"Learning without thought is labor lost; thought without learning is perilous." — Confucius

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Heritage Language Learners

"Real education should consist of drawing the goodness and the best out of our own students." — César Chávez

"We know who we are as Americans, we also need to know who we are as global citizens" — Shuham Wyng

Heritage language student is also different in important ways from the traditional foreign language students" — Guadalupe Valdes
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An organization for educators involved in teaching foreign languages to children.
Mission: Promote opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language in addition to
their own. This is accomplished through activities that improve public awareness and support of early language learning.
Activities: Facilitate cooperation among organizations directly concerned with early language learning; facilitate communication among teachers, teacher educators, parents, program administrators, and policymakers; and disseminate information and guidelines to assist in developing programs of excellence.

Annual Meeting: Held at the full conference of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.
Officers: Elected by members through a mail ballot election held annually in the spring.
NNELL is a member of the Joint National Committee for Languages: National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCILS).
For more information, visit the NNELL Web site at www.nnell.org or email NNELL at mail@wfu.edu
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WelcometothespringeditionofLearningLanguages.Asyournewpresident,IthoughtI'dtakethisopportunitytointroducemyself.

I'vespent28yearasaneducatorinnorthernVirginiawheretoughtoGermanbeforcementacominganadministrator.AsforeiglangscoordinatorforFairfaxCountyPublicSchools(FCPS),thetwelthlargestschoolsystemsystemintheU.S.,IoverseetheworldlanguageprogramfromKindergartenthroughgradetwelve.FCPSofferslanguageinstructioninelevenlanguagesthatincludesｗayimmersionprograms,anextensivetelepartial-immersionprogram,FLESprograms,andnumerousmiddleandhighschoolprograms,includingAdvancedPlacement(AP)andInternationalBaccalaureate(IB)courses.IamproudtoreportthattheFCPSSchoolBoardrecentlyadoptedthegoalofhavingallstudentsgraduatewithcommunicativecompetenceinoneormorelanguagesinadditiontoEnglish.Tohelpachievethistoｆｙgoal,theyhaveapprovedphasingeinforeignlanguageinallourelementaryschools.

Asdoloallofyou,Ibelievethateffectivecommunicationisanimportanttwenty-firstcenturyskillthatstudentsneedinordertobesuccessfulmembersoftoday'sglobalsociety.Studentsmustbeginlanguagelearningearlyandhavetheopportunitynocontinueasustained,well-articulatedprogramthroughhighschooltodevelopahigherleveloflanguageperformanceinandnativepronunciation.Topreparestudentsbecomecompetitiveintheglobalandinunderstandperspectivesofdiversearoundtheworld,itisimperativethatstudent sareabletocommunicateinmorethanonelanguage.IamfortunatetohaveaschooldirectorwithvisionsandaDivisionSuperintendentwhounderstandswhatittakescompeteintoday'ssociety,butIamalsoawareoftheworkthatisneedeotoeducateothersacrossthecountrysharethisvision.

Asyourpresident,IpromisetoincreaseNNELL'smissiontoeducateparentsanddecision-makersabouttheimportanceandbenefitofearlylanguagelearning.American schools have traditionally focused on beginning world languages when students are adolescents, a time when they are the busiest and the most self-conscious. It continues to baffle me that many people think that learning a second language is so difficult that the sole rationale for taking another language is for admission into university. The focus must switch to theimportanceofcommunication,notonlytoconversewiththoseabroad,bothalsohereathomeinourincreasinglydiverse.

Every language educator has the responsibility to convince our monolingual peersthat learning a language is not difficult if instructionstareintheearlygrades.Elementary arefearlessandhungrytouse languageto communicatewiththeirlclassmates andpeers.Theylookalearning another language as a very natural partoftheirelementaryexperience.I'veseenyoung children tellreportersthatthenon-Romanscript language they are learning is "not hard" and they should "try it." Most adults who observe a language lesson, leave the classroom amazed that the students make learning a world language look so easy. They cannot believe thestudents"understandwhattheteacherissaying"afteronlyafewmonthsinstruction.TheseplurilingualstudentsareourfutureanditisourdreamthatonedaytheU.S.willnotdependonothercountrieseducatetheoiryoungpeopletolearnEnglish.

Asyouknow,onebenefitofearlylanguagelearningisthatstudentsgainaricherappreciationofdiverseculturesandcustoms.Studentscompareandcontrastthetargetcountrieswiththeirown. Heritage language learners in a world language class are able to refine their ability to producetheirfamily'slanguageandlearnmoreaboutitsculture.These students bring so much to the classroom that benefits thenativeEnglishspeakers. When classes have students who have learned the target language as their first language mixed with students learning the target language asasecondlanguage,itrechallengestheirteacherimetomeetsynthesisneedsallstudents.Inaddition, heritage students often come to class with a wide range of abilities and teachers look for ways to teach literacy skills in their first language while at the sametimeexpandand refine students'extensivevocabularybase.

