Abstract
This article focuses on authenticity of second language identity which has been at issue. Previous research of the authenticity of second language identity has revealed that second language identity may be inauthentic due to the impact from social context and the individual’s competence and desires. The discussion in this article aims at exploring causes for the possible inauthenticity of second language identity further. The discussion is carried out in a theoretical framework consisting of Sociocultural Identity Theory of Second Language Learning and Identity Theory. It is revealed that besides individual learners’ insufficient second language proficiency to support their free expression, contributive factors include: their possible disadvantageous position in power relations in a second language context, the lack of immediate and realistic social context, and the possible imagined membership in the target language community in a foreign language context. Based on the discussion, suggestions are made for second language teaching and learning practice.

Keywords
authenticity, second language, identity verification, imagined identity, emotions

Introduction
Authenticity has been a focus for various fields of humanity and social science, such as philosophy, psychology, and political study. For example, it has received attention from Existentialism, the well-known school of modern philosophy and empirical research efforts of psychology have produced concrete measurements of it and have confirmed its connection with humans’ well-being (Sutton, 2020); whether authenticity is unrealistic in political discourse has been a controversy for academic debate (Jones, 2016). In general, authenticity is defined as true expression of self (Jones, 2016; Smirnova, 2016; Sutton, 2020). In recent decades, fresh research interest in the relationship between authenticity and language has emerged. The argument that authenticity is related to language is supported by previous studies. The issue how much authentic the expression of self in a second language has been addressed (e.g., Cutler, 2003; Gu, 2008; Horwitz, 2009; Palmer, 2007; Wang, 2018). This article aims at joining the discussion of this issue and offering interpretations of possible inauthentic expression of self in second language. The main message of this article is that the expression of self in a second language (second language identity), may be inauthentic. Possible causes will be explored within the theoretical framework consisting of Sociocultural Identity Theory of Second Language Learning and Identity Theory. Implications for second language teaching and learning will be provided, based on the discussion with support from my previous empirical study findings.

Authenticity of Second Language Identity

Authenticity of Second Language Identity in an Immigration Context

“[T]he determining factor in whether a person lives authentically is that the life lived be what the person wants and chooses” (Beethler, 1990, p. 39). As Kramsch (2012) pointed out, many multilingual speakers have had the experiences that trigger their feeling of “imposture” just as what Eva Hoffman described in her Lost in Translation (1989); those experiences reveal the issue of authenticity and legitimacy in association with second language learning, bilingualism, and globalization. The issue tends to be salient in the experiences of immigrants who make up of a distinct group of second language speakers. The obvious and decisive force

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in immigrants’ life is the complete change in the living environment. In other words, the social context is changed. Social context has been emphasized as important impact on authenticity. As Erickson (1995) stressed, in postmodern era of more fluidity, context should be taken into consideration when authenticity was addressed concerning “self.” Also, Pennycook (2007) emphasized that, adopting Taylor’s (1991) view of authenticity, “authenticity cannot be defined without relation to social contexts.” (p. 103). The dramatic change in the immediate social context for immigrants may bring challenges to their true expression of self. One of the challenges is rooted in the loss of “cultural capital.” As Roberts and Cooke (2009) mentioned, immigrants may be confronted with loss of “cultural capital” when they had to learn to express themselves in a second language and they would have the difficulty in expressing themselves in an “authentic voice.” Roberts and Cooke’s (2009) argument corresponds with Harder’s (1980) observation that second language learners might experience reduction of their roles in interactions in their second language and an important reason is that they have limited access to conventions of that language.

Besides the loss of “cultural capital” and the corresponding reduction of roles in interactions, the host society’s attitudes may pose challenge to the immigrant second language learners’ construction of identity. Palmer’s (2007) investigation of the identity construction of Korean-born Korean American high school students offers an example. His investigation revealed the tension between Korean-born Korean American high school students and their American-born Korean American peers in their attempts to justify their authentic identity as Koreans and Americans. The former group viewed the latter as “sell-outs” of Koreans while the latter group saw the former as foreigners to Americans. Even though those American-born Korean American students share the ethnic origin with the Korean-born Korean American students, as they were born and brought up in the host country, their attitudes represent the attitudes of the host society in general. That they considered the Korean-born Korean American students as foreigners indicates that it may be difficult for those students to get support from the host society for their construction of an American identity. They are not considered “real” Americans.

