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The Art of Saving a Language:
Heritage Language Learning in America

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The Art of Saving a Language:
Heritage Language Learning in America

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Dedication

In honor of my mother Eva, and in memory of my aunt Livia, for teaching me to read and write as well as explore the rich cultural tradition of my Hungarian heritage language.

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Abstract

The Art of Saving a Language: Heritage Language Learning in America

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The term heritage language (HL), which only emerged in the context of language policy during the 1990's, refers to immigrant, refugee, and indigenous languages whose target group of learners have either previously learned the language as a first language (L1) or home language, or have some form of heritage connection to the language (Cummins, 2005). The bilingual nature of these individuals is ambiguous, as variables related to literacy and oral proficiency in the first language are significantly influenced by geographical, cultural, academic, and sociolinguistic factors prevalent to the context in which the speaker is situated. The topic of HL is the subject of a growing number of studies in second language acquisition as well as bilingual education. Given that an increasing number of immigrants from around the world continue to make the United States their place of permanent residence, the country's educational focus needs to take into account the needs of heritage language learners (HLL), especially as that focus shifts from the exclusive teaching of foreign languages to incorporating the maintenance and linguistic competence of our multilingual inhabitants.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The term heritage language (HL), which only emerged in the context of language policy during the 1990's, refers to immigrant, refugee, and indigenous languages whose target group of learners have either previously learned the language as a first language (L1) or home language, or have some form of heritage connection to the language (Cummins, 2005). The bilingual nature of these individuals is both questionable and inconclusive, as variables related to literacy and oral proficiency in the first language are significantly influenced by geographical, cultural, academic, and sociolinguistic factors prevalent to the context in which the speaker is situated.

As a minority language speaker in a country like the United States has the tendency to shift to speaking the target language over the course of three generations, current demographics are showing that some second and third generation immigrants are attempting to reconnect with their original heritage through language (Cho, 2000). This may affect the motivation when attempting to learn a heritage language. Proficiency levels differ vastly among HL speakers, with variance related to background, degree of HL use, and "sociopsychological factors" such as identity, attitudes, and motivation (Kondo-Brown, 2010, p. 24).

Despite this shift, HL remains ill defined because of a variety of connotations (oftentimes negative) based on the sociopolitical or regional context in which that particular population of speakers resides in the country. The topic of HL is one that is highly debated, and is the subject of a growing number of studies in second language acquisition as well as bilingual education. Given that an increasing number of immigrants from around the world continue to make the United States their place of permanent residence, the country's educational focus needs to take into account the needs of heritage

language learners (HLL), especially as that focus shifts from the exclusive teaching of foreign languages to incorporating the maintenance and linguistic competence of our multilingual inhabitants.

This extended literature review is divided into the following categories pertaining to HL learning: definition and origin of HLL; HL loss and maintenance; the roles of identity and literacy as they pertain to heritage language acquisition; pedagogical implications addressing the need for specialized curriculum design to meet the linguistic and social needs of these learners; and sociopolitical considerations, as they shed light on the policy standards that affect the level and amount of instruction that HL learners are able to access. As these emergent themes overlap on several perspectives, the concluding section will analyze the significance of this connection. The sociopolitical considerations also synthesize the breadth of this information, and examine what policy makers and educators alike can do increase the access to and level of instruction needed for HL learners to foster and maintain their unique linguistic proficiency.

Chapter 1: Definition and Origin

Before delving into the research, it is crucial to identify the current definition of both heritage language (HL) and heritage language learners (HLL) as they are discussed in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) today. The most commonly cited definition is attributed to Guadalupe Valdés, who states that HLL have been raised in a home where the HL is spoken, the HLL can speak or at least understand the HL, and are bilingual in some degree in the HL and English (Valdés, 2001, as cited in Jenson & Llosa, 2007, p. 98). Furthermore, HLL have acquired the HL primarily through socialization, but did not achieve fluency because of the switch to the dominant language. The four studies reviewed in the first chapter will examine the definition and origin of the term "heritage language learner" and how it has risen to prominence as a dominant research pursuit in the field of second language acquisition. These studies are ordered chronologically, beginning with the work of Lily Wong Fillmore, whose prolific research of 1991 serves as a cornerstone for subsequent heritage language study.

FILLMORE, L.W. (1991)

Lily Wong Fillmore and her colleagues conducted a nationwide survey in 1990 to examine the language shift taking place among language-minority children in the United States. At the time of the study, the term "heritage language" was not yet used in this capacity; the phenomenon of the "erosion" of the native language in exchange for the second was referred to as "subtractive bilingualism" (Fillmore, 1991, p. 323). Fillmore wanted to quantify not just how many children could be categorized as heritage speakers, but also *how fast* they were losing their native language. As the researchers believed that early enrollment in bilingual or English-only preschools were the cause of this language loss, the study participants were categorized into two groups for the purpose of the

analysis: children attending bilingual or primarily-English preschools, and preschools functioning solely in the HL.

The volunteer researchers conducted a 45-question interview pertaining to home language use versus school language use with families across the country. The respondents consisted of 311 families (hereinafter referred to as the **comparison sample**) whose children attended preschool conducted *only* in the HL, in this case Spanish. The data from this group was compared to the **main sample** of 690 families with children enrolled in bilingual or English-only preschools.

Of the families in the main sample, 211 (30.6%) reported English as the only language of instruction, 11% was the HL, and 46.7% bilingual. Accordingly, 74.6% of the comparison group children spoke the HL at school. The crux of the study came when the researchers reported the parents' answers to whether they perceived an increase or decrease in their children's English use versus an increase or decrease of HL use. Of the main sample, 50.6% respondents reported a negative change in language use at home, which the researchers defined as a change from using less of the HL to more English. Only 10.8% of the comparison sample reported this shift, leading Fillmore to conclude that children's native languages were being lost almost *5 times* more frequently in the sample of children enrolled in the bilingual or English-only early education programs.

When the bilingual/English-only attending-children were segmented even further, 64.4% of the English-only respondents reported this same negative shift. This is eye opening when we compare these numbers to the comparison group that saw a 69% increase, or positive change, indicating an increased use of HL in the home. If we look at this same statistic but restrict it to the sample group, then positive change was reported 15 times more frequently within the primary HL families than the English-only families. The last staggering statistic showed that bilingual education was not preventing language

shift, since 47% of the main sample families with children enrolled in the bilingual schools still saw a negative shift toward the use of English.

The families' responses indicate a critical theme in heritage language loss, which is the fact that language shifts begin with the children. The majority of the time, the English language has to take over if the family wants to assimilate to the status quo in American society. The study revealed that not only were the children that were enrolled in the bilingual/English-only schools using the HL less with their families than the children enrolled in the HL schools, but the children in the former group were bringing the English language into the home and using it with siblings and adults alike, thus laying the groundwork for this language shift. The study also revealed that it was the younger children that were showing greater HL loss and shift to English. This emotionally affected some families in the sample group because they admitted to experiencing minimal genuine communication between the parents (with minimal English skills) and their now English-speaking children. Lastly, despite the efforts of the primary language school-attending children, studies showed that the majority of the acquired HL skill still began to erode upon exiting the program. Though this research was conducted in 1990, the subsequent 20 plus years of research that pertaining to this issue confirm the same statistic.

LYNCH, A. (2003)

Andrew Lynch argues for the use of established SLA research to advocate for growth in the field of HL acquisition. Lynch does this by comparing the linguistic, social, and instructional methods of acquisition shared by second language (L2) and HLL. The reason for the L2/HL distinction is that most HLL receive appropriate input of the language in childhood, but because social and cognitive factors at play cause the learner

to abandon the native language in favor of the dominant target language, the process of re-acquiring the lost language is much like learning an L2 for monolingual speakers. This language loss, or attrition, is especially prevalent as one reaches adolescence. Such notions echo those of Guadalupe Valdés (2005) in this regard, for her claim that a HL speaker is neither an L1 or L2 native speaker.

To convey his ultimate goal, Lynch cites the French Canadian immersion schools as a model of the effective exchange of theory and research that successfully supported the doctrine of bilingualism in schools. He states that the United States could apply similar principles in promoting the bilingual instruction of Spanish, what he calls the *de facto* majority second language. Lynch outlines his argument using the framework of Rod Ellis' (1994) opening chapter in *The Study of Second Language Acquisition,* only replacing "second" with "heritage." To the first question of what exactly heritage language learners acquire and how, Lynch describes the shared linguistic capabilities of child L1, adult L2, and HLL in areas like oversimplification, order and stages of acquisition, and erroneous word order transfer. HL and L2 learners use the same (and most often incorrect) forms of verbs and conjugations.

When addressing the question of what differences exist in the way in which individual learners acquire the HL, the issue of critical period is discussed. Critical period hypothesis (Gass & Selinker, 2008) in this regard is questionable, for despite the fact that the learner's first experiences with acquisition began within the critical period, one's ability to reach the level of "native speaker" is less attainable. This leads to a paradox in the academic language attained by HLL versus L2 learners, as evidenced by the research of Stephen Krashen (2000). Krashen explains that although HL learners may not have acquired certain grammatical rules and structures in their young age, L2 learners that are good at grammar can at times outperform the heritage speaker, which could remove any

confidence the speaker has and thus be "psychologically devastating" for him or her (Lynch, 2003, p. 11 of available online version).

Based on the various cognitive and societal factors at play that differentiate HL learners from L2 learners, Lynch ultimately proposes separate classrooms for HL and L2 learners, primarily at the beginning or intermediate stages of instruction. In addition, the described arguments relying heavily on established SLA research should be transferred further to consider implications and benefits to HL acquisition.

CARREIRA, M. (2004)

Maria Carreira expresses a distinct pedagogical view on HL learning: one cannot simply define who a heritage learner is without offering a path for the learner to follow which adequately meets his or her identity and linguistic needs, as these needs were not met due to lack of sufficient exposure to the HL and culture. Current definitions, with those of Guadalupe Valdés being the most cited, vary based on the context within which they are discussed, as well as the learners' linguistic attainment and proficiency in the HL. This can change radically given the HL's geographic influence and prevalence, for an educated and literate Spanish speaker in Miami is regarded as having a different linguistic status than a linguistic minority in Birmingham, AL. For HL maintenance to be properly revitalized and supported, it is critical to establish the definition and related theory of HL acquisition to allow pedagogy and policy to properly address the needs of HLL.

The first category of distinction pertains to membership in the HL community. Carreira emphasizes that ethnolinguistic association within a community *may not* be tied to a person's linguistic proficiency. Given that language functions as a tool to transmit culture and traditions, such as in the case of speakers of Native American languages, this

transmission becomes threatened with fewer speakers (and teachers) of the HL. A second category of HLL describes those with a personal connection to the HL because of their family background, but who are now second or third generation and thus, not active members of the HL group. Examples of this are African-American students in the United States studying Swahili. An important point of distinction is their "perceived affinity" as described by Ghambir (2001, as cited in Carreira, 2004), because of the actual connection to the HL spoken by their ancestors is not entirely known. Such learners have strong motivations to define their ethnic identities via the HL. Finally, Carreira describes the last group of HL learners based on their HL linguistic proficiency, which she comments is the most restrictive of the definitions. Valdés (2005) and her linguistic proficiency-based definition fall into this category. Carreira briefly summarizes her own research pertaining to this category, in which she asked 13 high school teachers of Spanish to define HLL. All teachers offered a definition based on linguistic proficiency. Carreira warns of the negative implications of such narrow categorization, for focusing solely on language perception and production is at the expense of validating the learner's HL identity and cultural affinity.

In discussing the educated standard of foreign language proficiency, Carreira writes that the students' lack of knowledge about academic registers is indicative of a need to segment the Spanish-speaking students in schools based on their ultimate goals of learning the language: basic communication locally among family and community members, or professional communication globally in a future professional context. The most significant point of Carreira's argument is that the definitions for HLL fall on a linguistic continuum, as all possible varieties cannot be addressed. This continuum is the very basis for her conclusion: the ethnic backgrounds, identities, and linguistic

proficiencies of HLL are so expansive that they cannot possibly fit into one clear-cut definition, but need to be addressed in concert with the pedagogical needs of the learners.

