

Second Culture Acquisition and Language Development: Cultural Sensitivity as an Individual Difference Factor*

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Choe, Mun-Hong. (2022). Second culture acquisition and language development: Cultural sensitivity as an individual difference factor. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal*, 30(4), 145-167. This paper constitutes an initial part of the research agenda that aims to explore the relationship between individuals' multicultural sensitivity and their acquisition of a second language (L2). In order to lay the groundwork for a systematic inquiry into this complex problem, the present study first reviews previous works on theoretical and empirical validation of the construct of cultural sensitivity. The affective, cognitive, and behavioral correlates of cultural sensitivity that have been identified and discussed in the literature are recapitulated from a perspective of L2 research. Secondly, drawing on a pool of extant instruments to measure individuals' cultural sensitivity, we develop an alternative scale that better fits the goal of subsequent research efforts to investigate the role of cultural sensitivity in L2 acquisition. Lastly, we put forward some research questions that can be tackled effectively by means of the instrument developed here in the context of learning and teaching English as a foreign language.

Key Words: cultural sensitivity, intercultural competence, measurement, language learning, English as a foreign language

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1. Introduction

Culture and its acquisition have not been of central interest in the fields of applied linguistics and second language (L2) acquisition. This seems reasonable given the fact that the rise of modern linguistics, and its ramifications, was possible by the conception of language as a special faculty that is independent of any particular culture. Nonetheless, no one would deny that culture is an integral part of language learning and that not much is known about how it is acquired, especially concerning those who are learning an additional culture and the language spoken in it.

The sociocultural accounts of language learning have been proposed mainly in the frameworks of social constructivism and acculturation theory (for reviews, see Barjesteh & Vaseghi, 2012; Jiang et al., 2009; Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf & Beckett, 2009; Sam & Berry, 2006; Shumann, 1976, 1978, 1990). They have focused on the factors that affect second language learners' attitudes toward the target language and the cultural context in which it is spoken. These factors are thought to be responsible for the variation that individual learners display in their language development and thus provide evidence for the mediation of sociocultural settings in the process of language learning. Among the most extensively studied factors are learner age, perceived social distance, length of sojourn, and motivational type in relation to attained L2 proficiency level.

Although one's ability to acquire another culture is not usually conceived as an individual difference factor in L2 research, the last three decades have seen a growing interest in individuals' intercultural competence as a predictor of their successful acculturation to the target community in the literature of communication, social psychology, business, counseling, nursing, etc. The proponents of intercultural competence hypothesize that individuals vary in their capabilities to recognize and accommodate new cultural patterns, which in turn determine their effectiveness in that culture. This conceptualization of culture acquisition as ability (i.e., part of intelligence) has been formulated and empirically attested in a number of studies (e.g., Bennett, 1986, 1993; Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992; Byram, 2020; Deardorff, 2011; Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003; Ott & Michailova, 2018). It is this gap in L2 research that the present study attempts to fill by looking at the theoretical models and assessment methods of cultural competence in other disciplines and then developing a new tool specified for L2 research.

The primary goal of this and subsequent studies is to determine if individuals vary to a substantial degree in their ability to acquire a new culture and if so, to what extent

individual difference in cultural competence plays a role in L2 development. The present study thus constitutes the first groundwork towards the superordinate goal, providing a research tool to address such questions in a systematic way. The learner population of interest is native Korean-speaking immigrants and study-abroad students at various ages in the United States. An additional goal is to gain an empirical understanding of the challenges that researchers of culture and language acquisition have to undertake when assessing the constructs in question and validating the methods to contribute to the knowledge base of second culture and language acquisition.

2. Background

2.1. The Ability to Learn a Second Culture

To become a competent member in another culture, one needs to be interested in that culture, be capable of noticing cultural differences, and be willing to adjust their behavior to the explicit and implicit norms of the people around them. An oft-cited term that refers to these qualities is (inter-)cultural sensitivity, and it is a hypothetical construct that predicts individuals' successful adaptation to a new culture (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992). One key question drawn out of this hypothesis is, as illustrated by Shumann's (1976, 1978) acculturation-pidginization model, whether, and to what extent, learners' recognition of cultural distance and attitude towards that distance vary, and how far the perceived distance impacts on their L2 development. Another important question is whether their sensitivity to new cultural meanings and practices varies considerably, and if so, such differences in sensitivity correlate with their development in linguistic knowledge. Moreover, do people with more experience in living in the target culture become more sensitive than those who have less experience? Do different types of cultural experience require or lead to different degrees of sensitivity? Do people living in a monocultural society less sensitive and more ethnocentric than those living in the environment where interaction with culturally diverse others is frequent and necessary? In combination, these questions will shed light on the interplay of L2 learners' differential sensitivity to the target culture and their development in L2 ability.