ThiseditionofLearningLanguagesexploresthetopicofheritagelanguagelearnersandIamconfidentthatyouwillfindawealthofinformationthatwillhelpinyourquesttoincreaselanguageperformanceandbuildtherigorthatinreturnsstudentschallengedandengagedineveryactivity.Thispertainsusto students who are inaclassdesignedfor heritage speakers or inaclasswith students learning the target language asasecondlanguage.Enjotheotherrestoftheschoolyearandthank youforbeingaNNELLmember!
Rooting for Your Roots

Christi Moraga

How can you encourage children to root for their roots in an elementary school, where the program is not Immersion? Here are three ideas that you can use and adapt to your situation. West Woods Upper Elementary School in Farmington, Connecticut offers a standards based World Language program in the 5th and 6th grades. The children take three days of either French or Spanish for 40 minutes and go to physical education the other two days. The program covers a lot of material and there is little time to do heritage or multicultural teaching within the formal program. However, the four teachers at West Woods have been able to encourage the students to respect their heritage languages and cultures through extra-curricular activities. The major heritages of the Farmington population are Irish, Italian, Polish, French Canadian, German, English and in the last few years, a sprinkling of Asian and Latin American backgrounds.

Idea Number One: “Heritage Bulletin Board”
The World Language Department has a parent liaison who not only created this idea, but has taken charge! Several times a year, the entire student body is invited to create a large index card with a phrase written in the heritage language. Students decorate the card and can add pictures of cultural traditions if they want. The announcement goes out through the homeroom and the cards come back in to the language teachers, who can reward the students according to their individual incentive plan. Then, the parent liaison, sometimes with the help of students, put up an interesting bulletin board that is a great hit with students and parents. Phrases chosen so far have been: “Friends” and “Happy New Year!” (See two examples in Polish and Korean online).

Idea Number Two: “Taste of Languages Club”
This after school club draws a lot of children who do have a strong ethnic background, adopted children and students who are open to learning about people and places that are different from themselves. Some people sign up because they like to eat the ethnic goodties! The first meeting each trimester, the club advisor shows a Power Point of some of the activities club members have done in the past and lets them decide what they would like to do, so that they take ownership. Each child tentatively signs up for a date to bring in some ethnic snacks and prepare a short presentation on their heritage language and/or culture. The snacks have varied from Austrian Sachertorte to Japanese sushi. The club members usually spend time working on the culture-language boxes. This idea came from the Eisenhower International School in Tulsa, Oklahoma, that won the ACTFL Melba Woodruff Award in 2005 for Exemplary Elementary Foreign Language. The students decorate the outside of the boxes with flags or pictures from the countries that speak the language (such as Germany, Austria and Switzerland for the German box) and then contribute items such as recipes, food wrappers in the target heritage language, coins, brochures, dolls etc. Later, when the fifth graders do their Immigration projects for social studies, they can borrow items from box, similar to a lending library. The club has also prepared displays (such as picture books in different scripts) and bulletin boards (such as a language tree) for the school. Finally, parents sometimes offer to do a presentation of their heritage language and cultures, introduced by their own child.

Idea Number Three: The CT COLT Rhyme Celebration
This is a statewide event bringing together hundreds of students that has been successful for eighteen years. This year’s theme is: “Long Live the Animal Kingdom!” offering a venue for rhymes, songs and tongue twisters about animals. Teachers may prepare students in the language of their school’s program and also encourage heritage learners to do solos, duets or group renditions. A program booklet with the rhyme in the script of each language is given to all of the participants. They also receive a certificate in the language of recitation. This presentational speaking in front of an audience is also great for advocacy of early language learning. You can go to www.ctcolt.org for more information and to see photos of children reciting or singing in their heritage languages, or check YouTube by typing in “Rhyme Celebration 08.” Alternatively, you can either prepare your own Rhyme Celebration or take students to other events outside of school that showcase heritage languages.

Whether students of a single heritage group are reciting a rhyme as they participate in the grand CT COLT Rhyme Celebration or they are working with their parents to create culture-language boxes for the cross disciplinary study of immigration or even when they gather the necessary phrases to decorate a heritage bulletin board, students and families find many avenues for exploring and celebrating their heritage in the Farmington, CT schools. The exciting news is that everyone, students, faculty and families, all benefit and they share with one another the linguistic and cultural richness of their heritage.