VALDÉS, G. (2005)

Guadalupe Valdés, in her effort to shed light on the current state of HLL both in the United States and across the globe, proposes a "reconceptualization" of the field of SLA to include the implications of HLL and how their unique bilingual abilities need to be addressed in order to better provide educational structure and support for the learners' linguistic intricacies. Valdés examines the current theoretical framework that applies to the bilingual nature of HLL, and applies empirical support from various SLA researchers to validate her argument of why current second and foreign language pedagogy does not take into account how these individuals came to be proficient in their heritage level, the level of which they function in this language, and how best to teach (or sometimes "reteach") key grammatical concepts that may have not transferred accurately to the learner.

Valdés examines the "bilingualism" of these heritage language learners, who are often categorized by the field as "linguistic minorities" because of the prevalence in which their language is spoken in their current location. Her definition of bilingualism is inclusive of several various groups of learners (speakers indigenous to a certain region, populations that have migrated to other world regions, etc.) The origin of heritage student instruction in the United States is discussed, leading Valdés to use this origin (the Spanish speaking population migration in the 1970's) to identify the context in which the problem of how to properly address these learners first arose. This discussion evolves to highlight the current national/strategic need for heritage language instruction in the United States, post 9/11. As Valdés is one of the more cited researchers on this topic, it is

her definition of a *heritage language learner* (cited in Valdés, 2000) that is most often referenced: a student that a) is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, b) may speak or merely understand the HL, c) may be, to some degree, bilingual in English and the HL.

The pedagogical implications of instructing these learners is brought to light as traditional classroom instruction designed for non-native speakers is not adequate to fit their linguistic needs. Consequently, this roadblock poses a challenge for efficient language instruction and leads to Valdés' charge for current researchers in the field of SLA to provide new discourse and methods of instruction to scaffold the learning of heritage languages.

CONCLUSION

Research can attest to the decades-long journey that the study and establishment of heritage language learning has progressed through to its current state of inquiry. Even in her context at the time, Fillmore (1991) offered a sociocultural critique of American society in stating that "second language learning does not result in the loss of the primary language everywhere," but it does in the United States. As this piece of research pertained to Guadalupe Valdés' definition of heritage language learning, Fillmore describes the basis by which heritage speakers are not native speakers of either their L1 or L2. All four authors within this section highlight the fluid bilingual nature of heritage language speakers. The continuum discussed by Carreira (2004) of the various definitions of HL speakers is similar to the continuum of L1/L2 users offered by Valdés (2005).

We have discussed how L1 learning is halted with the entrance to English-speaking schools, but more often than not the L2 that is offered as input to these learners is from other L2 learners of English, whose language represents an "imperfect variety"

spoken by their classmates (Fillmore, 1991, p. 341). Consequently, without the tools or awareness to correct this, schools are producing speakers with linguistic capabilities that remain undeveloped. This fact will resurface as we further study the effects of language order, the identity issues at play with this shifting language dominance, the curriculum design and educational policies that can support proper heritage language maintenance.

Chapter 2: Language Loss and Maintenance

Opening with research that is relevant to the definition of HL revealed the significance of HL learning as a subdiscipline of SLA. Only by knowing the importance placed on this intricate form of acquisition and this minority group of learners, can we truly comprehend the critical need behind preventing the loss of the heritage languages among speakers. The articles that represented case studies of HL loss and maintenance share unique similarities pertaining to the motivation of the parents to transmit HL and culture to their children. Additionally, the articles allude to the key fact that HL attrition due to the dominance of the English language takes place over the course of 2-3 generations, with the family becoming monolingual English speakers by the third generation. The research below conveys the essence of Fillmore's (1991) argument about drawing awareness to the threat that English dominance is having on the state of heritage languages in this country.

SHIN, S. J., ELLIS, R., & JOHNSON, K. E. (2002)

In an effort to address the growing discussion surrounding language loss and the maintenance of heritage languages, Sarah Shin studies the effects of birth order on bilingual development in an effort to pinpoint factors relating to first language loss and maintenance. First-born and later-born children have different experiences with first and second language acquisition. Identifying the reasons behind these varying experiences can offer both researchers and educators the tools and ideas to aid in maintaining the heritage language.

Shin surveyed the parents of second-generation Korean-American children, whom she reached via Korean-American churches in Baltimore, Chicago, Houston, and New York City (cities with large Korean-American populations.) The survey consisted of 72

questions in Korean pertaining to bilingualism, language shift, and maintenance of the Korean language, and the published results of the survey specifically pertained to the role that birth order played within this context. The author attributes Korean-American parents' interest in their children's bilingualism as a factor in the rate of response.

The results showed a significant correlation in the length of stay in the United States with differing attitudes toward the use of the heritage language and English at home. The longer the parents' stay, the more favorable they were to English use at home and thus more English was spoken. Moreover, the children spoke more English and less Korean with their parents once they entered school. The spoken rate of Korean also sharply declined with the birth of additional children, as the first child spoke Korean 78.8% before entering school, the second-born child 66.3%, and the third-child only 42.9%. As expected given these results, English was spoken only 4.7% of the time with the first-born, 9.6% with the second-born, and a striking 23.8% with the third-born. The results proved the fact that the first-born child would bring English into the household after school, and the later-born children would receive exponentially more exposure to English than Korean, with this learning starting at an earlier age than with the eldest child. Since these younger children are receiving the English language earlier, their attitudes toward English language use shift, and they prefer to speak English and see it as more favorable.

These results lead to the author's conclusions that the firstborn child receives more direct input in the HL than subsequent children, and thus the later-born children receive less comprehensible input in the first language, starting at a younger age. Because of this reduced input, the later-born children also have reduced opportunities to practice the first language and consequently the earlier exposure to English from the oldest sibling (and eventually the parents if they shift to English) affect the children's linguistic

capabilities and favorable attitude toward the preference of English as the main language for communication with siblings and parents. Once the younger children enter school, they find that English is more accepted by their schoolmates and teachers and they begin to have negative attitudes toward the native language. The author refers to this as a "vicious cycle" since less interaction in the native language means less input, and less input leads to "incomplete acquisition" (Shin, 2002, p. 109).

DECAPUA, A., & WINTERGERST, A. C. (2009)

Given that school, family, and community support are beneficial in the maintenance of bilingualism, Andrea DeCapua and Ann Wintergerst conduct a case study to research how HL maintenance of German was attainable in a context which lacked this external support. The research analyzes what strategies employed by the mother fostered both the linguistic maintenance of the German language in an English-dominant environment, and the positive attitudes of her children toward maintaining the HL.

The mother, herself a daughter of a German immigrant, and her husband, a monolingual American who only speaks basic phrases in German, consistently encourages the mother in speaking German to their children. The children are 11, 12, and 15 at the time of the study, and speak only in German with their mother and with each other. The family lives in New Jersey with very few opportunities for the family to interact externally with German contacts.

The children took part in two semi-structured interviews in their own home, with the first interview conducted in German and the second in English. The interview questions (open-ended, pertaining to their attitudes and perceptions of using the HL) were the same in both languages, and the children were interviewed in isolation from each other in an effort to prevent collusion. The reason for this was to see if the children would

provide different answers from one language to the other, or if any affective factors were discussed more in one language than the other.

Analysis revealed that their positive attitudes toward the HL language were due to the three primary strategies employed by the mother: strict adherence to the "one-parent/one-language rule" in which the mother only spoke in German with the children, active exposure to cultural materials and environments, and constant engagement with German print and media. The children thus felt comfortable constantly conversing in German and the study found their developed ease at code-switching between the languages in an effort to include the English-speaking father in family conversations. From an environmental perspective, the children spoke in German to any German-speaking friends or family that would visit the family, which proved to progress their HL identity formation. They found motivation in their bilingual capabilities. Finally, the children were prohibited from watching American television.

This study confirmed that the role of the parents in fostering and maintaining HL competence cannot be understated. The children must feel that they are gaining something positive and valuable in knowing two languages, and this awareness should increase one's desire to learn both languages and gain bilingual status. Although the findings of the study succeeded in answering the hypothetical questions, the researchers were also quite honest at the end of the case study in confirming that the children's linguistic abilities in the HL did diminish with age, especially as their capabilities were limited to social and conversational knowledge (BICS) as opposed to academic knowledge (CALPS).

NESTERUK, O. (2010)

Olena Nesteruk's research interests pertain to heritage language (HL) loss and maintenance among the children of Eastern European immigrants in the United States, particularly those immigrants that come to the country for a professional purpose. Through examining the geographic dispersion versus proximity to a particular ethnic "enclave" in the United States, Nesteruk hopes to categorize to what extent individual, familial, and community factors contribute to the HL loss and maintenance in each of those situations (2010, p. 275).

Through newspaper advertising, personal contacts, and snowball sampling, Nesteruk searched for participants that were married couples with children, were first generation Eastern European Immigrants with either the husband or wife working in a professional occupation, and had resided in the country for less than five years. Nesteruk interviewed 50 immigrant couples, ages 31-50, from Romania, Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Poland, Belarus, and Bosnia. Half of the participants had doctoral degrees and the remainder had masters or bachelor's degrees. The children's ages ranged from eight months to 26 years, and 47 out of the 66 total children were born in this country. Because the author herself spoke Russian, 13 of the 29 Russian participants chose to conduct the interviews in Russian, and these interviews were later translated and transcribed into English. Nesteruk states that her "insider status" to being a linguistic-minority immigrant allowed the participants to be more open with her, especially given that she shared her experience of the difficulty in transmitting the HL to her own children (2010, p. 276).

The findings reveal a strong desire of the immigrant parents to transmit the HL language and culture to their children. The native-language is the vehicle through which this transmission can take place, especially because communication with the HL is the only way to communicate with the Eastern European family members, who happen to

play a central role in raising the children. The mothers take the children to the home country for weeks during the summer to allow the children to practice the HL while grandparents that visit the United States to help take care of the children do not speak English. These parents reported valuing the intellectual benefit of bilingualism, and thus want the children to benefit from the cultural awareness plus future professional benefit of being multilingual.

The parents transmit the language via exposure to HL literacy materials (books, folk stories, videos), the grandparents, and resources within the surrounding ethnic community, if one is available. A unique finding here is that with the availability of a proximal ethnic community, the mother might not be inclined to partake in the relationships and resources offered given the possible "gossip" and social inclusivity that is fostered. Another finding showed that a small group of the parents preferred to speak to their children in English from a young age to instill the idea of achievement in the "American dream," which apparently is based on English mastery.

SZECSI, T., & SZILAGYI, J. (2012)

Tunde Szecsi and Janka Szilagi's study explores the benefits that new media technologies have on the maintenance of HL in immigrant families. The data, mostly ethnographical and qualitative in nature, is categorized by focusing on three central components: the way in which new media help foster and develop heritage language skills, native cultural traditions and sense of identity, and relationships with relatives in the heritage country.

The authors of the article and their families serve as the research subjects. *Family 1* consists of the mother, age 35, a native Hungarian who 11 years ago immigrated to the United States to complete her doctoral studies (PhD in education, currently a university

professor in New York.) The father, also 35, is American. The male children, ages 5 and 18 months, communicate with the mother in Hungarian, and the father in English. *Family 2* consists of the mother, age 47, also a native Hungarian who immigrated to the United States and has the same educational distinctions as mother 1, is married to Hungarian man (age 47), and has two children, a daughter and son (ages 17 and 18.) The family communicates with each other *only* in Hungarian. Both sets of grandparents are also interviewed, as they share the commonality of being retired professionals living in Hungary who visit their families in the United States once a year. The linguistic background of the father in *Family 1* is important to keep in mind, as well as the ages of the children with respect to their various literacy skills (or lack thereof) in the HL.