Assessing learners' cultural sensitivity in measurable terms is one of the most difficult challenges in this line of inquiry. One way to measure cultural sensitivity is to determine

whether or not, or how likely, one can recognize cultural differences, empathize with people in the target culture, modify their behavior in various cross-cultural situations, and continue to develop their sensitivity with experience (e.g., Bennett, 1993; Deardorff, 2011; Hammer, 1999; Hammer et al., 2003). There exist a few instruments designed to tap learners' competence responsible for cultural perceptions and interpretations. They consist of such components as recognition of new cultural concepts and practices, interest in intercultural communication, and willingness to put newly acquired cultural experience into practice. Their constructs and items, which do not fit L2 research, will be discussed here in some detail.

In view of applied linguistics, whether it is conceptually akin to innatism, cognitive-interactionism, or sociocultural theory, learning an additional language in practice requires persistent effort to expand, refine, and amend the associations of cultural meanings with linguistic expressions. Since the beginning of scientific research into language acquisition in the mid-twentieth century, when formal explanatory linguistics directed its focus to language learners' internal competence and natural development, L2 learners' interim language, especially those aspects that are deviant from the standard form of the language, has been given a great deal of attention. In particular, the syntactic features and forms that parametrically vary across languages were considered the core of competence that is uniquely linguistic (i.e., not cultural), which cannot be attained fully after a biologically determined sensitive period for development. The realm of research has continued to grow along with the advancements in neighboring disciplines, but the most contentious issues have remained unchanged — the interplay of the first language and culture with individual difference factors involved in learners' construction of L2 knowledge. The early pioneering studies of Dulay and Burt (1974) and Brown (1973) have attested that there are universal developmental phases in children's acquisition of closed-system items, and many consider Krashen's (1982) Monitor Model as the culmination of inquiry into L2 acquisition with a focus on the innate faculty of language.

The following decades saw a surge of quantitative-confirmatory research, yet it did not take long for researchers to turn back to emic approaches to explore the dynamism of interlanguage. Most noteworthy are Schmidt (1983) and Ellis (1992), who demonstrated methodological and interpretive models for the case study of L2 development. Interdisciplinary in nature, the field will continue to face these theoretical and methodological conflicts while seeking to establish a coherent eclecticism therein, but all these notwithstanding, the developmental aspects of L2 acquisition can only be properly

investigated through natural data collected for a sufficient stretch of time.

In tandem with this cognitive-behavioral enterprise, another important perspective was proposed by the acculturation-pidginization model of Schumann (1976, 1978, 1990). He argues that the psychological distance that learners perceive between their native culture and the target culture constrains the quality and amount of input they possibly get. This means that those who feel the distance is great are less likely to conform to the culture, and so their interaction with people in the culture would be limited, resulting in insufficient input for language learning. Therefore, they are more likely to plateau early in a similar way as the process of pidginization.¹⁾

However, this line of argument and research never gets around the problem that it is practically impossible to separate the influence of first culture from the influence of first language. It is self-evident that if one has more in common with the target language community, it will be easier to learn the language. If learners are familiar with the target culture and desire to identify/characterize themselves within it, it will promote their communication with people in the host country, which will in turn facilitate language learning. Likewise, the closer their L1 is to the L2, the easier it will be to communicate, and this will increase the likelihood of successful language learning. What matters is that this intuition cannot be formulated into testable hypotheses unless the influence of first culture is somehow divorced from that of first language. This inseparability of culture and language has led the field to focus mainly on the latter (i.e., interlingual distance), as it is more measurable.²⁾

An intriguing cognitivist view of this interrelationship between culture and language acquisition was proposed by Talmy (2000). He submits that the ability to acquire culture constitutes a module of cognition. That is, it is possibly an innate faculty that has its own characteristic features in development, impairment, and ultimate attainment (commonly referred to as 'nativeness') that are not found in other cognitive systems. In this view, culture acquisition is analogous to language acquisition in that development is not

1) Extending this sociocultural perspective to the relationship with language learners' cognitive mechanisms, Schumann (1990) posits a neurocognitive component (specifically the amygdaloid of the brain which regulates emotion and episodic memory) that plays a mediating role in one's affective and cognitive reactions to second culture and language acquisition. It is uncertain whether he envisioned a cognitive culture system of the sort Talmy (2000) proposed.

2) As is well known, the contrastive analysis hypothesis was the first theoretic approach to second language acquisition, which attributed the emergence and degree of difficulty that L2 learners experience to the similarities and differences between L1 and L2. According to this view, errors mostly occur from the interference of L1 during L2 processing.

characterized by behavioristic mechanisms such as association, reinforcement, trials and errors. One may argue that children acquire a culture in the manner of approaching its adult norm through trials and errors. Under this scenario, they would make more errors in the beginning because of imperfect perception or imitation of the cultural phenomena instantiated in their environment and then gradually refine their ability to understand and reproduce them until it finally reaches the adult norm.

Evidence from language acquisition research testifies against this form of inductive learning. Rather, it suggests that language development unfolds in a sequence of incremental stages that are coherent in and of themselves (Holzman, 1997; Slobin, 1985, 1996). Each stage is characterized by its own grammar that is so consistent to the degree that it is not corrigible by corrective feedback, and the discrete stages arise from children's successive recognition of structural rules (or 'schematic patternings' from the perspective of cognitive linguistics), leading to a global reorganization of their developing grammar in a way that maintains its systemic integrity. Certain aspects of the development that children go through are universal, in part because they are associated with other aspects of cognitive maturity and also in part because they are controlled by an innate faculty. Given these accounts, it will be interesting to see whether culture acquisition proceeds as a continuous convergence to the target norm through errors and corrections or as a succession of coherent conceptual and behavioral structures.

