

The role of imagined community to the subjects' teacher identity construction: A study on twelve EFL teachers in a graduate program in the U.S.



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Abstract

Recently the concept of imagined communities has been used widely to explore the identities constructions of second language users and learners. Using the concept of imagination put forward by Pavlenko (2003) and Simon (1992), this paper explores how EFL teachers from Asia negotiate their imagined communities and the extent to which such negotiation affected their second language identities. The study employed a narrative research of twelve EFL teachers from Indonesia, Thailand, Korea, and Japan who pursue a graduate degree (either M.A. or Ph.D.) in the U.S. The study found that most subjects used early construction of native speaker imagined community as coping strategies when they were in the U.S. The analysis of subjects' narratives showed the significance of classroom readings on bilingualism and nativeness to construct positive identity options for bilinguals. Most importantly the study found that after completing the study, the subjects did not only projected a teacher identity as an agent of change and cultural ambassador for their culture, but also harnessed their imagination to their cultural identity so that they would not be negatively misconstrued in their home countries.