The 2006 Northeast Region Teacher of the Year, Christi teaches in the Farmington, CT schools. She is active in the Connecticut foreign language association (CT COLT) that sponsors the CT Rhyme Celebration that she created. Concordia Language Villages has recently named her dean of Lac du Bois French Language Village and El Lago del Bosque Spanish Language Village for the coming summer.
In the mid-nineties, as the national K-12 Student Standards for Foreign Language Learning were taking shape, the members of the Standards task force constantly wrestled with the issue of heritage language learners and how to capture the unique nature of their learning experiences and their proficiency development within the scope of the 5 C's: communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and communities. As we crafted the performance indicators for each of the C's, we were fully aware that those indicators were valid essentially for foreign language learners. They did not describe the performances that could/should be anticipated for heritage language learners, because their linguistic and cultural experiences are complexly different from those of students who are learning a language for the first time.

Under the communication standard, while the modes and modalities are obviously the same for both sets of learners, heritage language learners come with widely varied proficiency levels and a widely varied set of language varieties, depending on their connectedness to that language. The products, practices and perspectives of the culture standard, while certainly valid for both groups of learners, are even more complex, given the nature of heritage language learners' connectedness to their cultures both in their countries of origin and in the actual encounter between their cultures and the realities of life in the United States that they experience every day. The connection standard has the most potential for the two sets of learners to come together and expand their knowledge of the world through the use of more than one language, but in contrast, the comparisons standard is a conundrum that changes shape according to the heritage language learners' level of proficiency in English and their proficiency in their heritage language. The communities standard, while offering almost limitless possibilities for both groups, is rendered problematic by virtue of the complexity of the issues associated with communication and culture and the way they play out both in school and in the larger society.

The work of the task force was further impacted by the lack of systematically gathered quantitative data and qualitative observations on heritage language learners at the K-12 level. Much more had been written about heritage language learners at the postsecondary level where there were special textbooks and where there were many “native language” courses for which heritage language learners could enroll and thus avoid the confusion that so often exists in foreign language classes where heritage and foreign language learners are mixed together. The latter was, and apparently remains, the case in the majority of K-12 schools. The task force had to acknowledge that foreign language teachers, even those steeped in the communicative instructional paradigm, lacked the experience and training that enabled them to provide reliably effective instruction for heritage language learners. As a result, the task force chose to sidestep the heritage language issue, and rather than develop heritage language specific performance indicators for each of the standards, provided special notes to teachers that would alert them to the kinds of complexities that they might encounter and some guidance as to how to approach them. Finally, the task force recommended that further work be done in the area of heritage language learners so as to address the lacunae that would exist in the national standards.

Shortly after the national foreign language standards were released in 1996, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) joined with the School of Education at Hunter College of the City University of New York to begin to address the challenges raised by the national standards task force. With a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), they embarked upon a three-year project to research and identify effective practices for foreign language teachers that could advance the effectiveness of their instruction when working with heritage language learners at the middle and high school levels. It resulted in ACTFL’s publication of the book, Teaching Heritage Language Learners: Voices from the Classroom, a work that is cited in one of the articles in this issue (Webb and Miller, 2000). That study revealed that effectiveness of programs for heritage language learners lies essentially in the dispositions of the teachers, “dispositions” as defined in the national standards for teachers. While one might see that finding a bit amazing, given the supposed importance of methodology in education, on second glance, it becomes quite logical. After all, language teachers know that a person’s language and culture are deeply personal; they lie at the heart of who we are. So when we engage in the examination of our own culture and that of others, we react emotionally. Language teachers also know that learners play out the emotional dimensions of language learning in the form of risk-taking and that classroom atmosphere must be calibrated accordingly. Therefore, teacher dispositions come front and center.

Our conversations with and observations of teachers, and our interviews with heritage language learners that were part of the ACTFL-Hunter study revealed unmistakably that respect for their languages, and the many varieties thereof, and for their
cultures must be at the very core of all instruction. Many heritage language learners themselves exhibit a serious ambivalence toward their languages and cultures, particularly within the United States. (This is an age-old issue with immigrant groups.) Others can be fiercely proud, defensive, and protective of their languages and cultures. Failure of any magnitude on the part of teachers to show respect, therefore, threatens the potential of instructional programs. Of particular importance is the need to avoid a deficit perspective in which a program focuses on the weaknesses in the heritage language learners’ knowledge of that language. Instead, it is essential to honor the knowledge and proficiency that the heritage language learners bring with them and to base instruction on their strengths rather than on their perceived weaknesses. This orientation not only builds self-respect in the heritage language learners, but communicates a powerful message about language and culture to foreign language learners in the same class or in the same school.

Respect is born and maintained when teachers are knowledgeable about their learners. Teachers cannot teach effectively when they do not know the details of their students’ life realities, and this became more and more apparent during our three years of investigation. Teachers must tirelessly and continually gather information about their students in the areas of linguistic proficiency, motivation, academic preparedness, cultural connectedness, emotional factors, and societal factors. (The related guiding questions for each of these categories are found in Teaching Heritage Language Learners: Voices from the Classroom (Webb and Miller, 2000) This information enables teachers to make their respect for the learners’ languages and cultures informed and thereby authentic. According to the teachers and their students participating in the study, when knowledge and respect are solidly rooted, methodologies naturally emerge.

