Co-constructing the 'Familiar Exotic' in Second Language Learner Discourse

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1. Second Language Acquisition and Nationalism

This study addresses the relationship between Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and nationalism, especially as it pertains to Foreign Language (FL) teaching. For the purposes of this study, nationalism will be understood as a belief in a shared community expanding beyond one's immediate range of experience and is unified under a political regime (Anderson, 1983/2006). As a socially-constructed belief system, nationalism is best understood as an ideology, one which is reinforced and reconstructed in ritualized everyday discourse (Billig, 1995). When using the term 'nationalist ideology', I may be misunderstood as referring exclusively to controversial right-wing organizations which agitate for social change in the direction of returning nations like the United States to its 'rightful owners.' These groups provide interesting insights into nationalism as an ideology but they are not unique in their adherence to its precepts. In our daily participation in communities organized around nationalist ideologies, we are all equally "complicit…in their structures and our reproduction of their propositions and symbolic rituals" (McVeigh, 2004:7).

This understanding of nation-states as socially-constructed, imagined communities (Anderson, 1983/2006) was introduced to the SLA field by Kanno & Norton (2003) in their discussion of imagined communities both internal and external to language classrooms. For Kanno & Norton (2003: 243), no matter whether a particular community is imagined or material, both are 'real' in the minds of learners and directly influence learner investment in the target language. Their theoretical framework posits SLA as a process of learner self re-negotiation as they traverse boundaries of imagined national communities. Coupled with the growing popularity of poststructural treatments of learner identity (McKay & Wong, 1996; Peirce, 1995; Siegal, 1996), the treatment of nation-states as imagined communities paved the way for studies that made explicit associations between nationalism and learner re-negotiation of self (e.g., King & Ganuza, 2005; Kinginger, 2004; Ryan, 2006).

To understand how learners interact with nationalist ideologies, it is first valuable to consider how identity is articulated within a nationalist framework. Both Anderson (1983/2006) and Billig (1995) refer to an international world order where no nation can stand alone: There can be no 'us' without 'them' (Billig, 1995:78). Each nation-state sits in juxtaposition to other nation-states, creating a complex series of self/other binary contrasts. This self/other distinction is in fact fundamental to the articulation of the nation-state (de Cillia, Reisigl, & Wodak, 1999; Petersoo, 2007), and each nation-state relies on this basic distinction in order to identify itself within the larger network of nations.

The articulation of national self/other boundaries has a direct influence on the imagined communities made available to students in FL classrooms. Critical studies have brought attention to the constraining effects nationalist ideologies can have on the sorts of imagined communities in which FL learners are invited to participate. For example, textbooks intended for Japanese as a Foreign Language (JFL) classes have been identified to promote idealized visions of Japanese language communities which do not stand up to empirical study (Matsumoto & Okamoto, 2003; Siegal & Okamoto, 1996). Such studies make the case that textbooks promote normalized nationalist ideologies at the expense of training students for successful interaction within actual target language communities (see also Canagarajah, 1993; Shardakova & Pavlenko, 2005).

In fact, there is sentiment within the field of SLA that nationalist ideologies actually disrupt effective language instruction (McVeigh, 2004; Risager, 2007; Tai, 2003). One implicit goal of most FL programs is the humanistic endeavor to instill in individuals the appreciation of other cultures and the ability to operate across linguistic/cultural boundaries. McVeigh (2004) notes that FL education, when given over uncritically to the nation-state, serves to advance nationalist agendas of inter-national border *maintenance* instead of border *transcendence*. In a similar vein, Tai (2003) and Risager (2007) both challenge foreign language educators to be critical of the nationalist ideologies that, working in their own interests, erase diversity internal to the nation while exaggerating it externally.

