

Call for Papers

Imagined Communities and Motivation in Language Learning

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The notion of *imagined communities* was originally proposed by Benedict Anderson (1991) to describe the way in which citizens of nations conceptualize their own national communities. Such communities can only be described as imaginary, Anderson argues, “because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (p. 6). More recently, however, the concept of *imagined communities* has been expanded to not only include the imagining of people and communities that actually do exist *in the present*, but also the imagining of social relationships in communities that *might* exist *in the future* – communities imagined both by individuals themselves (e.g., Norton & Kamal, 2003) and communities imagined *for* individuals *by* others, such as parents (Dagenais, 2003) or schools (Kanno, 2003).

Ryan (2006) takes the imagined community concept one step further, proposing that it is a sense of membership in an imagined global community of English users that compels many EFL learners to expend considerable efforts learning the language. Ryan contends that for young people in much of the world today, the English language is increasingly associated not with any particular geographic area or culture, but instead with an international global culture and community – one which, as citizens of the world, they are already legitimate members. This imagined global community of English users concept has since been utilized to frame examinations of L2 personas (Seilhamer, 2013) and English ownership (Seilhamer, 2015).

As Ryan (2006) points out, “The challenge to articulate the imagined is indeed a daunting one” (p. 42), but since it is not only very concrete here and now experiences, but also hopes and dreams for the future, that affect individuals’ identities, affiliations, and investments, the imagined communities concept promises to continue to provide a very fruitful lens with which to view motivation in language learning, probing the link between identity and desire.

For this upcoming issue of *Language, Discourse, & Society*, we thus invite articles that make use of the imagined communities concept (in any of the abovementioned senses) in examinations and discussions of language learning motivation in any context.

Language, Discourse, & Society is an international peer-reviewed journal, focused on advancing sociological knowledge concerning language, face-to-face interaction, and other language-related social phenomena. The objective is to look at language from a sociological and/or a sociolinguistic perspective. This will be taken into account in the selection of articles for this upcoming issue about Imagined Communities and Motivation in Language Learning.

For this special issue, English submissions are preferred, but in line with *Language, Discourse, & Society* policy, French or Spanish submissions will also be considered.

Submit manuscripts to Mark Fifer Seilhamer (mark.seilhamer@nie.edu.sg) by the 1st december 2016.

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Please follow the author guidelines indicated at the following URL, which includes a template for formatting: <http://www.language-and-society.org/journal/instructions.html>

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