Talmy (2000b) cited the findings of Minoura (1992) as supporting evidence for the existence of a sensitive period for culture acquisition. In her study of study-abroad returnees, she reported that those who returned before adolescence were able to adapt themselves to their native (Japanese) culture again whereas those who returned at a later age could not. Another relevant example is Kordes (1991), in which only about 5% of his students were able to gain an increased level of multicultural competence after years of instructed L2 learning, while over 30% ended up being monocultural. Kramersch (1993) also found that even people who have lived as active participants in another culture often confess the feeling that they do not truly belong to the culture (see also Kramersch, 2014).

The possibility that there is a cognitive module specified for culture acquisition becomes even more intriguing when considered in connection with L2 acquisition. That there is something like a critical period for culture acquisition implies that certain cultural features can only be acquired if they are observable to and put into practice by individuals in an early period of life, with acquisition involving not only one's recognition of cultural phenomena but willingness to respond to and reproduce them. Furthermore, culture

acquisition can be thought to occur on a gradient scale — whether a particular feature is acquired partially or in its full subtlety. Thus, people who encounter new cultural patterns later in life may still be able to interpret and respond to them intellectually, but the new patterns may not affect the way they feel, think, and act at a fundamental level.

This view of culture as part of intelligence is at odds with the sociocultural account of acculturation as essentially a matter of individuals' perceptions. It instead suggests that acculturation, with regards to both its process and outcome, depends in part on individuals' ability to comprehend and produce the cultural patterns at hand. The idea that some delicate features of culture can only be acquired fully within a sensitive period has clear parallels with the case of L1 and L2 acquisition. Language learners who have acquired the linguistic concepts and forms of their first language may be unable to internalize the counterparts in a second language. An example for grammar is English L1 speakers who cannot later internalize the systems of honorifics and object classification in Korean. Although they might be able to produce them from memorized pieces of knowledge, they did not fully internalize them as part of their cognition. Likewise, Korean speakers may never be able to master such culture-specific indexicals as articles and tenses in English.

2.2. Models of Individual Difference in Cultural Sensitivity

In what follows, the existing models and measures of cultural sensitivity are reviewed in some detail, the constructs of which will be employed to develop a modified tool that would better fit L2 research. Through an extensive search of relevant studies, we found that multicultural sensitivity as an individual difference factor has been discussed most productively in the fields of international business and management, and that four models have been widely practiced: cultural intelligence scale (Ang, Rockstuhl, & Tan, 2015; Ang et al., 2007; Earley & Ang, 2003), intercultural sensitivity scale (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992; Chen & Starosta, 1996, 1998; Portalla & Chen, 2010), acculturation scale (Barry, 2001; Berry, 2006), and intercultural development inventory (Hammer, 1999, 2012; Hammer et al., 2003). While the first two emphasize the cognitive and affective aspects of intercultural competence, the latter two take into account its developmental aspects within and across individuals.

First, cultural intelligence is a term mainly used in the fields of employment and management to refer to one's ability to function effectively in a foreign culture (Earley & Ang, 2003). This conceptualization of culture as a special domain of intelligence is rooted in theories of practical intelligence such as social intelligence (Kihlstrom & Cantor, 2000)

and emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 2004).

In their model of cultural intelligence, Earley and Ang (2003) posits four distinct aspects of the ability: metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral. The metacognitive dimension of cultural intelligence is related to how learners consciously reflect on, monitor, and modify their representations of cross-cultural knowledge. For example, items such as “I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from another culture” and “I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions” are used to measure this dimension. The cognitive dimension indicates learners’ knowledge and understanding of cultural differences. Items to measure this dimension contain “I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures” and “I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.” The motivational aspects of cultural intelligence concern learners’ enjoyment and confidence in intercultural interactions. Items such as “I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures” and “I am confident that I can socialize with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me” are used to measure this dimension. Finally, the behavioral dimension concerns one’s ability to modify behaviors in order to meet the norms of the target culture, including such items as “I change my nonverbal behavior when a cross-cultural situation requires it” and “I alter my facial expressions when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.”

In an updated study, Ang et al. (2007) describe cultural intelligence as a factor that causes individual difference in the recognition, appreciation, and reproduction of intricate cultural patterns, which is distinguished from general traits or personality types. In this respect, their model goes along with the cognitivist view of culture as a special endowed faculty. Importantly, however, they are different in the point that the concept of cultural intelligence, as is intended by the authors, is not an innate construct. It is always malleable regardless of age or other maturity factors, something that develops as a function of experience and hence is enhanced by instruction. Through a series of validation studies, Ang et al. (2015) proposed the most recent and economical scale of cultural intelligence. It consisted only of 20 items, 4 to 6 items for each dimension, of which several were mentioned above.