It is within these constraints of nationalism that language learners typically find themselves re-negotiating a sense of who they are in relation to larger imagined national communities. When informed by normalized nationalist ideologies, FL classrooms compare language learners against an unreasonable standard, the idealized monolingual native speaker. When language learners do not successfully imitate the native speaker norm, they are judged as deficient in communicative competence or even perhaps lacking in motivation to learn the language. Furthermore, nationalist ideologies which privilege monolingualism over bilingualism and monoculturalism over multiculturalism marginalize language learners to inauthenticity. Due to their multilingual character, they may never be fully accepted into the target national community because they do not match the profile of the idealized monolingual national. On the other hand, in the eyes of their home national community these learners may no longer be seen as authentic ingroup members since they have adopted, at least to some extent, the cultural and linguistic practices of the Other (see Kanno, 2000; King & Ganuza, 2005).

Despite this, there exists a space for multilingual identity. Recent scholarship in SLA has explored the concept of a space for multilinguals that is found between and across

recognized national communities of language and culture. This concept has taken on alternate guises: *third place* (Crozet, Liddicoat, & Lo Bianco, 1999; Kramsch, 1993) and *third spaces* (Gutíerrez, 2005, Kostogriz, 2002). Regardless of the specific terminology, each conceptualizes a space/place where second language learners are liberated from the constraints imposed on them by monolingual/monocultural ideologies. These third spaces/places promote the full employment of learner resources, including the first-language and first-cultural practices, that they bring to the classroom. Such resources can be used in the classroom to lead students to higher levels of meta-awareness about the socially constructed nature of our social worlds and the role that dominant nationalist/linguistic ideologies play in that constructedness. Furthermore, this meta-awareness prompts students to build a critical understanding of the world so that they may become responsible members of increasingly interconnected communities, as has been called for in critical pedagogies (Freire, 1993/1970; May, 1999; Nieto, 2001). Recently Kramsch (2006) has brought the poststructuralist term, 'subjectivity,' together with the concept of the third place. For Kramsch (2006), multilingual subjects occupy a space across linguistic/cultural borders thus affording them multiple semiotic resources of meaning-making. Following Kramsch's lead, I will advance a related term, 'transnational subjectivity,' as it captures the central focus of this study, the intersection of nationalism and second language acquisition, while also giving attention to poststructural notions of human subjectivity.

The purpose of this study is to explore the transnational subjectivity of language learners as it is made salient in learner face-to-face interaction. In order to accomplish this, I brought together three second language learners of Japanese and provided them with a hypothetical task. They were to imagine an upcoming international festival to be held at their American university campus. Their specific role in this hypothetical festival was to design a 'Japan booth' which would represent the nation-state of Japan to the American undergraduate audience. There were no set limits to the materials and objects that they could include in the festival booth. The conversation lasted for roughly 45 minutes and was conducted almost entirely in English, except for the occasional Japanese lexical item. The conversation was videotaped for later qualitative discourse analysis.

Prior to beginning the conversation, I interviewed each participant to gather some basic information about their personal histories. Suzan and Hailey, both pseudonyms, reported that they both grew up in the United States. Hailey had spent several years living in Jordan and Japan respectively. Suzan also had spent several years living in Japan. Both Hailey and Suzan were attending JFL classes at their universities at the time of the recording. Amy, also a pseudonym, brought a different life history. Amy grew up in the People's Republic of China and had arrived in the United States four years prior to the recording. She had been studying Japanese in a formal classroom setting for more than ten years but had never personally visited Japan. At the time of the recording, she was pursuing a graduate degree in Japanese at her university and at the same time was instructing American undergraduate students.

2. Methodology

The methodology adopted for analysis was multi-disciplinary. I began with a critical framework, drawing on van Dijk's socio-cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis. I

incorporated his concepts of social cognition, social representation, and ideology (van Dijk, 1998, 1999), and applied them to my treatment of national identities as national ideologies. Second, I drew on Ochs' discussion of stance-taking (Ochs, 1992, 1999) in discourse and the way those stances index self-positionings of participants in social interaction. Third, I incorporated Bucholtz & Hall's (2003, 2004) poststructuralist treatment of identity and their tactics of intersubjectivity which take identity analysis away from positivistic binaries by specifying the particular practices that make up identity work and locating them along three interrelated continua: *adequation / distinction*; *authentication / denaturalization*; and *authorization / illegitimation*.