Interviews were conducted in-person with each of the subjects above (in Hungarian and translated into English, except for Father 1), and then via Skype for the interviews with the grandparents. The researchers then employed authoethnographical interviews with each other via Skype. The transcribed data was analyzed and then categorized into the three emergent themes as stated at the beginning. The findings revealed that the children's HL skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking were all positively affected by the use of new media, as long as the adults maintained active involvement in this facilitation. This involved providing them with tools for learning within the home (Hungarian children's websites, Hungarian historical DVD's created for children, interactive virtual games in Hungarian) and access to communication tools with relatives in Hungary (Skype chats, Facebook messages, e-mails.) The use of Skype was seen as especially crucial; not only did the video component provide the children with sources of Hungarian input for listening and a platform to practice their speaking, but the chat interface component allowed them to practice reading and writing in Hungarian with their grandparents. This tool served to maintain the children's literacy skills and

relationships with the heritage country, and also afforded them exposure to Hungarian cultural traditions by way of the grandparents live-broadcasting of the food, songs, and events that comprise Hungarian Christmas Eve, St. Nicholas Day, All Saints Day, and other such holidays.

The authors emphasize the role that social media plays in maintaining language skills, relationships, and cultural identity in HLL. The conclusions would not be as believable if not for the consistent presence and restatement of the crucial role that the parents' scaffolding plays in the children's' maintenance of the HL. The only exception to this is the father in *Family 1*, who despite maintaining a very positive and supportive attitude towards the children's Hungarian language development was not able to offer the same level of linguistic support given his monolingual status. The authors are also quite realistic in stating that linguistic capabilities of these children rest at a conversational level, and formal cognitive academic language is not as prevalent, for the eldest teenage boy showed avoidance and hesitation in his writing and speaking online interactions. This is mostly attributed to anxiety of making errors in the HL.

CONCLUSION

Findings on HL loss and maintenance are also consistent with other previously established research in terms of birth-order, as these parents confirmed that transmitting the HL to the first-born/older children was easier than the younger children, for by that point English interaction with siblings and peers in preschool contributed to their English-dominant communication. Another similarity was of the parents' reluctance to continue HL maintenance once the children reached adolescence, since their social anxieties were easier to overcome if the parents allowed the children to speak to them in English, a language that children were more comfortable speaking.

The question pertaining to the proximity of an ethnic community comes into play here. Those families that took advantage of the ethnic community claimed more success in raising bilingual children due to the ethnic resources for schools, churches, and friends that reinforced HL language transmission. Those families without these resources found themselves too tired and frustrated to pass the language onto the children on their own and were forced to switch to English in communicating with the children as they approached adolescence. There is, however, a gap that is open for further research when we consider the language learning tools used to support HL maintenance. Social media and interactive web tools could prove to be essential in fostering access to culturally relevant content in the HL, thus future research in this domain could prove to be influential.

Chapter 3: The Role of Identity in Language Loss and Maintenance

This chapter will highlight studies on the identity issues encountered by HL learners in light of standards and stereotypes imposed by society on this oftentimes-marginalized group of learners. Identity issues stem from a variety of sociocultural contexts such as being a recent immigrant, speaking a lesser-than-common language, and dealing with social and academic frustrations that such a student could face from being placed in language classes that do not meet the critical needs of these learners.

CHO, G. (2000)

In her research, Grace Cho attempts to fill an empirical gap on the effects of HL loss or maintenance among language minority groups. She does this in the context of second-generation Korean-American adults, to explore how the maintenance or loss of the HL plays in a role in social interactions, relationships, and cultural or ethnic identity.

By recruiting adult Korean-Americans through Korean language classes, churches, and acquaintances, Cho found 114 participants, with 98 of them filling out a questionnaire and 16 participating in in-depth interviews. 72 were female, 42 were male, all between the ages of 18 and 35. 55 were born in the United States, and 59 immigrated at an early age, which is key given that Cho's research requires that all of their formal education began in this country, not Korea. The in-depth interview questions related to personal background, home language use, attitude toward the HL, and experience using the HL outside the home. The questionnaire contained two-open ended questions relating to the effects of having or not having learned the HL, and self-assessments on proficiency were made using a Likert-type scale. These assessments were then categorized into students who claimed "strong HL competence" to those who had "weak or no HL competence" (Cho, 2000, p. 373).

The findings revealed the important role that the HL plays in interactions among the Korean-Americans, in particular the sociocultural and personal benefits in developing the HL. Strong HL competences fostered a strong sense of ethnic identity, and consequently lower social and psychological distance. These participants reported the positive social benefits of knowing the HL, such as good relationships with families, partaking in cultural traditions, and appreciating the HL media. Conversely, those with weak HL competence reported instances of anxiety, isolation, exclusion, and avoidance with speakers of the HL. The limited communication skills also hindered relationships with Korean-speaking family members, and even lead to strong rejection by native speakers. Findings revealed that some Korean-Americans were easily scolded by other natives for their lack of competence given the fact that ethnically they looked like natives, so the assumption was asserted that they should *speak* the language. Others avoided more competent HL speakers because of self-imposed shame from not knowing the language. However, some of the weaker competent HL speakers wanted their children to learn the language and culture, despite their personal lack of knowledge.

Cho's data and interpretations coupled quantitative and qualitative research which allowed her to correctly categorize the individuals by justifying their self-imposed competence based on their personal comments and reflections. For example, individuals who identified themselves as having no conflict with other HL speakers appeared in both "strong" and "weak" HL competence categories. This is because those with strong language skills had no problems with basic communication while those with weak language skills *avoided* communication all together with Koreans. Nevertheless, those Korean-Americans that maintained the HL experienced expanded vocabulary in the HL as well as English, and their knowledge is concluded to positively benefit both the individual and society

CHO, G., SHIN, F., & KRASHEN, S. (2004)

Grace Cho, Fay Shin, and Stephen Krashen offer a concise review about the current state of HLs in the United States, with a primary focus on the frequency with which they are spoken, the proficiency level of the speakers, and learner attitudes toward the HL. The researchers' assessment begins with the review of the research of Garcia & Diaz (1992, as cited in Cho et al., 2004), showing that HL use declines with age, especially as speakers from younger elementary school move through senior high school. Declines of this nature are largely attributed to the dominance of the majority language (English) by the time a speaker reaches high school. The study also posited that no HL group of speakers could be considered fluent in the parents' native language.

Another component in which age is a factor is that of attitude and identity. Younger learners of languages like Hmong and Vietnamese (Shin & Bo; Nguyen, Shin, & Krashen, 2001, as cited in Cho et al., 2004) expressed positive attitudes towards learning to speak, read, and write in the HL. However, beginning in adolescence, negative attitudes toward the HL begin to develop as this age group has a desire to integrate into the target culture, sometimes to the point of rejecting the HL completely (Tse 1998, as cited in Cho et al., 2004). Research shows that the sentiment of valuing one's HL varies regionally, and such ambivalence is less frequent in those areas where the HL is more readily spoken.

Despite such ambivalence, Cho (2000) confirms that as these HL speakers enter adulthood, there is a resurgence to reconnect with the HL to maintain communication and relationships with relatives of the older generation. In summarizing the researchers' conclusions, Krashen states that comprehensible input in the HL (reading materials for pleasure and TV programs, for example) will help learners improve the HL. The basis for maintaining HL competence is supported in a 1998 study of Krashen's, in which he

offers evidence that HL study not only has "practical advantages in terms of international relations and trade," but also in furthering cognitive development.

LEE, J. S. (2005)

Jin Sook Lee conducted this study to see whether current university student learners of Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTL) self-identified as heritage language learners (HLL) or non-heritage learners (NHLL), what characteristics were relevant in identifying themselves within these categories, and what such a distinction implies in terms of addressing the needs of these learners. The subjects were 530 LCTL learners at a state university in the United States (112 learners of Korean, 139 of Chinese, 16 of Japanese, 41 of Hindi, 34 of Russian, 7 of Hungarian, 7 of Polish, 92 of Arabic, 55 of Hebrew, 23 of Swahili, and 4 of Yoruba.

A 34-item survey in English containing Likert scale items and open-ended questions was given to the students with questions ranging from demographic information, home language, prior language learning experience, motivation, attitudes, needs, and concerns. T tests were then used to identify meaningful differences between self-identified HLL and NHLL, and common emerging themes were identified and analyzed.

245 students self-identified as HLL, 239 as NHLL, and 10 provided ambivalent answers citing elements of both. The basis for their self-identification stemmed from some of the following reasons: 24.5% could (or could not) identify with the culture or ethnicity of speakers of the language, 12.1% claimed it was reserved for "birth right" or mother tongue speakers of the language, 10.6% stated proficiency (or lack of) in the language, and 5.3% cited that having lived in the native country was significant. However, the two largest variables of self-identification were ethnolinguistic affiliation,

and linguistic proficiency. Of the 344 participants that cited ethnolinguistic affiliation, only 62% self-identified as HLL, for the remaining percentage claimed lack of linguistic proficiency in comparison to the HL group. For instance, one self-identified Hindi NHLL claimed that she could *speak* Hindi at home, but could not *read/write* as well as other Hindi-natives in the class. Thus, oral and literacy competence distinctions played a significant role as an identification marker.

Three language specific functions emerged from the responses, one as a religious language (i.e. Hebrew), second a national language (Mandarin for China), and third a symbolic language (Yoruba as a symbol of connection to African heritage). A rather unique finding was the case of the African languages (Swahili and Yoruba), 22 of the 27 learners were African-American, and all claimed to be NHLL because they did not know the actual language of their ancestors, only that it was African in origin. For them, learning one of the two languages would foster a sense of cultural identity and connection to one's African roots, and in essence serve as a tribute.

KIM, J., KIM, T., & SCHALLERT, D. L. (2010)

In their research, Kim, Kim, and Schallert cite established research that the development of heritage language (HL) is an important factor in maintaining ethnic identity. Accordingly, the failure to develop the HL (or the hiding of it in school) is attributed to the switch to the target language. Given such sociocultural influences, their goal is to study the experiences of young Korean-American students to understand relationships between their "situated identities and their motivation" to learn the HL (Kim, Kim, & Schallert, 2010, p. 245). More specifically, what would the method of critical discourse analysis show about their varied identities and motivations with regard to the HL?

Out of eleven Korean-American students, eight students in a Korean Saturday school, ages 10-13 (grades 5-8) chose to participate. The children's mothers were all Korean, but two of the fathers were of European American descent. This is important to note because of the increased probability that these children received less exposure to the Korean language in these households.

Data was collected from classroom observations (observation notes on kinds of interactions, body language indicating motivation), two interviews with each student (one at the beginning, one at the end of the semester), two interviews with the teacher, and one interview with each of two mothers. Students were asked why they wanted to learn Korean, how they felt about learning the language, and general background questions. The interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed using constant comparative analyses and critical discourse analysis (CDA). The researchers discuss that reliability of the data stems from the numerous hours spent at the school in observations, consistency between the first and second interviews with the students, as well as interviews from the parents and teacher that concurred with what was seen in observations.

The findings were organized along a "continuum of motivation" based on the students' self-constructed identities and motivations on learning the Korean HL (Kim, Kim, & Schallert, 2010, p. 250). Two categories of motivation emerged, one being the less-autonomous learner, the other more autonomous (and motivated.) The student that was categorized as being the least motivated was done so partly because of her short answers and less-engaged demeanor. This student was not pressured from her parents to learn Korean, and consequently had a rather ambivalent attitude toward her ethnic identity. The other female students were motivated to learn the language to please the mother, and communicate with the Korean family, respectively. One particular 5th grade boy saw the potential value in being bilingual for communication purposes, and another

girl wanted to eventually get an international job. The latter half of the scale revealed much more intrinsic motivation, with students wanting to learn the HL to build their Korean identity, communicate with Koreans in the target country upon travel in order to better assimilate, and for the independence gained from speaking the HL, both in the target country and with other Korean-Americans.