Another term to refer to the virtually same concept as cultural intelligence is ‘intercultural sensitivity’, which is used widely in the field of international business. According to Bhawuk and Brislin (1992), it is defined as one’s open-mindedness toward cultural differences, ability to comprehend unfamiliar cultural patterns, and behave flexibly in various intercultural settings. Chen and Starosta (1996) distinguished between

intercultural awareness and intercultural sensitivity such that the former indicates the cognitive domain of cultural competence whereas the latter indicates one's affects and emotions regarding cultural differences. Thus, their scale of intercultural sensitivity focuses on culture-related affects and emotions, specifically enjoyment, confidence, open-mindedness, positive appreciation, and respect. For example, "I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures", "I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures", and "I respect the values of people from different cultures" are included. In this view, cultural sensitivity is not a cognitive faculty in nature but rather a combination of individuals' affective responses to cultural differences, upon which the other aspects of cultural competence are dependent. This is fairly consistent with Shumann's original version of acculturation model, but is in discord with the cognitivist views of culture acquisition.

The scale developed by Chen and Starosta (1998) consists of 24 items with five constructs: engagement, confidence, enjoyment, attentiveness in intercultural communication, and respect for cultural differences. Despite their successful efforts to validate the scale, it turned out that those four factors' explanatory power was not so high, less than 40% of the observed variance. They also pointed out this fact as a critical limitation of the scale, which implies that there exist other important factors that are not captured by the scale. Another limitation is that its targeted populations and intercultural situations are confined to study-abroad students in a university setting, so it cannot be readily applied to immigrants and other groups of learners.

Both the preceding two models treat cultural sensitivity as individuals' cognitive and affective dispositions toward foreign cultures. The following two models instead attend to its strategic and processual aspects. The view that acculturation is essentially a set of coping strategies (or styles) that individuals adopt in unfamiliar cultural contexts is advocated by Barry (2001) and Berry (2006), among others. This conception of acculturation is similar to Schumann's acculturation-pidginization model in that they both assume cultural adaptation is a matter of individuals' choice and effort, rather than a matter of cognitive (in-)ability. How individuals cope with their transcultural experience and reconcile their cultural identity has been of considerable discussion in the field of counseling psychology. For example, the Suinn-Lew self-identity scale has been widely utilized to assess Asian Americans' acculturation styles and preferences (Suinn, Ahuna, & Khoo, 1992; Suinn, Khoo, & Ahuna, 1995).

A more recent scale was developed by Barry (2001), who criticized the Suinn-Lew

scale for its treatment of acculturation as a unidimensional construct. He correctly points out that one does not acculturate uniformly in all aspects of the target culture. Instead, individuals may adopt different acculturation strategies with respect to particular cultural elements or subcultures. This requires a scale to embrace a broad range of cultural contexts in which an individual may selectively decide to acculturate. In addition, individuals' responses to cultural differences usually fall in four types: separation, marginalization, assimilation, or integration (see Berry, 2006 for a review).

Separation means maintaining one's ethnic identity and native traditions without active interactions with the host culture. Marginalization is an extreme case of isolation whereby one stands apart from both their first and second cultures. Assimilation, on the other hand, refers to dismissing one's ethnic identity and becoming a typical member of the host culture. Integration means formation of multiple cultural identities with which one can feel, think, and act flexibly depending on the given cultural conditions. Based on these assumptions, Barry (2001) designed a scale specifically targeting East Asian immigrants and students in the United States. For example, separation strategies are assessed by means of such items as "My closest friends are Asian", "I feel that Asians treat me as an equal more so than Americans do", and "Asians should not date non-Asians." Items concerning assimilation strategies include "If I were asked to write poetry, I would prefer to write it in English", "I feel that Americans understand me better than Asians do", and "I find it easier to communicate my feelings to Americans than to Asians." Integration and marginalization strategies are assessed by items such as "I feel that both Asians and Americans value me" and "Sometimes I find it hard to trust both Americans and Asians", respectively.

The final model to be discussed here was originally proposed by Bennett (1986, 1993) for employee training programs. Its primary goal was to help culturally insensitive individuals develop a sense of cultural relativism and behavioral skills in intercultural settings. Thus, the model is concerned with the developmental phases individuals undergo from the initial stage of ethnocentrism to the ultimate stage of acknowledging and appreciating cultural differences. This emphasis on within-individual variability, yet still unidimensional, is also well illustrated by his description of multicultural competence as individuals' ability to 'transform' themselves in various cultural contexts. Importantly, an implicit assumption underlying this model is that individuals differ in their culture-related ability to some extent, and therefore not all are able to reach the final stage and may plateau in the midway. Why they stop developing further was not given close attention.