Since my analysis involves the identification of nationalist ideologies, it is imperative that I am aware that my own ideological influences and assumptions contribute to the analytical product I have produced. Like Suzan and Hailey, I also grew up in the United States and attended the American public school system where I was socialized, among other places, into the imagined national community of the United States. Furthermore, like Hailey and Suzan, I have spent several years living in Japan and have attended JFL courses. Also, like Hailey and Suzan, I embody a life history that contrasts with that of Amy. Thus, my positioning is similar in many ways to Suzan and Hailey, including my potential positioning to Amy if I were to have actually participated in the conversation. This positioning both aids and constrains my analysis. On the one hand, the similarity that I share with Suzan and Hailey lends my analysis to the native anthropologist's dilemma. On the other hand, my concordance with Suzan and Hailey, I argue, provides me with an advantage in identifying likely connotations and associations left implicit in their discourse behavior.

3. The Co-Construction of the Familiar Exotic

During the course of the recorded conversation, these three second language learners participated in what I am calling the co-construction of the Familiar Exotic. I propose that this process specifically highlights the transnational subjectivity of second language learners, especially when they are caught between two competing monolingual/monocultural nationalist ideologies (e.g., Japan and the United States). In this conversation, first the learners vetted the authenticity (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004) of a series of items proposed to be included in the festival booth to represent Japan. This initial step required inside knowledge of Japanese nationalist ideologies (i.e., how people who self-identify as Japanese understand what it means to be Japanese). Second, the learners determined the adequacy (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004) of each authenticated item to dominant American ideologies. Not all authenticated items were in turn adequated. In other words, some items were determined to be 'too authentic' for an American audience and were not included in the final booth product. This second step required a meta-awareness of American nationalist ideologies and the ability to compare them against their Japanese counterparts. Also, this second step featured the learners' distancing moves from the American audiences for whom they were preparing the booth. Most importantly, this ability to manipulate the Other (authenticating and adequating) is a central feature of the co-construction of the Familiar Exotic and is indicative of the learners' transnational positioning.

The co-construction of the Familiar Exotic is more complex than simple stereotyping or a straightforward construction of the Other primarily because of what these learners did with the stereotypes they were evoking. Drawing on their awareness of nationalist imaginings across competing discourse communities, these learners were able to manipulate the Other in order to construct a specific exotic product, one which was explicitly denaturalized locally but adequated to dominant American ideologies circulating at macro-societal levels. Additionally, the learners co-constructed the Familiar Exotic not from an established positioning within an ingroup community, but from a liminal position in between and across the psychological boundaries of national self/other. Their liminal positioning afforded them the ability to work as cultural brokers, manipulating the representations that one group sees of the other.

4. Discourse Analysis

Over the course of 45 minutes, the group considered a range of possible items to include in the booth. The majority were authenticated and ratified for inclusion. In total seventeen topics are authenticated. Examples included *cherry blossoms, Mt. Fuji, kimono, origami, swords, animation, Japanese food, sumo wrestling, Japanese traditional music*, among others. In contrast, three topics were denaturalized and not included in the booth product. Those items were *SMAP (musical pop group), Tokyo Disneyland, inflatable Sumo wrestling suit*. While the majority of topics were authenticated by the group, my discussion of the Familiar Exotic necessitates a close look at those items that were instead denaturalized.

4.1 Step One: Authentication / Denaturalization

The excerpt below immediately follows a group decision to authenticate sumo as a topic to include in the Japan booth. However, Hailey suggests the group also include the sumo play costume. This induces some repair work as Amy is not familiar with the costume.