CONCLUSION

The wealth of data and various categories and distinctions that were made between and among the characteristics of the learners in these studies accurately support the authors' conclusions that the categories of HLL and non-HLL are fluid; learner's can self-identify in various forms given their backgrounds and belief systems regarding various aspects of both linguistic categories. As the categories are not mutually exclusive, the learners are not "static beings" and they move between a fluid "heritage language learner continuum" based on their degree of ethnolinguistic affiliation, religious identity and cultural ties, level of language proficiency, and experience in the native country or culture (Lee, 2005, p. 561). Thus, language teachers of HLL need to be aware of these characteristics and needs of the changing populations of these learners in foreign language classrooms. The inherent marginalization that is present in the majority of the studies based on the HL learners being linguistic minorities suggests that identity issues consequently emerge. Though sometimes ethnolinguistic affiliation leads to positive identity associations and motivations to learn the HL, more often than not the negative identity associations result in HL language loss.

Chapter 4: The Role of Literacy in Language Loss and Maintenance

There are critical literacy issues that are relevant to the study of HL learning. This chapter will begin with research that frames literacy as a social practice, and how the literacy development of HL learners is significantly influenced by the sociocultural context in which these learners are raised. The studies aim to answer the question: why does literacy matter? Research regarding English language development emphasizes the need for developing literacy to aid in the progression of language acquisition. Explicit reading instruction is crucial for these learners, just as it is for younger developing readers in fostering academic literacy necessary for success in schools (Olson & Land, 2007).

FAIGLEY, L. (1986)

Lester Faigley traces the development of the writing process from various established theories throughout history. In his piece, Faigley notes that human language, which includes writing, can only be understood from the perspective of the society in which it is created, not the individual. From a Vygotskian take on this, children acquire not only the words of a language but the "intentions carried by those words and situations implied by them" (Faigley, 1986, p. 535).

Faigley highlights that ethnographic study has been key to understanding the communities from which writers learn to write. The ethnographic methodology referenced by Faigley observed that for children, "the ways literacy is used at home and in the world around them matches poorly with the literacy expectations of the school". In referencing the research of Heath's (1983) *Ways with Words*, observation found that they way in which children learn to use literacy originates from "how families and

communities are structured (Faigley, 1986, p. 536). Heath's study further showed that from a social view on the process of writing, remedial students are learning from exposure to the literacy practices and writing of the world around them.

This is significantly relevant to the literacy development of HL learners. As Lily Wong Fillmore stated in her evocative research of 1991, HL learners are influenced by and mirror incorrect forms and uses of the language. Then, they embody this form and pass it on to siblings and peers around them, resulting in the spread and embodiment of hybrid (and more often than not incorrect) language use.

FILLMORE, L.W. (2000)

Since the prolific Lau v. Nichols ruling of 1974, schools in the United States have been mandated to implement bilingual or ESL programs to meet the demands of their English language learners. While no one specific type of program has been deemed obligatory, schools have determined on their own accord the program that best meets their population and/or resources. The primary goal of English instruction for proficiency comes at the expense of deteriorating language loss of the L1. As HL learners are primarily categorized as being natively proficient in neither the L1 nor L2, their literacy practices in the L1 are strongly affected.

Lily Wong Fillmore, ten years after the release of her cornerstone study, revisits this topic by profiling a Chinese immigrant family in San Francisco with school age children. The family consisted of the parents, grandmother, and two children ages 16 and 15 at the time of the study (ages 5 and 4, respectively, at the time of arrival). As the children's literacy practices in English grew, the Cantonese L1 development was halted. Fillmore uses the ethnographic study of this family to highlight the themes of increased

family tension and separation between the younger and elder family members due to L1 language loss.

The crux of Wong Fillmore's argument is to call for an evaluation of what it means to be successful in school. The Chen children were successful because they quickly learned literacy and oral skills in English, yet this successful gain of English is also attributed to the loss of the L1. This gain/loss paradigm also has deep sociocultural implications, as children such as the Chens believe that the L1 is a barrier to social acceptance. As long as HL speakers believe that their home language has no value, the English language will be used exclusively. Implications suggest that educators need to provide HL learners with opportunities to become fully literate in the L1, and parents should encourage such practices in the home. Teachers and parents alike need to become aware of the negative social pressures that children face as they try to acclimate to American culture. Positive forces from within the home and school as well as the community to foster bilingual and biliterate practices is crucially needed.

BRANDT, D. (2001)

In this ethnographic study, Brandt traces the literacy practices of a century of Americans (80 participants, ages 10 to 98) to examine the sociocultural context around which these individuals learned to read and write. The study is based on a theoretical perspective of "sponsors of literacy" who are those individuals that enable, teach, model, and support literacy. Over the course of her research, Brandt determined that it was these sponsors that paved the way for literacy to develop, and thus also served as a vehicle from which literacy could be passed on to other generations.

The meaning of what it means to be literate has shifted with every generation, and Brandt analyzes the methods and then subsequent impact of what it meant for individuals

throughout the years to learn to read, and then learn to write. Brandt highlights how acquiring literacy in America has been used as a tool for stratification. She writes that literacy "has gotten implicated in almost all of the ways that money is now made in America," to the point that it has the power to "catapult" oneself into a higher social or economic bracket. Additionally, the context in which literacy is situated in affects the politics of elite groups, as it is *their* literacy standards against which other versions are measured and deemed "inadequate or undesirable" (Brandt, 2001, p. 2-3). This notion has great relevance and implications for the literacy practices of HL learners, for the sociocultural context in which these students acquire literacy not only relates to the level of skill that is acquired, but how that particular level will be received in society, potentially serving to further marginalize HL learners.

TSE, L. (2001)

In an effort to explain possible language shift resistance and/or reversal, Lucy Tse conducted a research study to see what factors and experiences caused a small group of heritage language speakers to develop and maintain their biliteracy in English and the HL. As language shift causes a HL to erode and disappear by the third generation, Tse hoped to analyze the factors that lead to the maintenance of HL literacy.

Through a process of reaching out to faculty at linguistically diverse university campuses in southern California as well as snowball sampling of potential biliterate individuals, Tse recruited 10 participants, 3 male and 7 female, all high school graduates enrolled at a community college or institute of higher learning. The subjects needed to be fluent in English, and exposed to the HL in the home or community as a child. They needed to have been born in the United States or arrived before the age of six. They needed to not have studied formally for longer than two weeks in the HL country, but

they had to have attained at least a reading ability equivalent to a HL native-speaking adolescent.

Subjects completed a survey that asked them to self-identify their language ability, with the researcher looking for capability to read at least a teen novel in the HL. The subjects were then asked to read a passage from a teen magazine in their respective HLs and write an English summary. This process of "immediate recall protocol" was used to validate their self-identified literacy capabilities, after which the subjects moved on to the semi-structured interview phase (Tse, 2001, p. 684).

These themes were the two factors that influenced the subjects' literacy development the most: language vitality (the status/prestige of a language) and literacy environment and experiences. Under the umbrella of language vitality, the most critical factor for the subjects was having a peer group that equally valued the HL. One example of this positive affiliation with a group was of the Cuban-American participants with which she could speak *Cuban* Spanish. Tse beautifully characterizes the Spanish language as being a "passport to make bilingual friends" for one of the participants (Tse, 2001, p. 688). A second factor was HL institutional support, such as a bilingual church, in which the HL was associated with positive status. Lastly, home and parental support and encouragement for the children to not abandon the language and instead see the academic and societal benefits of bilingualism were seen as key in this regard.

Under the second umbrella of literacy environment, these participants received access to HL print materials from childhood in the form of books, comic books, religious texts, and grocery lists. Additionally, despite the HL having a somewhat stigmatized minority status in English-speaking schools, any potential halt in literacy in early adolescence was met with latent literacy resurgence in early adulthood which built upon the foundation established in childhood. Finally, all subjects had HL schooling, which

legitimized the HL as a "sanctioned subject of study" (Tse, 2001, p. 696). They even adopted leadership roles when enrolled in high school language classes because of their previous background knowledge. Interestingly, however, they all received negative feedback from their language teachers who disvalued their native accents and expressions and oftentimes-faulty grammar or proper use of accents. These experiences fostered lower confidence in HL ability.

Tse addresses the fact that her difficulty in recruiting candidates is indicative of the struggle that the general HL speaking population has in maintaining literacy in both languages. Tse advocates that these two factors work hand in hand to promote biliteracy, seeing that the learners were receptive to developing their bilingual literacy only when they viewed the HL as useful and prestigious. The power of peer membership and acceptance cannot be overemphasized in this study, as almost all participants underwent a period of disassociation with the HL in early adolescence, and then experienced resurgence. Tse's research concludes with the necessity of home, school, and community to work cohesively in allowing the HL to prevail.

MOJE, E.M., & LUKE, A. (2009)

Elizabeth Moje and Allan Luke provide a theoretical review of the notion of both literacy and identity as social practices. The research question being asked pertains to how particular views of identity shape how researchers think about literacy, and vice versa. This is done by conceptualizing identity through five metaphors: identity as difference, sense of self/subjectivity, mind or consciousness, narrative, and position. To do this, the authors recognize literacy practices as social. Identity is also thought of as a theoretical or practical construct both in literacy research and education, as "identity labels can be used to stereotype, privilege, or marginalize readers and writers" (Moje &

Luke, 2009, p. 416). Identity labels that characterize how one reads and writes can impact how that person is recognized socially, as well as how one sees oneself.

A certain aspect of the research pertaining to the identity as difference metaphor bears relevance to the identity issues faced by struggling HL learners. The authors discuss the fact that children whose language and literacy practices do not correlate with the school language and literacy practices were "devalued and marginalized" from school learning (Moje & Luke, 2009, p. 421). Heritage learners with less-proficient literacy skills are disparaged and set apart from their more proficient classmates. If teachers and mentors along with the school system in general do not take the necessary steps to provide a support space from which the necessary literacy skills can be scaffolded for these learners, then we run the risk of setting such students on a path to possible academic failure and social disappointment. Moje and Luke end their study with similar concerns and implications for educators and policymakers.

CONCLUSION

Once this basis for what it fundamentally means to be a HL learner was established, we can then explore the critical literacy issues that are prevalent in this targeted group of learners. The authors in this section promote the commonality of viewing literacy as a social practice. From a social view, HLLs are learning from exposure to the literacy practices and writing of the world around them (Faigley, 1986). If we speak in reference to those learners that are situated in lower SES communities where the variety of the HL is less than academically proficient, the level of the HL that is used for oral and written communication is negatively affected. The language used is often of the imperfect variety, so the input is not representative of the target language (Fillmore,

1991). As learners mirror incorrect forms of the L2 in speaking and writing, they then pass this form on to siblings and peers around them.

Research has shown that HLLs' native languages are being lost at a staggering rate. Literacy practices need to be maintained in both the HL/L1 and the L2, as the HL has shown to begin to erode as soon as a bilingual program or practice is exited. Literacy skills need to be taken into account when placing HLL in the proper school classes (Carreira, 2004; Hakuta, 2011). Just as higher proficient students need to be challenged by learners at or above their level, the reverse is also true. A low-proficiency HLL needs the linguistic support of a class targeted for native HLLs. This also means that English language arts and foreign language classrooms should revisit curricula to ensure that the needs of particular struggling learners are being appropriately met. Menken & Kleyn (2009) accurately conveys the critical need for this distinction, expressing:

> In fact, the vast majority of immigrants to the United States receive instruction only in English, the misconception being that doing so will help students learn English better and more quickly. But the English language programming offered to these students in high school is often mismatched to their needs. English classes are either too easy—like a "baby class"—or too difficult, as in English language arts classes that demand high levels of English literacy (What Opportunities Have We Missed? section, para. 7)

Based on this problematic characterization and distinction from varied literacy practice, such stratification affects the identity issues faced by HL learners. Younger learners express desires to read & write in HL, but this shifts starting in adolescence, as this age group has a desire to integrate into the target culture. The threat of L1 language loss thus emerges, as these students face the risk of rejecting the HL completely. Such language loss varies regionally, based on the dominance of the surrounding sociocultural context.