In this developmental perspective, Hammer and Bennett (1998) and Hammer et al. (2003) developed a scale called the intercultural development inventory (for a detailed rationale, see Hammer, 2012). The developmental phases of acculturation are divided into six stages. Each stage indicates a characteristic mindset with its cognitive, affective, behavioral correlates that are itemized for measurement purposes. The first three are ethnocentric, wherein people show a hard-wired tendency to ignore cultural relativity, defend their native culture, and minimize the significance of knowing and appreciating cultural differences. The next three are ethnorelative, which begins with acceptance of different cultures and worldviews. The second stage is adaptation in which learners seek to find opportunities to interact with people in the target culture and to contribute to the community as a member. The third stage is called integration. This stage is characterized as one's formation of an additional identity that accords with the target culture. Reaching this stage, individuals are able to control their multiple cultural identities and function effectively in both their native and non-native cultures.

The intercultural development inventory aims to assess individuals' current developmental phase on the scale of the aforementioned six stages from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. The most recent version consists of 50 statements with a five-point Likert-type scale (see Hammer et al., 2003).

3. Method

3.1. Developing an Initial Pool of Items

Drawing on the foregoing overview of previous theories and measurement tools of cultural sensitivity, we undertook an effort to develop a scale that better fits L2 research, following the guidelines proposed by Devellis and Thorpe (2021). This effort proceeded in two phases. In the first phase, a preliminary version consisting of 79 items was developed. The majority of items in this version were based on those in the previous scales discussed above. In addition, individuals' genuine interest in the target culture and their predispositions to emulate its patterns were emphasized. In the second phase, ethnographic interviews with Korean immigrants and study-abroad students in the United States and an expert panel review were conducted in order to further revise the scale.

The instrument is a self-report questionnaire in which participants give their response by marking an option on a Likert-type scale. Items were initially categorized into four sections:

cognitive, affective, behavioral, and developmental. Based on comments from interviewees and feedback from a group of experts, the items in the developmental section were incorporated into the other three sections, under the assumption that the developmental aspects of culture acquisition are dynamic and strategic capabilities associated with one or another of the three dimensions (e.g., Barry, 2001; Bennett, 1986, 1993).

In the first section, participants are asked to respond to 15 items that probe into their sense of noticing and learning cultural differences, namely the cognitive domain of cultural sensitivity (cognitive sensitivity). In the second section, referred to as affective sensitivity, participants are asked to respond to another set of 17 items that assess their genuine interest, enjoyment, empathy, respect, and sense of belongingness (and their negative counterparts) related to cross-cultural experiences. The third section, which is called behavioral sensitivity, consists of 15 items aiming to measure participants' behavioral assimilation, modification, flexibility, and skillfulness in cross-cultural interactions.

As mentioned before, a large pool of items was derived from the scales reviewed in the last section. The items that directly address language ability as part of cultural sensitivity and those that are not relevant to language learning situations were eliminated. Instead, one's inclination to emulate new cultural patterns and continuous development in the cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of cultural sensitivity as a function of living experience are included in each section. Each section is therefore composed of three layers of sensitivity: basic, elaborate, and developmental, with 4 to 6 items for each layer. For example, the items in the section of cognitive sensitivity were written to capture learners' recognition of cultural differences (elementary or elaborate) and their self-perceived advancement in cultural cognition. The behavioral aspects of cultural sensitivity were considered important because one's cognitive and affective dispositions do not entail that they are willing and capable to behave accordingly in practice. As Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) stress, the ability to modify behavior in various cultural settings is a core component of cultural sensitivity and its measurement.

Items are presented with a 5-point Likert scale: agree, agree somewhat, neutral, disagree somewhat, disagree. Some are given in negative statements, and the scoring is done by summing positive- and reverse-scored items.

3.2. Ethnographic Interviews and an Expert Panel Review

With the initial pool of items generated from research sources, individual semi-

structured interviews were carried out with 35 convenience-sampled Korean adult immigrants ($n=12$), study abroad college students ($n=8$), secondary school students ($n=10$), and children under 10 ($n=5$). They were asked about their cultural experiences, perceptions, problems in the course of adaptation, and interactions with peers in a variety of settings.

A pre-planned set of interview questions was developed to elicit their personal experiences and understandings of cultural difference more efficiently. Each question aimed to stimulate interviewees' tacit recognition of, intrinsic interest in, and behavioral reactions to unfamiliar cultural patterns that they have encountered or observed in the United States. For example, questions such as (a) Do you think you are the same person when living in Korea and when living in the States? (b) When do you feel most obviously there are cultural differences between Korea and the United States? (c) What problems have you experienced in interacting with your peers and the people around you? (d) Do you think there are more similarities than differences between Koreans and Americans? (e) Do you try to understand more about the culture around you? (f) Do you think you know enough to live effectively in the States? (g) Do you want to behave like Americans when interacting with them? What does it mean to you becoming American? (h) Do you ever feel isolated from the group you are in?

The researcher worked together with an expert in intercultural communication to analyze the interviewees' recorded responses. The experiences and observations consistently expressed during the interview and their varying degrees of cultural sensitivity were assessed to revise the initial items. Adult and adolescent interviewees were also asked to check the items for clarity in meaning, applicability of response options, and time taken to complete it. Their feedback was used to delete superfluous items and make revisions in wording. Once the initial version of the scale was completed, we independently reviewed the items again and examined their clarity and comprehensiveness, resulting in a further refinement.