**Authenticity of Second Language Identity in a Non-Immigration Context**

The issue of authenticity of identity confronts second language learners in a non-immigration second language learning context as well. Different from the immigrant second language learners, the non-immigrant second language learners do not suffer from the loss of “cultural capital” which is associated with their first language; instead, their first language and cultural, ethnic origins are considered a “standard” to evaluate the authenticity of second language identity. An example is provided by Cutler’s (2003) study of the identity construction of white middle-class youngster hip-hoppers in New York City. As is introduced in the study, an authentic hip-hopper identity is usually understood as both being associated with real places such as the ghettos, the streets, and the African American community and being associated with whether one was true to who s/he is. In order to construct a “real” hip-hopper identity, those white middle-class youngsters turned to African American English (AAE) which was considered a cultural index to Hip-Hop. To those white young hip-hoppers in this study, AAE is a language/variety that is used by a community coexisting with theirs in the same society. It is a second language to them. As was found in the study, too much adoption of the use of AAE made them appear less “real” to who they really were (i.e., white middle-class young people). This example of study proves what Henze and Davis (1999) has said, “. . . authenticity implies a standard” (p. 14). Authenticity of second language identity in a non-immigrant context is concerned with the first language identity as a standard.

**Authenticity of Second Language Identity in a Foreign Language Learning Context**

In a foreign language learning context, authenticity of identity is also a concern. Horwitz (2009) proposed “Authentic Self-Presentation via the L2” as the answer to the question of full competence in a second language (p. 59). By “Authentic Self-Presentation via the L2,” Horwitz means if a second language speaker is fully competent, s/he should be able to show the same characteristics as s/he does in his or her first language. In Wang’s (2018) study, the subjects—Chinese postgraduate students majoring in English Language, Literature, and Culture, reported that they did not feel authentic trying to express their characteristics in English as a foreign language. In Gu’s (2008) study of the investment in learning English, the subjects—three Chinese female undergraduates, reported emotional conflicts while participating in two communities, namely “a Chinese educated urban community” and “an English speaking Christian community.” The subjects felt motivated to participate in the communities by symbolic resources (e.g., an identity they desired). But one subject reflected that her participation in the English-speaking Christian community and even religious conversion had less to do with religious belief, but was rather encouraged by her desire to become a “legitimate” user of English and to gain an identity modeled by white middle-class women. What she realized through reflection made her suffer from inner struggles, feeling herself being “purposeful.” These research findings seem to show that in the foreign language context, competence of the foreign language and even desires of the “individual” are highlighted. This echoes arguments about the role played by
the individual in authenticity of identity, such as Jaffe (1993)’s argument that authentic identity is connected with individual competence. Jaffe’s interpretation of authenticity echoes one of Handler’s (1986) presuppositions that “... authenticity is a cultural construct closely tied to Western notions of the individual” (p. 2). Also, Pierce (2015) argued that individual authenticity and collective authenticity should not be viewed as in conflict but be conceived “based upon the intersubjective relation of trust” (p. 436).

Based on the review of previous research literature, my conception of authenticity of second language identity is that it is an issue whether a person can satisfactorily express his/her self in a second language. My argument corresponds with the worrisome conclusion drawn in previous research that second language identity may be inauthentic due to the impact from social context and the individual’s competence and desires. The rest of this article will focus on exploring the possible causes of inauthentic second language identity. The discussion will mainly involve notions of Sociocultural Identity Theory of Second Language Learning and Identity Theory. I maintain that none of the two theories is considered sufficient for the discussion. Therefore, it is necessary to build the theoretical framework prior to the discussion, with some important notions of the two theories: right to speak, imagined identity and identity verification.

Theoretical Framework for Discussion

The Sociocultural Identity Theory of Second Language Learning

The right to speak. The Sociocultural Identity Theory of Second Language Learning is established on Peirce’s (1995) Social Identity Theory of Second Language Learning. Theorically grounded in poststructuralist thoughts and empirically based on her study of immigrant women’s second language learning and identity in Canada, Peirce (1995) conceptualized social identity as “multiple, [being] a site of struggle, and changing over time.” Social identity is viewed as being changeable, constructible, and multidimensional rather than being a static and simple label given to a person by order of his/her birth. Besides the conceptualization of social identity, Peirce addressed the issue of “right to speak” in her theory. Peirce argued that it was not appropriate to regard second language speakers who may fail to seize opportunities to communicate with native speakers as fully responsible because they may have no “right to speak” because of power relations in the learning context.