Example One

(1)	Hailey:	So you're on, part of it is too is just the goofiness of it of like you're in a costume that doesn't fit you..and then you're on like an air mattress essentially
(2)	Amy:	Oh, I see
(3)	Suzan:	I think that might be too much of an American version of a Japanese thing..then right? So
(4)	Hailey:	Yeah <nodding head>

Suzan and Hailey conclude their explanation of the sumo play costume (line 1) to Amy who then gives uptake (Pomerantz, 1984) in line 2. Suzan then remarks that the sumo play costume is not authentically Japanese but an American imitation of the Japanese sumo topic (line 3). Also notable is Suzan's maintaining the floor and filling in

the turn-slots for her two interlocutors in line 3 (*then, right? So*). This action forces agreement and Hailey obliges. Later in the recorded conversation, an additional topic, *Tokyo Disneyland*, was denaturalized for similar reasons: an American version of a Japanese thing.

In Example One, Suzan and Hailey first construct, in relation to Amy, a shared epistemological stance (Ochs 1992) indexing an insider position to the American audience (in that they are able to identify the play sumo costume). Similarly, in lines 3 and 4 they extend their epistemological stance to additionally index an insider position to the Japanese community in the way that they are able to distinguish 'authentic' Japan from an American imitation. Hailey provides uptake to Suzan's statement in line 3, thus forming a shared alignment between the two. Their ability to determine authenticity/inauthenticity rests entirely on their ability to make propositions about two national communities and to have those propositions ratified locally.

4.2 Step Two: Adequation / Distinction

The second step to the co-construction of the Familiar Exotic is adequation. Each authenticated item was further considered for adequacy/distinctiveness to the imagined American worldview. Many items were both authenticated and adequated by the group. On the other hand, a select number of items were authenticated but rendered distinct, and therefore, inappropriate for the Japan booth. In other words, some items were determined to be 'too' authentically Japanese for the American audience. I argue that this practice of manipulating the national Other for display is a product of these learners' transnational positioning. This adequation process will be brought to the fore reflexively by highlighting those incidents when an item was deemed in-adequate, or distinct, from dominant American ideologies.

In Example Two, certain food items such as natto, umeboshi, and takoyaki are initially authenticated by the group but then immediately made distinct to the imagined American audience. As the former items are deemed distinct from the schema that makes up American ideologies, the group settles instead on two alternative food items: sashimi and noodles. From the local perspective of these learners, these two food items are more recognizable as 'Japanese food' by the American audience.

Example Two

(1)   Hailey: food goes over well with students

(2)   ⌐Amy: <laugh>
(3)   └Suzan: <laugh>

(4)   Hailey: like free food that would work what would we I I think we
                      should make them try ume

(5)   Suzan: I was thinking takoyaki just because the shape is so unique and
                      and octopus is such a unique ingredient

(6)   Hailey: That would be fun I vote for ume

(7)   Suzan: umeboshi!

(8)   Hailey: and natto!

(9)   Suzan: but those are things nobody would get

(10)   Hailey: but it'd be fun to have them just to see it well you know to
                    obviously y'know sashimi or noodles or y'know

Suzan and Hailey initially authenticate the food items they mention in lines 4-8 (takoyaki, umeboshi, and natto) and provide enthusiastic upgrades (Pomerantz, 1984) to one another. This series of turns encompasses the first step of the Familiar Exotic co-construction: authentication. However, at line 9, Suzan initiates the second step of adequation. She remarks that the items they decided on were too Japanese for the American audience and unrecognizable to them. In line 10, Hailey accepts Suzan's rejection hinting at disagreement but maintaining the conventional preference for agreement. For example, Hailey switches to subjunctive mood in line 10 (*it'd be* fun) in contradistinction to Suzan's indicative mood in line 9 (those *are* things). Furthermore, Hailey begins her agreement turn with the contrastive 'but' (starting a rebuttal) but does not carry through. In line 10, she uses hedges three times (you know, y'know, y'know) to mediate her constrained agreement to Suzan's assertion. Nevertheless, she provides two more familiar items (sashimi, noodles) showing alignment (restrained as it is) to Suzan's assertion. In the end, the American audience is to receive the familiar exotic, those food items familiar to them as being Japanese.