Some have attributed this to ethnolinguistic affiliation (Carreira, 2004; Cho et. al., 2004; Lee, 2005). Oral & literacy competence thus further serve as cultural identity markers, as discussed in the previous section.

II. CURRICULUM DESIGN TO STRUCTURE PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

As research in the field of heritage language learning progresses, educators and applied linguists are bringing to light the critical differences that set HL learning apart from mainstream foreign language or content-based learning. Much like how curriculum design is uniquely structured for foreign language (FL) or English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms, certain critical components of the design must be addressed for an effective HL classroom to be established. This section will discuss elements of needs analysis for current heritage language instruction, and then goals and content that must be addressed to suit the needs of this distinct group of learners, and lastly proposals for curricular design and assessment. The studies are ordered chronologically within those three sections. They will showcase various qualitative and quantitative case studies, as well as reviews and critiques of prior research pertinent to HL curriculum design. Pedagogical implications will follow this analysis.

Given the unique definition of heritage language learners, it should become apparent that the goals, content, and sequencing on which FL programs are designed do not exactly align to the needs of HLL, given their distinct linguistic proficiency. It is for this reason that this section will highlight key findings pertaining to curriculum design for this specialized group of learners, so that language educators will be able to address the instructional needs of this growing population.

Needs Analysis

JENSON, L., & LLOSA, L. (2007)

Based on previous research that has suggested both cognitive and social advantages of bilingualism and biliteracy, Linda Jenson and Lorena Llosa conducted a survey at UCLA of 128 participants to examine how much their prior HL reading experiences, processes, and strategies employed when reading helped to shape their goals, preferences, and motivation when it came to HL maintenance. The findings revealed that maintaining HL identity was important to 94% of the students because it reflected cultural ties and also allowed them to communicate with family members and future children (Jensen & Llosa, 2007, p. 103).

As previous literacy-based research has proven, exposure to print materials at home from an early age instills positive attitudes towards the development of literacy skills (Heath, 1983, as cited in Jenson & Llosa, 2007, p. 105). 60% of respondents grew up with newspapers printed in the HL, 50% had books, and lower percentages had other material such as bibles, dictionaries, comics, wall writings, etc. in the HL. However, less than half of the respondents reported being read to as a child in the HL, which is another factor that has been shown to promote literacy skills. At least 50% of the students self-assessed themselves as slow readers because they were not read to, nor did they read much HL print on their own. When asked about reading strategies, very few reported transferring skills such as sounding out words, getting the meaning from text, and finding the main idea/skimming (Jensen & Llosa, 2007, p. 107). 34% preferred reading cultural/historical texts and folktales, which serves as an implication for curriculum designers and educators to capitalize on the rich educational content afforded by incorporating such texts and materials into the curriculum. As students admitted to spending very little time reading, their self-assessments classified themselves as less

proficient readers and writers, and more proficient HL speakers and listeners. This is a critical factor for future HL curriculum design, as materials and instruction should be structured to address this realistic need.

LEE, J.S., & KIM, H.Y. (2008)

Jin Sook Lee and Hae-Young Kim conducted an investigation into Korean HLL attitudes, motivations, and self-perceptions towards their experience as HL students. The authors open their study with discussing the needs of this unique group of learners, emphasizing the fact that without proper financial or institutional support, HL curricula is forced to rely on the same materials used in the foreign language classroom, which has been proven unsuitable for the HL context (Lee & Kim, 2008, p. 160). For the study, Lee & Kim surveyed 101 Korean undergraduate students (34-item questionnaire with Likert scale/open-ended questions), and conducted interviews with 10 students (in-depth, semi-structured to allow themes to emerge).

Quantitative results revealed that: the perceived value of the Korean language was not very high; that the media's portrayal of the language was negative; and that the United States does not care about any language other than English. Instrumental motivation and utility was not what was driving the students to learn, but rather cultural obligation (Lee & Kim, 2008, p. 165). Respondents cited a lack of literacy skills and ability to communicate with family (linguistic proficiency) as well as lack of "shared cultural expectations and beliefs" between family members as key motivators to learn the HL. The implication for curriculum designers here is to include explicit cultural content via authentic materials. To address linguistic proficiency, the suggestion was offered to incorporate speech communities as part of community-based language learning. When asked about HL instruction, respondents expressed a desire to incorporate HL language

study as part of the regular curriculum, "indicating a need for systematicity and academic formulation" in instruction to conjure more legitimacy (Lee & Kim, 2008, p. 169-173). Thus a content-based curriculum which incorporates explicit cultural knowledge instruction and extended opportunities for fluency practice and literacy skills is recommended for an effective and motivating HL curriculum.

CARREIRA, M. & KAGAN, O. (2011)

The goal of this paper was to analyze results from the National Heritage Language Resource Center's 45 discrete-point question survey, disseminated through language instructors to university-level HL students. The questions were autobiographical in nature, and addressed attitudes, goals, and experiences with the HL as well as self-assessments of HL/English competency. Responses were collected from 1,732 students, and the first 500 responses were read and then coded for emerging themes. As the results were comprised of 22 various languages, the researchers appropriately noted the limitation that this variation is only reflective of California's demographics, and the subsequent HL offerings at mostly California-based universities (Carreira & Kagan, 2011, p. 43-45). Another limitation stems from the reliability in self-assessment methods to correctly identify linguistic proficiency.

Given that the majority of students were born in the United States, the HL was primarily used until the age of 5, at which point a combination of English and HL use emerged. The data showed that respondents were primarily sequential bilinguals who "acquired the structural foundation of their first language" given the larger amount of HL input in the home, and thus allowing "complete grammar systems" to be formed (Montrul, 2008, as cited in Carreira & Kagan, 2011, p. 43). From a literacy perspective,

71% of respondents reported being read to in the HL as a child, though the development of oral skills far surpassed literacy skills as they progressed into their college years.

The researchers then segmented survey results into detailed findings of eight various language groups (Spanish, Korean, Mandarin & Cantonese, Russian, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Persian), which effectively stratified the HL population into their respective goals for learning, proficiencies, and motivation. Such classification affords curriculum designers with the take-away that HL classrooms are not "one-size-fits-all" and thus a multi-level curriculum would be the most beneficial (Carreira & Kagan, 2011, p. 48). The respondents expressed overall positive attitudes toward the HL, with primarily personal reasons for learning such as connection to cultural roots and communicating with family members. Learning objectives were to increase vocabulary and improve writing, which are both goals that curriculum designers can take into account in their materials development (Carreira & Kagan, 2011, p. 48). The researchers also shed light on implications to keep in mind for an effective HL curriculum: communication with family and cultural ties are the main source of motivation for HLL; HL instructors must possess the appropriate background and training for effectively teaching HLL; and community-based instruction capitalizing on the aid of locals in the community could provide valuable resources in supporting instruction.

Goals & Content

POTOWSKI, K. & CARREIRA, M. (2004)

The researchers open by speaking to the fact that while the Hispanic population is increasing in this country at a staggering rate, the instructional practices in Spanish FL classrooms are not rising to meet the challenge of the diversified student mix. Thus, a need for teacher training in the Spanish for Native Speakers (SNS) realm is high. Current curricula do not capitalize on the rich content-based material afforded by culturally authentic materials as learning tools. Additionally, the fact that the linguistic and cultural skills already possessed by HL speakers, despite how valuable they may be to economic prosperity, are mostly overlooked. Potowski and Carreira address the pedagogical differences in dealing with HL learners and subsequent implications for the SNS/SFL classroom.

HLL may be fluent in oral proficiency, yet have absolutely no academic basis in the language. From a metalinguistic perspective, they may be able to correctly identify the correct verb to use, but have no idea why it is the correct choice. The researchers hypothesize that to address such issues, it would be more appropriate to place HLL in classrooms that functioned like Spanish language arts classes as opposed to FL classes. They make the comparison of placing native English speakers into an ESL as opposed to English language arts class (Potowski & Carreira, 2004, p. 429).

Another aspect to explore in this linguistic predicament is the socioeconomic value of the language. Despite the increase in population, the Spanish language is eroding at staggering rates. The language shift to English is on the rise, and this can be explained (especially in the Southwestern United States) by the "low socioeconomic standing of the Spanish-speaking population in this area" (Potowski & Carreira, 2004, p. 429). There is quite a different state of the Spanish language in an area such as Miami, where the

language and its population is received in a much more positive light. Information gathered by Potowski & Carreira also shed light on the higher high school dropout rate and lower scholastic assessment scores of United States Latinos. This could be attributed to various aspects of the educational make-up of the homes in which the learners are raised and the families that raise them.

The researchers cite a study which states that only 39% of Hispanic undergraduate students were read to on a daily basis as children, which is worrisome when research reveals that on average children that are read to by their parents perform better scholastically. Not only do Latino households have less children's books, but often HLL are the first generation in their family to receive formal academic education. It is for this reason that they were possibly not read to as children, as they lack the fundamental support system, and subsequently experience higher dropout rates (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Horn, Peter, & Rooney, 2002; Fry, 2002, as cited in Potowski & Carreira, 2004, p. 430).

As implications for teachers based on these findings, SNS instructors must take certain steps to address these unique needs. Materials for HLL need to be "carefully calibrated to not just the linguistic level of Latino students but also to their academic abilities and background" (Potowski & Carreira, 2004, p. 430). The key take-away from their research review is for HL instructors to be aware of the affective, academic, sociolinguistic and cultural identity issues that are prevalent to this group of learners, and to apply curricular standards to their instruction that more closely line up with a language arts curriculum than a foreign language one. Appropriate teacher training must be designed for this purpose.

KAGAN, O. (2005)

Olga Kagan opens her paper by expressing the critical need to separate instruction and materials for HLL from that of the traditional foreign language (FL) curriculum. Kalgan cites a key distinction between the two curricula, in that HL acquisition begins in the home, while FL acquisition is typically begun in the classroom. Additionally, the establishment of community schools (or lack thereof) affects the support and maintenance of heritage languages among speakers (Kagan, 2005, p. 213). For those HLL who enroll in a post-secondary foreign language program to maintain the language, their high oral proficiency but low literacy skills create the need for a curriculum to balance this hybrid proficiency mix.

The key finding here is that HLL deserve access to instruction that is at their level of ability, with the risk that identity issues may arise, as HLL could perceive placement in a HL classroom without account of their proficiency level as a form of discrimination. It is for this reason that Kagan advocates for proficiency-based placement and curricular design that is "based on measurable characteristics" and not simply country of origin. (2005, p. 214). Some research suggests that HLL without literacy should be classified as true beginners, a hypothesis which should call for future research and exploration to justify validity.

Kagan examines her claims by classifying Russian HLL into three groups. The first group is comprised of learners who have received the majority of their formal education in Russia. Group 2 students also attended Russian schools, but only for 5-7 years as their schooling was interrupted by emigration to the United States. Thus, sociocultural conventions stemming from adult interactions did not develop. Group 3 students were known as "incomplete acquirers" whose education was halted at an even younger age. A study of Russian-speaking UCLA students (n= 41) that asked these HLL

to translate text from English to Russian served to corroborate these classifications, as "grammatical structure and vocabulary correlated well with years of schooling" (Kagan, 2005, p. 216). The key implication here for educators is to analyze biographical variables such as the amount of schooling in the HL when stratifying HLL based on proficiency and placement into the appropriate curricular track.

Finally, Kagan's review of past research reveals that using material "not specifically intended for HLL has been generally unsuccessful" and is not suitable to the "cognitive and cultural characteristics of adult HLL" (2005, p. 218). Further review of Kagan's research legitimates the implication and need for educators and curriculum designers to create instructional materials unique to the HL classroom.