The imagined identity. Peirce’s (1995) Social Identity Theory of Second Language Learning was widely cited in later studies. As the research interest in social identity and second language learning growing, more concepts were added into the theoretical framework and major research themes emerged. “Identity and imagined communities” makes one of the four research themes that Norton (2006a, 2006b) identified, the other three being “identity and investment,” “identity categories and educational change,” and “identity and literacy.”

The imagined community derived from Anderson’s (1991) definition of the nation:

[It] is an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined 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. 15)

An imagined community is the “groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination” (Kanno & Norton, 2003, p. 241). The notion is considered to give space for “exploration of creativity, hope and desire in identity construction” (Kanno & Norton, 2003, p. 248). As Norton (2001, p. 166) argued, “[a] learner’s imagined community invite[s] an imagined identity, and a learner’s investment in the target language must be understood within this context.”

Imagined community and imagined identity were incorporated in previous studies of second language education. In a study of policies and practice for bilingual students in four schools in Japan, Kanno (2003) argued that students’ identity and future possible social positioning could be influenced by the envisioning of an imagined community shown in school policy and teaching practice based on the finding that English was the dominant language in the school of privileged “western” children or Japanese children of international marriages and rich multilingual materials were offered to students there; however, the claimed bilingual education was not truly in practice at the school for socially economically disadvantaged children. Pavlenko and Norton (2007) thought that the association of English with some imagined community will have influence on language policies, learners’ attitudes, and behavior. For example, as they pointed out, in postcolonial contexts, whether seeing English as a colonist/imperialist language to denounce or taking a neutral stance might influence the language policies and attitudes toward English learning.

As the impact of imagination is clear concerning identity and second language education, the worry about over-imagi- nation emerged. Dagenais (2003) studied immigrant parents’ opinion about their choice to enroll their children in a French immersion education program in Vancouver, Canada, and pointed out that the nature of an imagined identity could be fantasizing as it was very distant from the unsatisfactory reality for immigrants. And, as a result, investment in an imagined identity may not have the reward as it is expected. Norton and Kamal (2003) revealed unrealistic opinions on literacy and English in their study of Pakistani middle-school students. Their subjects considered literacy helpful to reduce the gap between their country and the developed countries
and English made it possible for them to get access to modern sciences and technology. Norton and Kamal expressed the worry that “students might overestimate the benefits that can accrue from the development of literacy and the spread of English” (p. 314).

The Identity Theory: Identity Verification

Identity Theory claims its theoretical foundation in Symbolic Interactionism and Perceptual Control Theory, George Herbert Mead’s and William T. Powers’ work in particular (Burke & Stets, 2009). In Identity Theory, identity is defined as “the set of meanings that define who one is when one is an occupant of a particular role in society, a member of a particular group, or claims particular characteristics that identify him or her as a unique person” (p. 3). Correspondingly, identities are categorized into role identities, social identities, and person identities.

Identity Theory distinguishes itself from many other theories of identity with its sophisticated system of identity verification. According to Burke and Stets (2009), identity verification is a result of identity operation in a control system. The control system consists of four basic components: the input, the identity standard, the comparator, and the output. The input is a person’s perception of an identity that s/he bears in a situation; it is compared to the identity standard which is a set of meanings defining an identity in socio-cultural contexts; if the input is different from the identity standard, the comparator will produce an error signal based on which the person who bears the identity will adapt his or her behavior as the outputs that will become the source of inputs for another round of the identity verification (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Identity verification has been revealed to be in association with self-esteem in different aspects: the verification of a role identity results in the activation of a sense of self-efficacy, the verification of a social identity will lead to the activation of self-worth and nurture a sense of belonging, and “the verification of person identities fosters self-authenticity” (p. 125). Cast and Burke (2002) pointed out that verifying identities could lead to people’s high efficacy-based self-esteem and verification realized with joint efforts in a group could lead to people’s high worth-based self-esteem. At the same time, they warned that persistent non-verification of identities could do harm to people’s self-esteem in a greater degree. Stets and Burke (2014a) proposed that there should be three dimensions of self-esteem which correspond to the three bases of identity. Those three dimensions are worth-based, efficacy-based, and authenticity-based esteems. They explained the effects of authenticity-based self-esteem in particular: “. . . while self-worth and self-efficacy mutually influenced each other, the relationships between authenticity and self-worth and authenticity and self-efficacy were both one-way, with worth influencing authenticity and authenticity influencing efficacy” (p. 428).