A similar exchange occurred during a discussion of the topic of kimono. In Example Three, the group has just authenticated kimono as an object to include in the Japan booth. However, the group next must confront the fact that there are various styles of kimono depending on the occasion, time of year, and age of the individual.

Example Three

(1)   Hailey: Yeah but they don't always wear kimono like the summer

(2)   Suzan: Yukata?

(3)   Hailey: Yukata isn't the same

(4)   Amy: I think I think there are a lot of different kinds of kimono

(5)   Suzan: For example the yukata

(6)   Amy: Yukata is one kind of that and also the year…there is the
                    seijinshiki <looking up> I don't know how you say it in…Japa
                    in English It's kind of like when people…uh, become twenty?

(7)   ⌐Hailey: Yeah ⌐
(8)   ⌊Suzan: Yeah ⌋

(9)   Suzan: The coming of age day

(10)   Amy: Uh huh so I think we can just pick some

(11)   Hailey: Different styles?

(12)   Suzan: I don't think that a western eye would be able to tell the difference

(13)   Amy: Yes…I think so

In Example Three, the group focuses on the topic of kimono distinctions. Suzan indicates her knowledge of kimono complexities by providing the group a specific lexical item (*yukata*) not only once (line 2) but twice (line 5). Amy uptakes Suzan's lexical item and attempts to also establish an insider epistemological stance by speaking of not only the kimono/yukata distinction but of the many different kinds of kimono (line 6). She narrows in on a special occasion, *seijinshiki* (line 6), for which Suzan (line 9) provides the conventional English gloss (*Coming of Age Day*). Amy continues forward and co-constructs with Hailey a suggestion to present the audience with a variety of kimono styles (lines 10-11). After this authentication practice and the shared ratification of the complex imagery associated with kimono, Suzan rejects adequation (line 12). She declares that a 'western eye' would not be able to tell the difference. Amy gives uptake in line 13.

It must be stressed that these learners are in fact constructing these stereotypes from a particular stance. In this excerpt, the participants are distancing themselves from the very American audience for whom they are constructing this product. Thus, the authentic complexity of the kimono remains a privileged local object while the less-authentic alternative is put on display for the American audience. In Example Three, Suzan establishes an epistemological stance indexing an insider's perspective to Japan in that she can tell the difference between the different styles of kimono dress (lines 2, 5, 9). Then immediately, she juxtapositions her epistemological stance against the imagined ignorant American audience in line 12. While her utterance in line 12 (*I don't think that a western eye would be able to tell the difference)* alone does not necessarily suggest that Suzan is constructing a distancing move, the turn sequencing leading up to that statement does. Recall that she establishes an insider's stance to Japan in lines 2, 5, and 9. Furthermore, it is not only Suzan, but her fellow interlocutors who participate in this distancing move. Both Hailey and Amy contribute to the group's insider stance to Japan Note that Hailey initiates the sequence on kimono complexity (line 1), and she establishes her knowledge of the yukata in line 3. Likewise, Amy states that there are many different kinds of kimono (line 4) and elaborates on her knowledge of Japan by evoking an event particularly associated with kimono dress, the *Coming of Age Day* (line 6). Nevertheless, she provides uptake (line 13) to Suzan's assertion that the complexity of the kimono is inappropriate for the American audience.

