cognitive endeavor, but also an inherently social one. This approach incorporates the concept of identity. As a result of this concept, we are better aware of how and why people use language, how others perceive them as language users, what they are attempting to say, and the resources they are using to do so. As cited by Zotzmann and O'Regan (2016), (p.113)."

DATA ANALYSIS

The researchers concluded that it would be more efficient for them to keep the text exchanges that occurred during the online interviews as text documents rather than capturing and storing the audio from the focus groups and face-to-face.

interviews. They were examined on several occasions and replayed in their entirety throughout the process.

When we replay a discussion after it has already occurred, our ears and brains can miss a surprising amount of information, and our memories may become distorted as a result (Cole & Knowles, 2000).

As a result, the researcher must read and listen to each piece of data several times in order to get a sense of it and choose the most relevant extracts (capital issues, English-related topics).

CONCLUSION

According to the results of my research, each participant began my study with their own unique and individualized conceptions of how learning English will impact their culture. Economic and social capital. Lily, for example, strongly identified with the "imaginary" target group; as a result, she worked hard in school and quickly rose to the top of her class. Serena also anticipated future career opportunities as a result of the English language's "commodification" (albeit hazy). Cherry and Ding's intersubjective positionings of English as potential capital were particularly sophisticated. Cherry's parents and grandparents prioritized her learning English; they relocated the family to a new location so that she could develop a more "obedient student" persona than her peers Lily and Serena, who were motivated to learn on their own. When Ding was in high school, he had an even worse inter subjective positioning: he cared less about English and concentrated on math and hard sciences, believing that they would be more useful to him in the long run.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Despite the researcher's best efforts during the proposed data collection, analysis, and final thesis writing, he recognizes that his study may have inherent limitations and shortcomings. Acknowledgement is important to him, and he sees these as promising areas for future research. First and foremost, the study's length will be a limiting factor. Observation, interviews, and a focus group will take place over the course of eight weeks, and the researcher intends to stay in touch with participants via QQ for over two and a half years. The researcher feels.

REFERENCES

1. Adamson,B.&Morris,P.(1997).TheEnglishcurriculuminthePeople'sRepublic. *ComparativeEducationReview,*41(1),3-26.
2. Adler, Paul S, and Seok-Woo Kwon. (2002). 'Social Capital: Prospects For a New Concept.' *Academy of Management. The Academy of Management Review* 27:17-40.

3. Anagnost, A. (2008). From "class" to "social strata": Grasping the social totality inreform-eraChina.*ThirdWorld Quarterly*,*29*(3),497–519.

4. Anderson,B.(1991).*ImaginedCommunities:Reflectionsontheoriginandspreadofnationalism*.London&NewYork:Verso.

5. Anheier,H.K.,Gerhards,J.&Romo,F.P.(1995).Formsofcapitalandsocialstructurein cultural fields: Examining Bourdieu's social topography. *American Journal ofSociology,100*(4), 859-903.

6. Anyon,J.(1981).Socialclassandschoolknowledge.*CurriculumInquiry*,*11*(1),3– 42.

7. Bamforth, D. (1993). Teaching as marketing. ELT Management (Feb), 2-4.

8. Barton, D., & Hamilton, M. (1998). Local literacies: reading and writing in one community. London: Routledge.

9. Bateson, M.C. (1989). Composing a life. New York: The Atlantic Monthly Press.

10. Bateson, M.C. (1994). Peripheral visions: Learning along the way. New York: Harper-Collins.

11. Berglund, T. (2009). Multimodal student interaction online: an ecological perspective, ReCALL, 21(2), 186-205.

12. Bernstein, B. (1971). On the classification and framing of educational knowledge. In MFD Young (ed). Knowledge and Control: New directions for the sociology of education. London: Collier MacMillan, 47-69.

13. Canagarajah, S. (1999). *Resisting linguistic imperialism in English teaching.* Oxford:OxfordUniversityPress.

14. Cao, L. (2016). The Significance and Practice of General Education in China: TheCase of Tsinghua University. In *Experiences in Liberal Arts and Science EducationfromAmerica,Europe,andAsia*(pp.33-46).PalgraveMacmillanUS.

15. Carspecken, P. (1996). *Critical ethnography in educational research: A theoreticalandpractical guide*.NewYork:Routledge.

16. Cassirer, E. (1944). *An essay on man*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.Cassirer,E.(1953).*Thephilosophyofsymbolicforms,Vol.I*.NewHaven,CT:Yale UniversityPress.

17. Dale, R., Esland, G., & Macdonald, M. (Eds.). (1976). Schooling and capitalism: A sociological reader. London: Routledge/Open University.

18. Darvin, R., & Norton, B. (2015). Identity and a model of investment in applied linguistics. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 35, 36–56.

19. Davies, B. and HarrÈ, R. (1990). Positioning: The Discursive Production of Selves. Theory of Social Behaviour 20(1): 43–63.

20. De Fina, A., Schiffrin, D. & Banberg, M. (eds). (2006) Discourse and identity. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

21. Deng, X. P. (1977), (1978) and (1979). Selections from Deng Xiaoping: 1975-1982. Beijing: People's Education Press.
22. Flick, U, von Kardorff, E & Steinke, I. (2004). What is qualitative research? An introduction to the field. In U. Flick, E. von Kardorff & I. Steinke (eds.) A companion to qualitative research (pp. 1-11). London: Sage Publications. 1-11
23. Flores, N. (2013). The unexamined relationship between neoliberalism and plurilingualism: A cautionary tale. TESOL Quarterly, 47(3), 500-520.
24. Fontana, A. & Frey, J. H. (2003), The interview: From structured questions to negotiated text. In N.K. Denzin, & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.).,Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials, 2nd ed (pp. 645-672). Thousand Oaks: Sage.