Also, identity verification was found to have relationships with some other factors. Stets and Cast (2007) revealed that identity verification and resource use had a mutually reinforcing relationship. As they further explained, “. . . when valued resources in a society are used in interaction, they produce identity verification for social actors. In turn, this identity verification fosters the availability of these very resources for future use” (p. 538). They claimed to support the idea that people having access to more resources may achieve greater identity verification. Stets and Harrod (2004) argued that identity verification was influenced by people’s status in social structure. Consequently, people who are high-status actors of some identities could achieve identity verification in a greater degree because of more resources they could get access to; and their achievement of identity verification would in turn lead to a stronger sense of efficacy and/or worth. In terms of people’s agency in the process of identity verification, commitment was found to be an influential factor. Burke and Reitzes (1991) found through their study that commitment was a connecting factor between an individual person and an identity. They argued that “. . . people pursue lines of activity which sustain and support their identities to the extent they are committed to those identities” (p. 250). Also, emotion has been studied in relation to the outcome of identity verification. Stets (2005) found that identity nonverification was not necessarily linked to negative emotions; instead, if in a positive direction, it could lead to positive emotions. Also, she revealed through her study that people’s affective responses to both identity verification and nonverification would decrease if the feedback was persisting. Stets and Burke’s (2014b) study revealed that contrary to the common expectation, people would feel bad when they were highly over-rated. Trettevik (2016) confirmed that identity verification was a source of emotions and further found that the emotions experienced by an individual would be affected by his/her distance from and progress toward identity verification.

Discussion and Conclusions

Discussion

Second language is used as a hyponym for foreign language in research practice. But as was shown in the literature review, the authenticity of second language identity was examined in two contexts—the second language learning context and the foreign language context. The following discussion will follow this pattern, to be carried out in the second language learning context and the foreign language context respectively. To assist the discussion, interview data from previous research studies that I conducted will be referred to as examples.

Possible inauthenticity of second language identity. In a second language learning context, speakers of the language
(native and non-native) make up of a real community where second language speakers of English have to live within for daily life. Therefore, the impact of imagination/over-imagination is not salient in identity construction. Besides constraints from limited competence in the second language which are a realistic cause, a possible cause for the inauthenticity of second language identity is the imbalanced power relations that second language speakers will probably experience in the social context. The imbalanced power relation usually occurs implicitly. It is more of an issue for those that have sufficient competence for communication in the language. As Peirce (1995) addressed the issue of “right to speak,” second language speakers may fail to seize opportunities to communicate with native speakers because of constraints from power relations in the learning context. As reviewed previously, Roberts and Cooke (2009) argued that the loss of “cultural capital” of immigrants would possibly lead to obstacles to their “authentic voice.” Second language speakers, especially those who have undergone loss of “cultural capital” for some reason (e.g., immigration), have the disadvantage in power relations in the social context. The disadvantageous position may restrain them from presenting their characteristics for being unique individual persons, even though their competence in the language is sufficient for communication. That will possibly result in the non-verification of their person identity, which will consequently harm their sense of authenticity. An example found in one of my previous studies, Wang (2014), may help to illustrate my discussion above. That study of mine was focused on mainland Chinese students’ identity construction and their Cantonese learning in Hong Kong SAR of China. In the in-depth interviews, one participant in the study talked about her personal experience and interpretation of the power relationship in her communication in Cantonese.

**Participant X:** I have had some unpleasant experiences even in the canteen of our school.

I wanted to show my respect to the waiter/waitress there so I ordered the dish in Cantonese.

But maybe s/he could recognize me as a mainland Chinese student. S/he sees those people who often dine in the canteen every day. S/he could recognize who are the Hong Kong local students and who are the mainland Chinese students.