Approaches to Curriculum Design & Assessment

SCHWARZER, D. & PETRON, M. (2005)

David Schwarzer and Mary Petron present an in-depth qualitative case study of three Spanish HL students to explore their perceptions of the HL classroom and to offer alternative pedagogical and principled approaches for developing HL curricula. The researchers conducted 90-minute, semi-structured oral interviews to allow participants to discuss their course experience along with the role of the HL in their lives. The primary data source was triangulated, and then follow-up clarifications and written compositions were collected and analyzed for thematic analysis and linguistic gains over time. It is important to note that this course was offered in the Spanish department as a "bridge" between the lower/upper division literature courses, and both the HL and Spanish FL courses utilized the same textbooks, syllabi, and worksheets (Schwarzer & Petron, 2005, p. 570). Placement into the course was based on a placement test designed for FL and not HL learners.

The themes that emerged from the analysis included the participants' critique of their Spanish class, self-assessment of their own proficiency, and stated family/cultural ties as reasons for studying the HL. Regarding the first theme, two participants shared the experience that they were not given any supplementary assignments because of the instructors' perceived belief that the students already knew the material. They were subsequently asked to run errands for the instructor. The third participant stated that not only was the class primarily grammar-focused, it was identical to the SFL class that his friends were enrolled in. This is important to note, as the class only addressed a "standard variety of Spanish" without "contextualizing that material" and thus did not "utilize the students' functional ability" in the HL, leading to a loss of interest in the material (Schwarzer & Petron, 2005, p. 572).

Students reported that though their vocabulary was deficient, the class did not offer them instruction in this regard, as they were hoping it would. A strong desire to connect with family was an impetus for this increased quest for vocabulary acquisition. It was clear that cultural ties played a huge role in the students' identities. The students suggested incorporating films and music from Spanish-speaking countries to broaden their horizons. Additionally, one student expressed the need for an integrated speaking component, as she felt the "opportunity to speak was crucial to improving her oral production" (Schwarzer & Petron, 2005, p. 574). Consequently, incorporating the four integrated skills of speaking with reading, writing, and listening is critical to effective HL curriculum design. The researchers acknowledge at the conclusion that there is no ideal class in existence for addressing these needs, and thus present a call for colleagues in the field to pursue further research of these critical issues.

POTOWSKI, K., BERNE, J., CLARK, A., & HAMMERAND, A. (2008)

Potowski et al. begin their paper on Spanish HL curriculum design highlighting the fact that the majority of Spanish speakers in the United States have never studied the language formally at an advanced level, nor have they developed age-appropriate literacy levels (2008, p. 25). American elementary schools with large Latino populations thus see FL classrooms filled with Spanish HL students that already "possess communicative competence in Spanish" despite being English dominant, and thus "reap no benefits" from the FL classroom. For this reason, a curriculum resembling Spanish language arts would be far more beneficial than a FL curriculum. Although Spanish for Native Speakers courses have been implemented at the high school level, rarely has this been done at the elementary level, for English development is the primary goal of instruction at those institutions. When faced with the phenomena of language attrition and

incomplete acquisition at such crucial stages of linguistic development, the incorporation of a Spanish HL curriculum could "promote a truly bilingual citizenry by solidifying Spanish language use and development" (Potowski et al., 2008, p. 26).

Potowski and colleagues consulted a variety of standards (national, local, ELA, content-area) to blend and develop ideas for the purposes of establishing a K-8 SNS/HL curriculum. In addition to learning from reviewing state standards such as that of New York, which implemented native-language support in addition to ESL support for HLL, Potowski and researchers scoured educator professional development sources from Mexico and Spain to discover what native-Spanish language arts standards and processes are in place (2011, p. 28). The implication is noted for curriculum designers to begin with seeking out their respective state's standards in both language and content-area instruction. From various publications, the researchers concluded that HL curricula should be balanced in terms of the three components of language, content, and culture, and both content and grammar should be spiraled from grade to grade. The focus of grammar is presented for usage, and not simply grammar for its own sake. As formal presentation abilities in the HL is an ultimate goal, the researchers also consulted College Board AP exams for more formal, advanced content that could be adjusted for the elementary grade levels (Potowski et. al., 2008, p. 29).

The spiraled nature of the curriculum is critical. While content and skill spirals occur within each grade, vertical spirals referring to skills such as inferencing and analyzing texts in authentic ways are revisited in "challenging and authentic ways" at "developmentally appropriate levels" to create distinct layering of scope and sequence. Information was then presented in "extended thematic units" that also accounted for the shifting of registers to promote as well-balanced of exposure to Spanish varietal forms as possible (Potowski et al., 2008, p. 30). Potowski concludes her analysis by confirming the

reliability of the learning scenarios that have been piloted in Chicago SNS classrooms, and by stating the critical need for professional development opportunities in heritage language teaching.

COLOMBI, M.C. (2009)

In relating to the demographic shift in the United States, Colombi addresses the perceived shift in the value of Spanish as a HL, given how readily it is spoken after English (2009, p. 40). This poses a curricular challenge given the various degrees of students' linguistic proficiencies due to differing ages, academic backgrounds, and literacy skills. Columbi proposes addressing these challenges by applying a systemic functional linguistics (SFL) curriculum, and emphasizing on the meaning-making functions of the HL as an effective pedagogy.

Since language is shaped by the social contexts in which it is used, language is functional for a variety of purposes fitting for HLLs given their various registers of the language and goals for learning/using the HL (Columbi, 2009, p. 42). The genre-based literacy approach may effectively influence the curriculum design in this context, as it would utilize thematic clusters of texts that incorporate "different [authentic] text types or genres in a variety of modalities." While presenting a variety of topical themes, language is explicitly highlighted in the context of various genres (poetry, short stories, editorials) that stem from different registers and geographic regions of the Spanish language to show how each variety can be functional depending on the social context in which it is used (Columbi, 2009, p. 43). This SFL curricular approach develops HLL awareness of language form and use. This functions to affirm the variety of Spanish language and registers used by HLL.

DISCUSSION

The questions used in the National Heritage Language Survey (Carreira & Kagan, 2011) reflect those found in the majority of surveys used by researchers in this paper. To recap, these questions related to HL students' attitudes, motivations, experiences and goals of learning the HL, as well as target self-assessments of their abilities in understanding or communicating in the HL. The studies of Kagan (2005) and Jenson & Llosa (2007) both speak to the importance of gathering biographical data in survey form for conducting needs analysis and subsequently planning appropriate and relevant curricula for HL learners. Future research in the field may establish new trends for the best mix of methodologies to assess HL proficiency and placement.

In addressing pedagogical implications, it is also interesting to note that the articles were each conducted based on different heritage languages (Spanish, Korean, Russian, etc.), yet they achieved quite similar results and conclusions. This speaks to the growing need to address the curricular and instructional needs of students in this country that bring to the classroom an already established linguistic proficiency in another language, however varied the levels may be. Previous research has established the need for more "extensive" HL programs, including the development of specialized curriculum guidelines and teacher training (Schwarzer & Petron, 2005, p. 569).

To contextualize the level of critical need for HL instruction demanded by the shifting American population, let us begin with the case of the Spanish language. Research and census data confirm that Spanish is the largest growing minority language in the United States, which carries its own implications for addressing the needs of a population bearing various levels of proficiency in their native language. Although immigrants to this country arrive from a variety of Spanish-speaking nations, it is a younger population of Mexican descent that comprises the majority, thus creating the

need for appropriate K-12 instruction to meet this linguistic diversity (Colombi, 2009, p. 39-40). This creates a dichotomy of this unique case of bilingualism, given that students fluent in HLs like Spanish are encouraged to learn English in mainstream schools at the expense of losing their HL, only to then be forced to reacquire a foreign language in secondary and post-secondary institutions. Students in these classes, even though they may possess a particular level of fluency in the HL, will most often learn alongside new learners with no proficiency in the language using the same materials and following the same curriculum (Columbi, 2009).

From a needs analysis perspective, the student mix (heritage/non-heritage learner) was a factor to be considered for HL classroom and learning design. Lee & Kim's (2008) study revealed that almost 60% of Korean HL learners said that HL and non-HL learners should be housed in the same classroom, while the remaining 40% believed in separating the two groups. The advantages for the inclusion of non-HL learners was perceived as chance to display academic recognition for their linguistic and cultural knowledge of Korean. Additional reasons cited the fact that the presence of non-HL's "instills more pride in the language" in showing that Korean "has value even for non-HL learners" since they want to learn it, and then HL learners can act as "linguistic and cultural brokers" for their non-HL peers. Those in favor of separation cited a perceived lack of fairness in grading as well as "instructional content-pacing issues" as factors (Lee & Kim, 2008, p. 178).

In addressing the best practices for training language teachers in instructing a HL population, Potowski & Carreira (2004) suggest aligning the standards of instruction to those found in the language arts classroom more so than in the foreign language classroom. Such instruction would only be possible if a two-track curriculum could be implemented, which is of course tied to available funding and resources. In a study

conducted by Yu (2008) the lack of funding issue is addressed, as this lack prohibits schools and institutions from locating and selecting skilled teachers that are qualified in both their linguistic background/proficiency and ability to differentiate instruction for this targeted group of learners. If funding were not an issue, the best possible solution is the incorporation of a two-track curriculum, which previous research suggests has the benefit of providing optimal support to both types of learners, thus increasing both retention rate, proficiency, and enrollment for both groups (p. 191). Kondo-Brown (2010) also addresses the financial support issue, as lack of funding can severely impact both the quality of instruction and availability of adequate materials needed for the HL classroom. Often, HL instruction is reduced to community-sponsored programs that do not take precedence to students' mainstream academic obligations.

Themes that HLLs valued the most in their instruction consistently included improved fluency and communication skills with family members, and increased exposure and instruction pertaining to HL culture. Kagan's research of Russian HLL reveals that emotional and cultural motivation is a key factor in strengthening students' positive attitudes and instrumental motivation in learning the HL (2005, p. 219). The emotional attachment from family ties again proves to be important in fostering and maintaining HL study. The instrumental motivation afforded by learning the HL to maintain familial ties has been shown to increase perceived value of the language (Jensen & Llosa, 2007) in the lesser-commonly taught languages. This is intriguing to analyze from the contrasting perspective of the Spanish HL, which seems to have a declining socioeconomic value as perceived by HL speakers.

A pedagogical implication to be considered is the incorporation of the Internet for reading target HL materials as sources of authentic HL cultural input. Results of the National Heritage Language Survey revealed that 84.5% of respondents rarely, if ever,

accessed the Internet in the HL (Carreira & Kagan, 2011, pg. 45). It would behoove instructors and curriculum designers to incorporate the use of the Internet in planning given the multitude of ways that such material can provide access to not only cultural artifacts but also instantaneous communication opportunities using social networking. Columbi (2009) and Potowski (2008) also advocate for organizing text into thematic clusters for effective distribution and attention to the mix of content, culture, and grammar. The positive associations of maintaining the HL as a marker of cultural identity is a motivating factor to consider when selecting appropriate materials for instruction.

A key suggestion posited by the researchers is that of addressing language usage within "sociocultural constructs" of the HLL, since "they are often part of an oppressed ethnic and racial minority" in the United States (Schwarzer & Petron, 2005, p. 575). HLL may have experienced negative experiences in mainstream classrooms, given that their particular variety of the HL may be ungrammatical or full of mistakes. As students may experience language identity issues in this regard, appropriate HL curricula should address HLL needs and experiences by choosing authentic materials, discussing language policies, and assessing the students' performance as a whole. This would achieve the goal of aligning curriculum with students' varying goals when it comes to learning the HL.