Finally, a panel of six experts in the fields of communication and second language acquisition who were familiar with the process of scale development reviewed the items. They were asked to evaluate the pertinence of the items to the construct of cultural sensitivity and provide their opinions on validity and reliability estimates (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021). The items were sent to each expert with no information about the underlying assumptions and internal structure of the scale. They were asked to grade each item in terms of appropriateness and effectiveness for the measurement of individuals' cultural sensitivity. If they thought a given item could not properly assess the

targeted construct, they checked the option “unclear”. Then, the mean ratings and inter-rater reliability estimates were computed for each item. Those that one or more experts marked as “unclear” and those whose inter-rater agreement was lower than 0.50 were eliminated. This led to a total of 47 items presented below.

4. Results

4.1. A Proposed Model of Cultural Sensitivity for L2 Research

Synthesizing the research sources discussed in section 2, we propose a following model of cultural sensitivity specifically applicable to L2 learning and teaching research.

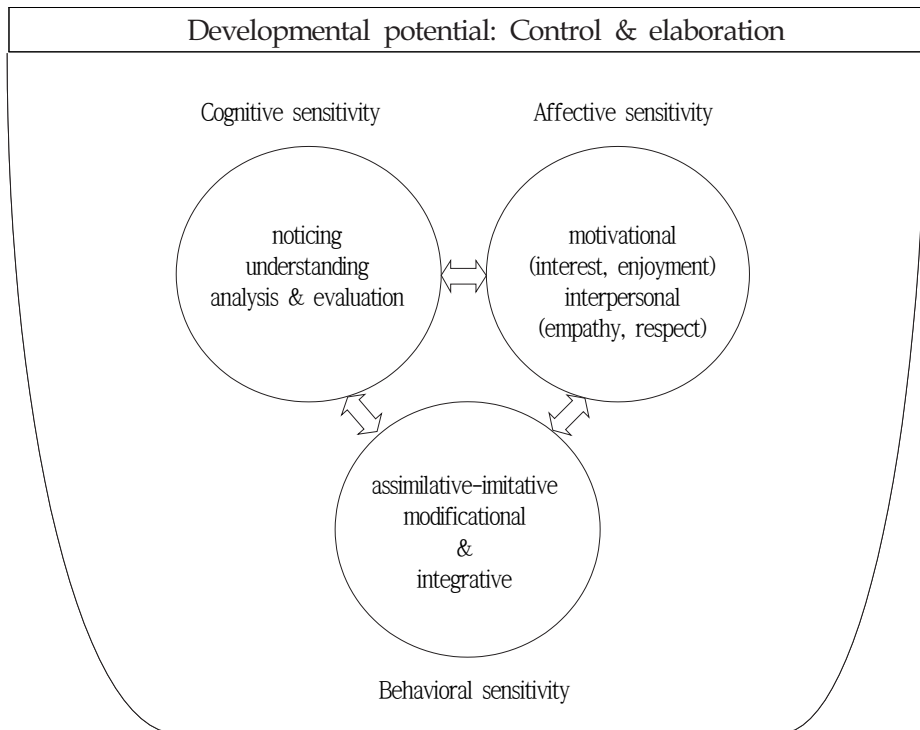


Figure 1. A Model of Cultural Sensitivity for L2 Research

4.2. Cognitive Sensitivity

This domain is associated with learners' cognitive awareness and understanding of cultural differences. It also embraces their ability to analyze and evaluate cultural information. Thus, those who are cognitively sensitive to cultural patterns and differences therein can be described as having the intellectual ability to notice, understand, analyze, and value the patterns, norms, and deviations of the target culture.

Table 1. Items to Measure Cognitive Cultural Sensitivity

Dimension	Cognitive Sensitivity
Knowledge Understanding	I know what Americans like and are happy about. (나는 미국 사람들이 좋아하고 기뻐하는 것들을 알고 있다.)
	I know what Americans don't like and have scruples about. (나는 미국 사람들이 꺼리고 싫어하는 것들을 알고 있다.)
	I know what Americans value and appreciate. (나는 미국 사람들이 중요하게 생각하는 것들을 알고 있다.)
	I know what Americans consider unimportant and don't think much of. (나는 미국 사람들이 대수롭지 않게 생각하는 것들을 알고 있다.)
	I know the etiquette and customs of American life. (나는 미국 사람들의 생활 속 예법과 관습들을 알고 있다.)
	I know the foods and ingredients that Americans enjoy eating. (나는 미국 사람들이 즐겨 먹는 음식과 재료들을 알고 있다.)
	I know the leisure activities that Americans enjoy. (나는 미국 사람들이 즐겨 하는 여가활동들을 알고 있다.)
	I can notice problems and their causes among American people. (나는 미국 사람들 사이에 발생하는 문제 상황들과 그 원인을 눈치챌 수 있다.)
	I can see American people's facial expressions and gestures and understand their inner thoughts. (나는 미국 사람들의 표정과 몸짓을 보고 그들의 속마음을 파악할 수 있다.)
	Development
- I think Americans are narrow-minded and secular. (나는 미국 사람들이 식견이 좁고 세속적이라고 생각한다.)	
- I think our culture is made up of more complex traditions and worldviews than American culture. (나는 우리 문화가 미국 문화보다 더 복잡한 전통과 세계관으로 이뤄져 있다고 생각한다.)	
- While living in the United States, I gradually became able to better understand the way Americans think. (나는 미국에 살면서 점차 미국 사람들의 생각을 더 잘 이해할 수 있게 되었다.)	
- I think Americans live and see the world from a different perspective than we do. (나는 미국 사람들이 우리와는 다른 시각으로 세상을 보고 살고 있다고 생각한다.)	
- I think the values and lifestyles of American people are very diverse. (나는 미국 사람들의 가치관과 삶의 방식이 매우 다양하다고 생각한다.)	