Maybe my Cantonese pronunciation is not very good but it is not so bad as to cause others to be unable to understand what I say. Sometimes when I ordered my dish in Cantonese. I said it in Cantonese. The waiter/waitress immediately repeated to me in Putonghua, “Liangsong, right? Yuanyang, right?” This experience made me feel bad. Every time this kind of stuff happened, I felt angry. I wondered whether s/he looked down upon me, whether s/he felt his/her Putonghua was quite good or s/he despised my ability of Cantonese. I think my Cantonese pronunciation is not so bad as to make him/her unable to understand me. His/her facial expression was also revealing. Anyway, I don’t think it’s necessary for him/her to repeat what I said in Putonghua in such a loud voice.

Under the policy of “One Country, Two Systems,” mainland Chinese students who study in Hong Kong are classified as “overseas” students. Visa is required for them to live and study in Hong Kong. Cantonese, a dialect of Chinese, is the dominant variety of language in Hong Kong. According to 2016 Population By-census Office, Census and Statistics Department, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (2017), the usual spoken language of 88.9% of population aged five and over is Cantonese. The context for those mainland Chinese students in Wang’s (2014) study was basically similar to a context for immigrants to learn a second language. In this example, the participant self-reported sufficient proficiency in Cantonese for communication. Even though she did not demonstrate intention to construct a Hong Kong local Chinese identity through using Cantonese, yet her choice of language use did not reject the possibility of acquiring a local identity. However, the waiter/waitress at the school canteen showed clear refusal to communicate in Cantonese. In that situation, the participant was confronted with rejection of the “right to speak” Cantonese. In this example, the participant experienced rejection in a brief communication for daily life activity. It is reasonable to wonder whether the participant might be confronted with the rejection further when she wanted to demonstrate the core characteristics of her self in Cantonese.

This example is presented in order to assist my discussion of the possible cause of inauthentic second language identity in a second language context. At the same time, it should be noted that the example is essentially different from a case study that is designed particularly to investigate the issue. Therefore, it is inappropriate to make any generalization from this single and particular example.

**Possible inauthenticity of foreign language identity.** In my previous study, Wang (2018), the participants who are Chinese postgraduates were interviewed about their expression of personality traits in English. In other words, they were asked to evaluate whether their person identity was properly presented in a foreign language. Four out of the five participants reported that they could not properly present their personality traits in English. They attributed the difficulty to their unsatisfactory English proficiency. For example, a participant, John, said:

Firstly, I’m quite sociable. That is, I like to communicate with people of various types. Secondly, I’m very diligent with researching and acquiring knowledge about what I’m interested in.

My English proficiency is not sufficient for me to talk concisely and precisely. I can only say something in a general way and I have difficulty in providing details in English. (Wang, 2018, p. 96)
This example helps to show that a realistic and immediate constraint of authentically constructing an identity in a foreign language is the speaker’s foreign language proficiency. In the foreign language learning situation, even though a speaker has good proficiency in the foreign language, s/he may not be familiar or comfortable with presenting who s/he is in the foreign language. The main reason is that foreign language learning is usually done in school and the use of the foreign language is detached from real social life. As a result, when the learners use English for the purpose of practice for improving language proficiency, they may quite possibly be confined to the task. They lack the freedom to express meanings that define who they are.

Besides this, an important reason for their difficulty in achieving sense of authenticity through identity verification is the impact of social context. The real and immediate social context in a foreign language learning situation is closely related to the mother tongue which plays an essential role in constructing the individual learners’ person identity. Meanwhile, what is intertwined with the foreign language is an imagined community. As is explained in Identity Theory, the input will be judged according to the identity standard. Social context does play a role in the process. Therefore, in a foreign language learning situation, the input which might be generated from imagination will possibly violate the identity standard which has to receive the influence from the immediate context. An example from my previous research may help to illustrate the discussion. In Wang’s (2014) study, when a participant (A) in a focused-group interview was asked about which of the three languages/varieties (English, Cantonese, Putonghua) she would give priority to for communication while studying in Hong Kong, she responded as the follows.

Participant A: I will choose Putonghua at the first place, then Cantonese and at last, English. I feel uneasy when I speak English. I don’t know why. I just wonder why I shall speak English.

Participant B: But you major in English. Your English is very good.

Participant A: It’s not that my English is good. Anyway, I won’t choose English. I feel strange. It is not my mother tongue. I do not really what to talk in it. What’s more, I think we (Hong Kong local Chinese and mainland Chinese) are all Chinese; I don’t want to talk in English.

Participant B: I think it depends on whom you talk to. If you talk to the foreigners, you will speak English.