Sociopolitical implications of using HL in the classroom arose in discussion of HL regional varieties and registers. In the mainstream FL classroom, HLL noted an "overemphasis of educated registers only (Schwarzer & Petron, 2005, p. 577). Effective HL curriculum design should draw awareness on the linguistic varieties of various contact languages, and would incorporate materials comprised of authentic texts to educate students about which usage is correct for specific contexts and situations. I would encourage future study to look at HL curriculum design from a metalinguistic awareness approach, for several studies addressed that fact that HL learners could self-correct the

proper form of verbs to be utilized, yet were not aware of the reasoning for doing so (Schwarzer & Petron, 2005, p. 574). To tie this factor back to the initial need to collect biographical survey data of HLL when creating a course, studies have found that survey data can also increase metalinguistic awareness in respondents while affording the instructor with opportunities to create pedagogically sound materials and curricula to better meet the needs of the students (Jenson & Llosa, 2007, p. 109).

Jenson & Llosa (2007), Carreira & Kagan (2011) again highlight the importance of being read to as a child in developing literacy skills. Where sound literacy skills are not present, teachers must focus on scaffolding learning in order to fills these gaps. Thus a goal of HL literacy instruction should be to foster the effective transfer of reading and writing strategies from one language to other, if that is viable for the learner (Potowski & Carreira, 2004). In Kagan's translation exercise with the lowest proficient group of Russian HLL, the translations revealed that after just 8-weeks of literacy instruction in an HL course, the Group 3 students reflected the same or higher proficiency than non-HLL with three or more years of language study. The vocabulary used by the HLL coupled with their minimal morphological mistakes allowed for the HLL translations to "pass as native discourse" much more than those of the non-HLL (Kagan, 2005, p. 217). This should instill hope in HL curriculum designers and instructors that critical linguistic improvements can appear upon effective and targeted HL instruction.

A key concern also addressed by Kondo-Brown is the literacy level of the learners, despite possible high levels of oral fluency. A suggestion to address this need is made in the offering of "homogenous accelerated classes" for HLL in lieu of a combined HL and NHL foreign language classroom, in which the development of key literacy skills can be addressed more effectively (Kondo-Brown, 2010, p. 31). Should such a classroom

exist, instructors can focus on teaching HL students about the formal/informal varieties of the HL as well as appropriate register and vocabulary usage

Though I've addressed the pedagogical implications for HL learners re-acquiring or building upon an incomplete linguistic foundation, a few points can be made for instruction that should be designed for those HLL removed from concentrated ethnolinguistic regions, such those speakers of Middle Eastern or Eastern European countries residing in smaller pockets within United States cities. In these cases, the availability of literacy materials and access to technology is crucial. Young learners require exposure to print and media sources, as well as the Internet for authentic, interactive communication with native speakers.

The majority of research in this chapter has concluded with the critical need for developing proper teacher training and professional development opportunities for those working with HL populations. Such a need begs the question whether current second or foreign language teacher training should include specialized instruction, or even certification, in the pedagogy and methodology in differentiating instruction for HLL. Given how much this diversified population of learners with varied linguistic proficiency is seeing increased enrollment in both language and mainstream classrooms, it would be safe to assume that such a measure will and should be implemented in the near future.

CONCLUSION

The vast immigration of individuals in the country has created a need for distinct language programs to address the various levels of proficiency of for speakers of languages other than English. An interesting facet of HL learning is the fact that HL researchers have proven that rarely do speakers retain the HL after the third generation has lived in the United States, especially given the country's penchant for encouraging

mainstream English development as rapidly as possible. Accordingly, as compilations of research on HL learning suggest, the primary reasons for enrolling in HL courses stem from a need to maintain their home language and culture, and establish or further develop literacy skills in the HL (Carreira & Kagan, 2011).

The sound theoretical framework is the basis for the authors' shared belief that formal classroom instruction for these learners needs to be separate from the mainstream second language classroom, because the HLL's prior linguistic knowledge is critical when considering how best to scaffold instruction to effectively build upon pre-existing knowledge. Valdés best explains this by explaining that we lack information on the "role of formal instruction in restructuring or reshaping" this knowledge system (2005, p. 416). Language educators need to explore how much and to what extent established L2 methodology can be incorporated, and what aspects need to be re-designed to address the needs of these learners. In most cases, these learners would need instruction in the more formal academic registers of the HL, and in the case of contact varieties of a language such as Spanish, the decision for which version of the language to base instruction on would have to be made. From an instructional perspective, teachers must incorporate a variety of learning strategies for the targeted pedagogical domains to be addressed effectively in the HL classroom.

III. SOCIOPOLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Borrowing from Richard Ruiz's concept of orientations in language planning, the "complex of dispositions" toward languages and their roles in society, it is critical to reflect on orientations toward HL and HLL in the United States (Ruiz, 1984, p. 16). Given the national and state policies that exist to currently mandate the form and amount of second language instruction that is available for multilingual students, it is critical for educators and policy-makers alike to reconceptualize current views on the status of language minority students in classrooms. Doing this requires a shift in seeing language move away from the perspective of language-as-a-problem, to seeing language-as-a-right and language-as-a-resource for the betterment and benefit of our global society.

Language-as-a-Problem

The language-as-a-problem context initially arose out of negative societal views being placed on non-English speakers in the United States. Nelleke Van Deusen-Scholl (2003) argues that this was first apparent in the country with the attempted eradication of Native American languages and the subsequent switch to predominantly English language instruction. Though this was first seen in the 19th and 20th centuries in this country, there are striking parallels between the treatment of this language minority group and the more recent "English-Only" movements that swept portions of the Southwest (California, Arizona). In these instances, the HL is in a power struggle with the English language, as not only does English carry greater social dominance, but this negative ideology causes the identity and linguistic capability of the HL speaker to be defined by the ethnic term with which one is referred to (i.e. a "Mexican" speaks Spanish, but "Hispanic" implies a lesser linguistic knowledge). Such views associated the group as a

whole with poverty, low academic achievement, and "little or no social mobility" (Ruiz, 1984, p. 19).

In this country, Mexican-American students have had to bear the brunt the of perceived lower rank in society. Ruiz eloquently pens the language problem into words by expressing "a sociolinguistic Darwinism will force on us the notion that subordinate languages are problems to be resolved (Ruiz, 1984, p. 19). In 1968, the Bilingual Education Act was created to recognize the needs of linguistic minority students. However, as Ruiz even effectively points out, the objective of this program was to teach English at the expense of the first language.

Prior research from the 1970's and 80's have all addressed this somewhat shocking attitude that non-English speakers were linguistically deficient, and only by becoming monolingual English speakers would they feel truly liberated as members of society. It is no wonder that HL speakers in this country have been marginalized for being anything less than the status quo. The more evocative notion that is being raised here is that bilingualism is seen as a remarkable and accepted asset all over the world, but it is English-speaking monolingualism that is lauded as desirable in the United States (Cummins, 2005).

Interestingly, the shift toward the need for foreign language study in the United States was brought about during the Cold War era, for after the launch of Sputnik in 1957, the government reassessed the learning of foreign languages for their importance in fostering international relations. Fast-forward 50 years, and in the wake of September 11, 2001, the United States government again is establishing a framework for the study of linguistic minority languages such as Farsi and Pashto. Van Deusen-Scholl (2003) concludes that the need to reassess the role of HL from the previously non-favored

standpoint is critical, as these languages are an "untapped resource" that could benefit the country from a political and global economic standpoint.

In his review of established policies and practices, Kenji Hakuta (2011) narrates the journey that bilingual education and the instruction of language minority children has encountered in this country. He, like several of the principal researchers in the field of HL study, firmly attest to the educational policy amendments that are needed to offer HL learners with the instruction that is required to properly address their linguistic needs. The promotion of bilingualism has always been met with opposition in the United States, as those who support it have a belief system that honors where these children come from, and those opposed to it honor where they will end up, as speakers of English (Hakuta, 2011, p. 163). To corroborate, Hakuta traces the negative image that America has shown toward bilingualism, stemming from early anti-immigration sentiment.

Despite this, Hakuta argues for the cognitive benefits and advantages of bilingualism. In fact, Hakuta references the work of Claude Goldenberg (2008), which supports the fact that instruction in the native language "results in better outcomes in literacy in English" (Hakuta. 2011, p. 166). Hakuta continues with this point by discussing the importance of assessment and proper proficiency-level placement in schools by analyzing a case study of a school district in California with a successful ELL population. Research from the school showed that tracking early performance on reading and math standardized tests can serve as predictors of later academic success as students move through secondary schooling. He concludes his argument by speaking to the fundamental value of bilingualism with its inherent value in the transmission of communication and culture.

A critical and alarming perspective of the language-as-a-problem debate is addressed in the research of Wayne Wright. Wright (2007) contextualizes the disconnect

existing in the United States, in which the economic/global need for multilingual individuals is juxtaposed with state-sponsored English-only policies and federal mandates stemming from No Child Left Behind (NCLB) whose policies move the country further toward English monolingualism. Prior to the passage of NCLB, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1994) declared the value in multilingual skills and the national resource that is constituted in such skills.

When NCLB passed in 2001, "progress in federal educational policy over the years, in recognition of the value of societal bilingualism and support for programs promoting the development and maintenance of students' heritage languages, came to an abrupt end" (Wright, 2007, p. 1). In its place, Title III "Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students" contains no language alluding to the development of bilingualism, only exclusive English language development. These goals are operationalized by state standardized testing, which holds schools and state agencies accountable for increasing English proficiency and high academic achievement. The law suggests that bilingualism is only allowable for limited English proficient students if the "program includes English-only students who want to learn the LEP students' native language" (Wright, 2007, p. 2). As such lofty goals are virtually unattainable, such mandates effectively work to eradicate the progress of HL maintenance programs that have been established in communities around the country.

Wayne Wright's extensive ethnographic research on the topic of HL program demise in this country shows that certain regional HL programs were terminated due to the lack of training and certification of HL teachers (2007). Wright's research of the Khmer HL population in certain California public schools showed the gradual reduction of primary language instruction to only 45-90 minutes a day, with Khmer speakers being removed from these classes and placed in power literacy (English) classes for the

ultimate goal of drilling practice for better performance on state testing. Interviews revealed that decreased instruction eventually lead to the loss of Khmer culture among the HLL. Additionally, reduced instruction resulted in the debilitating lack of communication between parents and children, as they did not speak each others' languages. Parents mourned the cultural values lost by their children, and children lost the ability to view their parents as resources due to the breakdown in communication (Wright, 2007). A multitude of HL research conducted over the last decade echoes this similar vicious cycle among HL families and communities.

Language-as-a-Right

On the heels of the Bilingual Education Act, similar language-related cases and committees in this country have sparked debate over the right for bilingual education, and more specifically for the right to continue instruction in the first language. Such language right debates that rose to prevalence in the 1970's and 80's are still prominent in our society due to non-compliance on the part of certain school districts and policy makers.

Most perplexing in Wayne Wright's (2007) research is perhaps that of the case of ELLs (English language learners) and dual language programs in the aftermath of Arizona's Proposition 203 (English for Children). The law states that only students (under the age of 10) who are already "proficient" in English as determined by an English language proficiency test are eligible for a waiver to be in bilingual classrooms. Wright states that paradox of this situation "turns the original purpose of bilingual education (to help ELLs learn English and academic content) on its head: In order for ELLs to get a waiver" to be in a bilingual program, they cannot be ELLs (Wright, 2007, p. 10). This means that some Arizona bilingual classrooms are not comprised of ELLs. Wright

emphasizes the "backwards policy" of such situations, as ELLs are prevented from learning their native language in schools unless they first become fluent English speakers.

The intersection of law and language instruction at this point further progresses the problem. Policymakers and school administrators believe that based on this high stakes testing, the language of classroom instruction must match the language of the test, and thus in most cases any use of the native language is restricted (Wright, 2007). Wright also ties his research to the plight of Native American languages, and expressing the fact that if these languages are to survive, "significant changes in language and education state and federal policies are needed that encourage rather than discourage heritage language programs" (Wright, 2007, p. 14). As if Wright's research didn't already speak volumes about the importance of this issue, he highlights the fact that no evident research has yet to convey the fact that eradicating HL programs has either increased academic achievement, *or* helped ELLs to learn English faster. In fact, in small regional pockets across the country where HL programs have managed to survive, evidence concludes that "academic achievement and HL development are not mutually exclusives goals" (Wright, 2007, p. 17-18).