4.3. Affective Sensitivity

This domain of cultural sensitivity comprises one's emotional reactions, attitudes, and interpersonal affects toward the target culture and people living in it. This section of the assessment questionnaire measures learners' motivational emotions such as intrinsic interest and enjoyment, their interpersonal affects such as empathy and respect, and meta-level developmental motives such as self-efficacy and self-regulation. It also includes those prompted with negative counterparts such as shyness, anxiety, and marginalization that L2 learners may feel in the course of cultural adaptation.

Table 2. Items to Measure Affective Cultural Sensitivity

Dimension	Affective Sensitivity
Motivational Affect	- I tend to observe the behavior of Americans closely. (나는 미국 사람들의 행동을 유심히 관찰하는 편이다.)
	- I am uncomfortable and sometimes afraid to communicate with Americans. (나는 미국 사람들과 소통하는 것이 불편하고 때론 두렵다.)
	- I am curious when the minds and actions of the American people are different from mine. (나는 미국 사람들의 마음과 행동이 나와 다를 때 호기심을 느낀다.)
	- Spending time with Americans for no particular reason is useless to me. (특별한 이유 없이 미국 사람들과 보내는 시간은 나에게 무익하다.)
	- I try to avoid embarrassing situations in front of Americans. (나는 미국 사람 앞에서 창피스러울 수 있는 상황은 되도록 피하려고 노력 한다.)
Interpersonal Affect	- I care about how Americans will see or judge me. (나는 미국 사람들이 나를 어떻게 볼지 마음이 쓰인다.)
	- I get intimidated and timid when I am among Americans. (나는 미국 사람들 사이에 있을 때 주눅이 들고 소심해진다.)
	- I want to build deep friendships with friends I made in America. (나는 미국에서 사귄 친구들과 깊은 우정을 쌓고 싶다.)
	- I do not try to deal directly with Americans unless it is unavoidable. (나는 불가피한 상황이 아니면 미국 사람들을 직접 상대하려고 하지 않는다.)
	- Other things being equal, I would rather be with Koreans than Americans. (다른 조건이 같다면 미국 사람들보다 한국 사람들과 함께 있고 싶다.)
	- I can feel the emotions that Americans feel. (나는 미국 사람들이 느끼는 감정들을 같이 느낄 수 있다.)
	- I can read the unintentional emotions and attitudes of Americans toward me. (나는 미국 사람들이 의도치 않게 내비치는 감정과 나에게 대한 태도를 읽을 수 있다.)

Dimension	Affective Sensitivity
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I am an outsider to American society, and I feel I will never be an insider. (나는 미국 사회의 외부인이며 결코 내부인은 될 수 없다고 느낀다.) - I think our culture is better than American culture when it comes to emotions and personal relationships. (나는 정서와 인간관계에 있어서는 우리 문화가 미국 문화보다 더 좋다고 생각한다.) - You can get along with Americans, but it's hard to be true friends. (미국 사람과 친하게 지낼 수는 있지만 진정한 친구가 되기는 어렵다.) - While living in the United States, I gained more confidence and certainty about American people. (나는 미국에서 지내면서 미국 사람들에 대한 확신과 자신감이 생겼다.) - While living in the United States, I gradually began to feel like an American. (나는 미국에서 지내면서 점차 미국 사람처럼 느낄 수 있게 되었다.)

4.4. Behavioral Sensitivity

This section aims to assess learners' intention and actual capability to modify their behaviors in the target culture. Those who are behaviorally sensitive to cultural contexts can be described as having the ability to adjust their behavioral patterns in accordance with the given surroundings. More basic behavioral skills involve assimilative-imitative ones with which learners try to act like a typical member of the culture. At advanced levels, learners are able to control and utilize modificational-integrative strategies to behave effectively, not just compliantly, across various cultural settings. In addition, manifesting culturally appropriate interaction skills is another important component of this domain. Thus, the behavioral dimension of cultural sensitivity includes the ability to emulate the cultural patterns of interest, to modify or integrate behavioral norms with reference to cultural settings, and to manifest behavioral adroitness required for building and managing relationships with people in that culture.