Participant A: Of course. That’s right.

Both Participant A and Participant B were mainland Chinese students studying in Hong Kong when the interview was carried out. According to the qualification requirements of postgraduate study program admission at the university where they were doing research study, non-local students and non-native speakers of English should have certificates such as IELTS and TOEFL to prove their English proficiency. That means they had good English proficiency as they were successfully admitted into the program. Obviously, it is the social context that made Participant A feel uneasy to communicate in English and take on a social identity at the same time. The language policy of Hong Kong is the “bilingual and trilingual” policy. The education there is aimed at enabling students to be able to read and write in English and Chinese and be able to communicate in English, Cantonese, and Putonghua (Adamson & Feng, 2009; Evans, 2010; Lee & Leung, 2012; Wang & Kirkpatrick, 2013; etc.). According to 2016 Population By-census Office, Census and Statistics Department, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (2017), the usual language for the majority of population of Hong Kong (88.9%) is Cantonese since the absolute majority (92%) of population of Hong Kong is Chinese. Under these circumstances, the environment for learning and using English in Hong Kong for those mainland Chinese students is a foreign language learning environment. That is, they usually learn and use English in school rather than in daily life settings. As Participant A pointed out, the immediate context is a Chinese community. Therefore, the standard for identity may not support an input of an identity which is constructed and expressed in English. If Participant A had insisted on constructing an identity through English in that context, she would have risked being rejected and consequently felt inauthentic.

Conclusions

From the above analysis and discussion, it is reasonable to conclude that individual learners may have difficulty in achieving authenticity of identity in their second language. A practical issue for them is their second language competence may not be sufficient to support their free expression of who they are. Other factors, such as the disadvantageous position in power relations, the lack of immediate and realistic social context and the possible imaginative nature of membership in the target language community may worsen the situation. Consequences of the possible failure to verify a second language identity to achieve sense of authenticity are worth noting. As reviewed above, according to the Identity Theory, identity verification is related to self-esteem. Lack of self authenticity means a person’s self-esteem is harmed. That will further do harm to individuals’ emotional well-being and pursuit of significance of existence as humans in the long run. For example, a possible problem to be caused by the inauthenticity of second language identity is unsatisfactory social contact and consequent feeling of isolation. That may happen when an individual keeps holding onto an identity which is difficult to verify due to its imaginative ground. The possible over-imagining will worsen the situation. In order
to self-verify the person identity which s/he constructs in a second language, s/he may reduce social contact in the immediate and realistic context because it is not supportive to his or her second language identity that is associated with an imagined community. That reduction of social contact may result in the feeling of isolation which may in turn affect his or her interpersonal communication skills and motivation for social contact. A vicious cycle may come into being.

Therefore, awareness of the probable difficulty of second language learners in achieving sense of authenticity in identity construction is helpful to second language learners’ self-understanding and emotional well-being. Moreover, the awareness can help second language educators with their teaching practice. It is suggested that second language educators incorporate the awareness into their teaching philosophy and offer practical advice to second language learners. In the second language teaching and learning context, assistance to the learners with community or neighborhood immersion learning service may help them to improve their second language competence in a real and practical social context. The construction and the verification of a group identity will increase the learners’ sense of self-worth that will in turn affect their sense of authenticity, as Stets and Burke (2014a) have pointed out. Also, teachers who share the mother tongue with the learners may be better candidates to offer educational service to the learners than monolingual speakers of the second language. They could offer scaffolding help to the learners through the shared mother tongue. In the foreign language learning context, warning against over-imagination from the educators to the mother tongue. In the foreign language learning context, warning against over-imagination from the educators to the learners with community or neighborhood immersion learning service may help them to improve their second language competence in a real and practical social context. The construction and the verification of a group identity will increase the learners’ sense of self-worth that will in turn affect their sense of authenticity, as Stets and Burke (2014a) have pointed out. Also, teachers who share the mother tongue with the learners may be better candidates to offer educational service to the learners than monolingual speakers of the second language. They could offer scaffolding help to the learners through the shared mother tongue. In the foreign language learning context, warning against over-imagination from the educators to the learners is necessary. Bilinguals of balanced competences in both languages should be an aim of teaching and learning. In teaching practice, encouraging the learners to express who they are in the foreign language with the scaffolding help from their mother tongue will do good to the learning.

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