It is for this reason that language planners and educators must step forward push these sensitive issues to the forefront for consideration (Ruiz, 1984). Despite the fact that there is a possible presence of other HL speakers in the learners' community, mainstream curriculum disregards this to instead teach foreign languages to English-speaking students that have no access to the target foreign language community in order to practice the language (Cummins, 2005).

Seeing as these HL speakers need both comprehensible input and opportunities for output and conversation in the HL, their linguistic capabilities are threatened. This current framework leads to the learners' rapid loss of HL development in the formative

years, as reinforcement is lost with the lack of schooling. Children's disengaged identities with regard to this loss of the HL are quickly formed, based on interactions with teachers that convey the "status differential" between the HL and English (Cummins, 2005, p. 586). Jim Cummins presents an eye-opening paradox of the schools successfully promoting the loss of fluent HL speakers, while attempting to transform English-speaking mainstream students, mostly unsuccessfully, into speakers of distant foreign languages.

An insurmountable number of identity issues arise when the right to speak or maintain the language of group is threatened. The choice to maintain or promote heritage languages is linked to these notions of identity, which manifest in foreign language classrooms when native speakers of a language such as Spanish are marginalized for speaking the imperfect variety, and perhaps not possessing the same grammatical knowledge that a foreign language student may have acquired from years of study (Wiley & Valdes, 2000). It is for this reason that curriculum and practices that specifically address the unique needs of these learners are essential, so that learning may be scaffolded to the necessary level and allow for language to develop at a level more suited to the HLL needs.

Nancy Hornberger's continua model of biliteracy is a framework which we can use to describe the dilemma that is facing educators of these HL students, as the mixed linguistic proficiency of this population is conveyed in the range of "intersecting first-second language, receptive-productive, and oral-written language skills" (2004, p. 156). This varying degree of biliteracy skills poses interesting challenges for classroom teachers who must differentiate their instruction to meet the language needs of their students. A key aspect of Hornberger's continua is the interrelationship of the dominant, standard variety of a language, and a learner's local, non-standard (or non-dominant) variety, with the implication being that a teacher must "provide space for the traditionally

less powerful ends of those continua" (2004, p. 161-162). The heuristic approach of this continua calls for the coexistence of these varieties as well as acceptance of the code-switching practices employed as these students build their background knowledge while developing higher levels of communicative competence.

The development of heritage language classes, such as Spanish for Native Speakers, is a positive step toward the acceptance and possible maintenance of the primary language for HLL. Hornberger draws on the established research of Guadalupe Valdés in stating that the Spanish language education for HLL cannot be the same as it is for foreign language learners. She urges consideration of the crucial question, "who will in fact be the beneficiaries of the language resources developed" in such classes? (Valdés, 1997, as cited in Hornberger, 2004, p. 163). In the secondary education classrooms in states such as California, New York, and Texas, HLL are often synonymous with long-term English language learners, as both sets of learners share a commonality in their lack of established literacy in the native language. As such, the literacy instruction needed to close this gap needs to be significantly more targeted to the academic needs of these various learners. Menken & Kleyn (2009) also addresses the critical need for this distinction in stating:

> Foreign language classes are a missed opportunity to support long-term English language learners' literacy development. Schools rarely offer foreign language classes targeted to long-term English language learners. Instead, Spanish classes, for example, are usually intended for either native English speakers who do not speak Spanish or for native Spanish speakers who arrive in the United States with high levels of Spanish literacy skills (What Opportunities Have We Missed? section, para. 7)

The question of fair and equal assessment must be addressed in this context, given the diverse linguistic situation. Hornberger attests that evaluation of HLL work must be holistic, as "an ungrammatical expression of accurate content, or a grammatically correct expression of inaccurate content, may be just as much a sign of learning as a grammatically correct expression of accurate content" (2004, p. 166). Additionally, the inclusion of culturally relevant pedagogy must be included as an integral part of literacy instruction, for if the "identities of marginalized youth are recognized and affirmed, academic achievement is expected and possible" (Winn & Johnson, 2011, pg. 13). Thus educators of HLL serve a critical role, as they help break down issues of cultural stereotyping in language classrooms while serving as advocates of change for the promotion of multilingualism.

Language-as-a-Resource

To help bridge this gap, it is both crucial and necessary for language educators and policy- makers to see primary language maintenance as a critical step and resource in fostering proficient speakers of both English and heritage languages in the United States. In advocating for true bilingual education, classrooms are creating spaces in which students can build a solid foundation of literacy skills and communicative competence in their first language. This basis can then be utilized as a firm platform from which to build and properly acquire the same functionality in the second language.

The only way in which this goal can be achieved is to view language as a resource. Doing so can "have a direct impact on enhancing the language status of subordinate languages; it can help to ease tensions between majority and minority communities; it can serve as a more consistent way of viewing the role of non-English languages in United States society" (Ruiz, 1984, p. 25). Even thirty plus years ago when

this research was being published, researchers such as Thompson (1980, as cited in Ruiz, 1984) were proposing national teacher training programs to better equip our educators in dealing with this unique linguistic proficiency of students. Hornberger suggests a bottom up approach, in which educators can adapt and adjust content to better enable the bilingual and biliterate development of students in serving as advocates for the "language rights and resources of language minority students and speakers of endangered, indigenous, immigrant, and ethnic languages (2004, p. 169).

In order to develop any instructional strategies to incorporate HL education into the mainstream, policy-makers and educators alike need to retreat from current English-monolingual ideologies, which per Cummins, have minimal empirical basis. To prove this, Cummins cites research of Lambert and Tucker (1972) regarding bilingual children at French Canadian immersion schools. Lambert and Tucker observed that the elementary children used a form of "contrastive linguistics" to compare aspects of French and English similarities and differences in their studies, despite the fact that the two languages were kept "rigidly separate" (Cummins, 2005, p. 588). His goal in citing this study is to raise awareness to what heritage bilingual students could accomplish with support from their teachers, given that teachers in the Canadian schools did not offer encouragement in this regard. Given this, the basis for his conclusion is in demonstrating the power that policy-makers and educators have in changing children's attitudes and access toward learning and maintaining the HL.

Several prolific authors cited in this paper are of the mutual mindset that these "existing resources" of languages spoken in the United States are "being destroyed through mismanagement and repression" (Ruiz, 1984, p. 26). Jim Cummins (2005), Nelleke Van Deusen-Scholl (2003), and Wayne Wright (2007) all express the frustration that national programs encourage the acquisition of foreign languages in schools, all the

while discouraging the maintenance and study of languages already possessed by HL speakers. As such thoughts are echoed in Ruiz's cited research from the 1970's and 80's, seen in his language planning study, the idea that non-English speakers are "expected to lose their first language" is consistent and still present forty years later (Macias, 1979, as cited in Ruiz, 1984, p. 27). The benefits of bilingualism need to be brought to light in a manner that promotes not only the learning of new languages in our schools, but also the maintenance of primary/heritage languages.

As this goal is reflective of future professional, global, and socioeconomic value and benefit of bilingualism, Van Deusen-Scholl (2003) very appropriately identified heritage languages in the United States as our "untapped resource" for beneficial language expertise (p. 220). Wright emphasizes how much the "unmet" linguistic needs of national security initiatives could be met by fostering HL development in the United States. As the United States sees a shortage of linguists and translators in these languages other than English, a recent security briefing from the National Security Education Program stated that "we need more linguists in more languages at higher levels of proficiency than ever before" (NSEP, as cited in Wright, 2007, p. 16). To help reach this goal, initiatives must begin at the state level as well as the elementary/secondary level within school districts. Wright suggests exempting ELLs from state tests until English proficiency is established, which would allow the implementation of high-quality bilingual programs to build both English and native language proficiency. Wright states "schools should be held accountable-and rewarded-for helping students become bilingual or multilingual citizens rather than monolingual English speakers (Wright, 2007, p. 18). Embracing such a perspective is what sets us on a path to truly viewing language as a resource to tap into, and not a hindrance to accountability and achievement.

IV. CONCLUSION

Issues of language loss and maintenance, identity, literacy, and subsequent curriculum design pave the way for a discourse on the sociopolitical factors that hold the key to changing the tide on the way in which our society, schools, and government view HL learning. The United States is not fostering the language of immigrants, the very foundation on which our multicultural society was built. To conclude the progression of these studies it is important to revisit the idea of the definition of HLL, and how that is affected by the sociocultural and sociopolitical context in which the state of the language is situated. Similar to other HL researchers in the field of second language acquisition, Van Deusen-Scholl (2003) agrees that the actual definitions of "heritage language" and "heritage learner" require further clarification, especially within the current sociopolitical framework. There is a theoretical and cross-cultural basis for the current state of HL learning, as well as the needs and implications for re-examining and re-categorizing the term in an effort to shape current foreign language policy in the United States.

To progress through the decades of research, it is imperative to discuss the definition of what it means to be a HL learner, for this definition has been the source of controversy given that connotations behind the meaning shift depending on the sociocultural context in question. Both classic and contemporary research confirm that the most debatable and prevalent open issue in the field of HL acquisition is the *actual definition* of what it means to be a HL learner. Although the actual term *heritage student* was not used until 1996 when it was published in the ACTFL Standards for Foreign Language Learning (Valdés, 2005), it is Guadalupe Valdés' definition from 2000 as cited in the first summary that is most commonly used, while the conceptualization of the HL field stems from the research initiated by Lily Wong Fillmore in 1991. The work of

Fillmore laid the foundation for not only research on HL loss, but also the prevailing support needed for HL sustainability. The torch is then passed to Valdés to educate current researchers and educators on the state of immigrant and indigenous languages in this country today.

Only by knowing the importance placed on the intricate form of language acquisition pertinent to such a minority group of learners can we truly comprehend the critical need behind preventing the loss of the HL among its speakers. Studies of HL loss and maintenance, identity and literacy issues, as well as those discussing the relevance and sociopolitical implications of supporting HL instruction all highlight this crucial factor of HL attrition. This attrition can be attributed to the dominance of the English language that replaces the HL spoken in the family over the course of 2-3 generations, with the family becoming monolingual English speakers by the third generation (Wiley & Valdés, 2000). Thus the language and literacy instruction afforded to learners, especially the younger ones entering English-speaking schools, is absolutely critical. As children also have a pragmatic reason to learn the language (multilingual competence to aid in procuring better employment and potentially higher income in the future), our role as linguists and language educators is to challenge conventional thought and re-examine the cognitive and affective benefits in maintaining the HL of learners.

As a possible solution, researchers over the course of the last decade have proposed carving out HL education for independent language policy focus, so current empirical research on the benefits of bilingual education and cross-language transfer can be discussed in the light of much-needed instructional changes. Given current No Child Left Behind policies that put foreign language instruction on the backburner in lieu of intensive math and reading, there seems to be almost no hope for HL instruction to gain any policy-related focus. Cummins (2005) proposes a call to action to promote HL

proficiency at the local school and community level. In order to develop any instructional strategies to incorporate HL education into the mainstream, policy-makers and educators alike need to retreat from current English-monolingual ideologies, which as both Cummins (2005) and Wright (2007) attested to, have a minimal empirical basis.

From pioneers in the field, to modern researchers and theorists, the work of these authors convey the point that the issue of HL learning is an evocative one, replete with emotion, cognition, groundbreaking research and thought-provoking takes on established second language acquisition methodologies. At the heart of the matter is the desire to promote awareness and support the language learning efforts of HLL by seeing their linguistic capabilities as a right and a resource, as opposed to a problem. Equally important is the willingness to save these heritage languages before they succumb to the societal forces that may prevent the progression of heritage language acquisition. Doing so would move us further away from the natural sources of bilingualism that laid the groundwork for our current multilingual society.

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