4.5. Developmental Potential

The developmental potential for cultural sensitivity is construed here as one's meta-level ability that is responsible for controlling, elaborating, and hence developing the three dimensions of cultural sensitivity. Therefore, it overarches them and determines one's cultural sensitivity as a whole. Those who are developmentally sensitive are capable

Table 3. Items to Measure Behavioral Cultural Sensitivity

Dimension	Behavioral Sensitivity
Assimilative Imitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I can imitate the expressions and gestures of American people. (나는 미국 사람들의 표정과 몸짓을 따라 할 수 있다.) - I change my tone and behavior when communicating with Americans. (나는 미국 사람과 소통할 때 나의 말투와 행동을 바꾼다.) - I change my clothes and appearance to impress Americans. (나는 미국 사람들에게 잘 보이려고 나의 옷차림과 외모를 바꾼다.) - I want to live in a small town in America where there are no foreigners. (나는 외국인인 없는 미국의 작은 마을에서 한번 살아보고 싶다.) - I avoid situations where I have to face American people alone. (나는 혼자서 미국 사람들을 마주해야만 하는 상황은 되도록 피한다.)
Modification Integrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I do not reveal my true face to Americans. (나는 미국 사람들에게 나의 본모습을 드러내지 않는다.) - When I get caught up in a conflict with Americans, I have the confidence to resolve it. (나는 미국 사람과 갈등을 빚거나 다툼에 휘말렸을 때 잘 풀어낼 자신이 있다.) - While living in the US, I hang out with Americans more often than I do with Koreans. (나는 미국에서 지내면서 한국 사람들보다 미국 사람들과 더 자주 어울린다.) - I can live as a Korean in Korea and as an American in the US. (나는 한국에서는 한국 사람으로, 미국에서는 미국 사람으로 살아갈 수 있다.) - I can live in the US permanently as long as I can get Korean language support when I need it. (나는 필요할 때 한국어 지원만 받을 수 있다면 미국에서 얼마든지 오래 살 수 있다.)
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I still don't know how to relate to and get along with Americans. (나는 미국 사람들과 어떤 관계를 맺고 어떻게 지내야 하는지 여전히 잘 모른다.) - While living in the United States, I have met more and more diverse Americans. (나는 미국에 살면서 갈수록 더 다양한 미국 사람들을 만나게 되었다.) - Living in the United States, I have come to get the information I need mainly from Americans. (나는 미국에 살면서 필요한 정보를 미국 사람들에게서 주로 얻게 되었다.) - I became more and more open-minded about American people. (나는 미국 사람들에 대해 점점 더 열린 마음을 갖게 되었다.) - Living in the US, I have come to feel less stressed out by Americans. (나는 미국에서 지내면서 사람들로 인한 스트레스를 점점 덜 느끼게 되었다.)

of altering their inherent dispositions in order to enhance or counterbalance their competence required for acculturation. They can therefore notice the gaps in their sensitivity and make strategic efforts to reduce them.

5. Conclusion

It is again noteworthy that the concept of cultural sensitivity and its presumed role in language development have not been fully explored in L2 research. Preliminary though it is, this paper opens up a path for future research and provides an initial tool to undertake it with. Of course, the tool should be tested and validated in a more rigorous way through subsequent studies, both qualitative and quantitative. Furthermore, not only the extent to which individuals differ in cultural sensitivity but the extent to which they differ in linguistic sensitivity should be measured to tackle the questions raised here, such as whether L2 learners' cultural sensitivity correlates with their linguistic sensitivity, to what extent one's cultural and linguistic sensitivity interact with each other, and what learner internal and external factors predict their growth or deterioration in cultural sensitivity.

The significance of this research project therefore lies not so much in the line of nature versus culture debate over the language faculty and the universal features of languages in general as in its questioning (and attesting) of the nature of a particular language as cultural semiosis. As mentioned in the beginning, this paper constitutes the first step towards a larger enterprise to probe into the parallelism, independence, and interaction of language and culture acquisition. The hypotheses that there may exist individual differences in multicultural sensitivity and that it influences the process and outcome of learning an L2 have direct bearings on the interface between them. Also, the idea that there is a sensitive period for culture acquisition gives rise to other important questions at a societal level.

One example is to diagnose multicultural students' needs and raise their awareness of cultural sensitivity and acculturation strategies, so that they can become more competent in dealing with intercultural problems. Another possibility that merits further exploration is that individuals' cultural sensitivity varies not only by demographic factors such as age, gender, and length of sojourn, but also by environmental factors such as cultural settings in which they were raised. It seems likely that a monolithic community does not facilitate

its members' cultivation and retention of multicultural sensitivity, which may in turn affect their motivation to learn an additional culture and language. Given this perspective, the type and degree of motivation for learning a second language may not be a purely learner-internal variable but rather a by-product tailored by the cultural context to which the learner has already acculturated.

As modern linguistics has focused on the language faculty as a cognitive system and its universal features across all particular languages, and the field of language teaching and learning has been strongly influenced by this trend, the study of culture and its acquisition has been marginalized into something "non-linguistic" or "extra-linguistic". As implicitly embedded throughout this paper, we suggest that efforts to reformulate the goal and practice of English language teaching in Korea substantiate culture-language integrated approaches. It is also necessary to rethink its primary roles in connection with cultural pluralism and relativity.

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