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Suzan's and Hailey's distancing moves in Example Three are of particular interest because they distance themselves from the American audience, an imagined group with which both conventionally identify. This desire to establish distance between self and an otherwise ingroup has been documented in Mallinson & Brewster (2005). In their study of white restaurant workers, they found the workers employing mitigating discursal moves typical of racist speech (e.g., I'm not a racist, but…) when categorizing African Americans. However, when speaking of white 'Bubbas' (rural residents), the same white workers were very explicit in their pejorative stance, evoking a clear distance between themselves and their 'Bubba' patrons. I argue that Hailey and Suzan in this conversation carry out a distancing move for similar reasons to the white workers in Mallinson & Brewster's study. While they may be conventionally identified as 'American,' they make very clear in this exchange (especially Suzan) that they are not to be identified with *those* Americans in their audience.

4.4 Social Cognition and Ideology

In the above examples, I demonstrated the speakers' engagement in the two-step process of co-constructing the Familiar Exotic. While the majority of items were authenticated and adequated, the instances when items were denaturalized or made distinctive were most revealing for the purposes of this analysis. This is because looking at instances when items were dismissed allows us to see the boundaries of this group's local categorization schema. I propose that these learners evoked dominant ideologies, or understandings of the national self, in order to carry out authentication and adequation work. For van Dijk (1999: 18), ideologies are "systems of principles that organize social cognitions…[that] mentally represent the basic social characteristics of a group." Furthermore, social ideologies and social identities collapse into one another because defining the boundaries of a group is at the same time establishing the rationale for its very existence (van Dijk, 1998: 118).

Due to their dual existence at individual and collective levels simultaneously (van Dijk, 1998: 118), nationalist ideologies are best understood as entailing countless variations and interpretations. This is because the actual interpretation of what it means to be 'American' varies by individual, by local community, and even by context. In order to reflect this variation and to make room for multiple interpretations, it is more accurate to refer to American nationalist *ideologies*, for example, in the plural. When I identify American ideologies that these speakers refer to, I must be very clear that I am interpreting their interpretation of American ideologies. To claim that they (or I) have a privileged link to *the* American ideology would be unfounded and unwise.

Precisely, what is the dominant imagery that these learners are orienting towards in order to co-create the Familiar Exotic? Let us consider each discourse example in turn. In Example One, the group determined that sumo wrestling was authentically Japanese but denaturalized the sumo play costume. Thus, the group settled on a specific image of the sumo wrestling item, one which privileges historical contiguity deep into the past over a plastic costume presumably employed for humorous occasions. In Example Two, a series of food items was authenticated but immediately made distinct from the imagined American audience (*something nobody would get*). Rather than include the items originally authenticated, the group compromised and included more recognizable items

such as sashimi and noodles. Finally in Example Three, the group authenticated the various versions of the kimono but determined in the end that such complexity was not necessary (*a Western eye wouldn't be able to tell the difference*). That is, it is best to provide a generic and familiar image to the American audience.

The images we then extract from these examples are the following: sumo wrestling attached to symbols of the past, exotic but familiar food items, and a generic and familiar image of the kimono. How did the group come to adequate these images to their imagined American audience? Exhaustively investigating the links between the images conjured up by this group and images circulating in general discourse within American discourse communities would reach far beyond the scope of this paper. However, I will draw on some limited evidence of this sort of imagery circulating in American media outlets. Hill (2002) conducted an analysis of *New York Times* articles and their treatment of Japan in their news reporting. What she found was a systematic association of Japan with a dual identity as both modern and traditional at the same time. For example, even when a reported topic was clearly of contemporary relevance, the writers made a point of linking the topic under discussion to some traditional Japanese cultural practice (Hill, 2002: 139-140). This portrayal of Japan (of being 'stuck' in the past) of course is played against depictions of a thoroughly modern American nation. Such binary distinctions serve as convenient distinction-making devices that organize social representations into coherent national ideologies and are then drawn upon in everyday discourse.

5. Discussion

This analysis of the co-construction of the Familiar Exotic is intended to highlight the transnational subjectivity of second language learners. The task which these three learners engaged in provided them with the context in which they could exercise their transnational positioning. They did not position themselves within the Japanese national imagined community, but at the same time they made very clear their distance from the American one. From this liminal positioning between these two national imagined communities, these learners were able to manipulate images of the Other and fine-tune them to their American audience. Their co-construction process followed two clear steps. First, each item was either authenticated or denaturalized. Second, each authenticated item was further scrutinized for adequacy to the dominant American ideologies. As demonstrated in Examples Two and Three, some items were determined to be too authentic for the American audience and not adequate to generally-held understandings of Japan vis-à-vis America. Thus, I interpret the second language learners in the case of Examples Two and Three as reserving authenticity for their local group while establishing an inauthentic product for the American audience. Tongue in cheek, the learners became brokers in cultural *inauthenticity*. I suggest that the ability to highlight and to manipulate national imaginings (or stereotypes) is a unique feature of second language learners because their transnational positioning affords them access to multiple ideological discourses and the ability to manipulate them in ways that monocultural/monolinguals cannot.

This analysis is of course subject to a number of limitations. It consists of a single conversation of 45 minutes between three second language learners. Further analysis of their conversation would require triangulation procedures such as follow-up interviews, repeating the task in a different context, and/or conducting longitudinal analysis of a single

speakers' discourse over time. Further exploration of the co-construction process requires, at the very least, repetitions of the international festival task with a variety of speakers in a variety of contexts. This includes collection of discourse at multiple sites such as classrooms in order to more closely document the circulation of nationalist ideologies and learners' mediation of the central self/other propositions making up those ideologies.

Finally, in the name of reflexivity, I must remark that my ideologies and my experiences (due to their similarities to that of Suzan and Hailey) without question flavored my interpretation of their analysis. An analyst with no experience with Japan or who is not a second language speaker of any language might have interpreted the data differently. My understanding of how Americans understand themselves (American ideologies) as well as my critical awareness of nationalist ideologies in general, also, for better or for worse, heightens my sensitivity to their activation in discourse.

6. Conclusions: Implications for Pedagogy

By drawing attention to the co-construction of the Familiar Exotic, I advocate a reconceptualization of conventional endpoint targets of FL instruction. The endpoint of FL instruction should not be a close impersonation of an idealized monolingual native speaker of the target language but instead a competent multilingual who is comfortable operating within and between national communities. Second language learners are by definition multilingual and multicultural. They should be recognized as such and provided with space in which they may exercise their transnational subjectivity. FL classrooms which draw uncritically on nationalist ideologies only serve to replicate them. This is unfortunate as nationalist ideologies thrive on border-maintenance, not border-reduction. Additionally, nationalist ideologies which hold the idealized monolingual and monocultural as the most authentic, when applied to language instruction, effectively sideline the second language learner to perpetual second-class status. Placed between two nationalist ideologies which both espouse monolingualism/multiculturalism, second language learners find themselves stuck in the middle, in a liminal state and no longer a full-fledged member of either national community.

We need a reflexive pedagogy that does not surrender FL teaching to nationalist ideologies. This entails new positionings of students in our classrooms and a re-consideration of what target models we evaluate our students against. We need to liberate students from subconsciously (or consciously) replicating nationalist ideologies in their language learning practices. One viable alternative appears to be Risager's (2007) *Transnational Paradigm*. The strengths of this approach include removing the authority of nation-states to define the boundaries of language communities. Thus, students are opened to diverse transnational language learning experiences. Furthermore, students are encouraged to develop critical awareness of nationalist ideologies and their influence on daily practice and perceptions. To this end, the co-construction of the Familiar Exotic may be incorporated to the FL classroom as an awareness-raising activity. Students could engage in the type of task videotaped for this analysis and then discuss their product afterwards, bringing to the surface the distinction-making devices of nationalist ideologies. They might also consider the same product but constructed from a variety of perspectives. The purpose behind such activities is to help language learners to develop an

understanding of their transnational positioning and subjectivity within local and global imagined communities.

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