While the ACTFL-Hunter College study clearly pointed to a need for special approaches when working with heritage language learners and a need to include specific kinds of preparation for teachers, it in no way suggested that heritage and foreign language instruction had to be separate. They can be accommodated in the same class, in the same school, and given what we learned about the fundamental essential attributes of teaching heritage language learners, classes and entire schools can be enriched when teachers have the necessary knowledge and respect.

Readers will find this series of articles informative and often refreshing. They offer vivid snapshots of efforts to provide meaningful and responsive learning experiences for heritage language learners. They were for me personally a catalyst for some serious reflection on this whole question with which I, and others in the field, have been so deeply involved for so many years. The authors indicate that effective instruction for heritage language learners is still elusive on the larger scale. If this elusive nature is linked in any way to the national attitude and policies toward immigrants, then it is alarming. What renders it so troubling is that basic respect and knowledge are the heart and soul of the enterprise, and one wonders how capable, or incapable, our schools and communities are of exemplifying those qualities. I could not help but note the extent to which programs for heritage language learners seem to require an alternative school setting, such as charter schools and, of course, the traditional Saturday or weekend schools, in order to survive. Have we made our approach to heritage language learning so exotic that it cannot be accommodated in our existing public schools? Are we fostering a condition of separate and equal, or unequal as the case may be, and if so, what are the long-term implications of that? They too can be alarming, because they suggest that the desired ultimate outcome of that fifth standard, communities, is far from being achieved.

The articles in this issue of Learning Languages are important, because they provide information about successful heritage language programs for K-12 learners. We need this kind of information, because so much work remains to be done. At the same time, they are important, because they raise flags of warning about the place in our schools held by heritage languages and the young people who speak them.

References

John B. Webb, Ed.D. is the director of the Program in Teacher Preparation at Princeton University and a member of National K-12 Student Standards Task Force.
Heritage Learners in a Community

Toshiko M. Calder, Princeton Community Japanese Language School

The Princeton Community Japanese Language School (PCJLS) is a weekend school established in 1980 by a group of Japanese scientists working at Princeton University Plasma Physics Laboratory. The purpose of the school was to give supplementary Japanese language education to the children in the neighboring Japanese community, as well as to provide opportunities for studying Japanese language and culture to local communities in Central New Jersey.

Rationale for Establishing Our School

At its founding, the PCJLS had two major programs: Division 1 is for the students who seek to go back to Japan after their families' stay in the U.S. This program provides a curriculum that conforms to the G1-12 guidelines of the Ministry of Education in Japan. Division 2 started as a Japanese as a Second Language Program (JASL) for children, adolescents and adults who have little or no background in Japanese. The heritage program or the Princeton Course was established in 2004, for children whose primary language is English but who use some Japanese at home. The majority of the students are from Japanese families who have resided in the U.S. for a long time and from families of multicultural marriages. The students in the Princeton course study Japanese in grades 2-6 and 7-9 levels using a bilingual education method. The PCJLS high school program also has two courses: one for students who are planning to go to Japanese colleges and one for students who are planning to attend American colleges. The heritage programs at all levels emphasize authentic materials and content-based instruction. Teachers for the two divisions are all hired locally and most are native Japanese speakers. Some obtain a teachers' license issued in Japan, while some others have educational background as a language teacher in the United States. All the teachers participate in frequent professional development sessions in school under the guidance of the director of each division in PCJLS.

Our Heritage Students

The PCJLS offers a variety of course offerings that meet the needs of students with diverse language and cultural backgrounds. The goals of heritage Japanese language students vary, ranging from acquiring basic language skills to a high command of the language. Most of the parents want their children to be exposed to Japanese language and culture in the school community. Here at PCJLS teachers and students speak Japanese all the time and they celebrate seasonal festivals, sport and theatrical events throughout the year. Some of the students join the school in kindergarten and stay in the school until they graduate high school. From a small enrollment in 1980, there are now 310 students enrolled in our school.

Our Elementary Program

Our younger heritage students enjoy a program rich in culture and language. Each week the elementary class dedicates a half hour for teaching Japanese traditional songs and rhymes. Among the songs that the children learn are Hinamatsuri (Dolls' festival) and Oshogatsu (New Year's Day). Storytelling is also important. Following a Japanese tradition the teacher sometimes performs Kamishibai to narrate beloved folktales such as Momotaro (Peach Boy) and Kasajizoo (The Children's Deities and the Bamboo Hats). Teachers use a set of colorfully drawn and painted cards that slip into a wooden frame. Each card in the series has a scene on the front and the storyline for the next card in the story on the back. This way the teller can show the card to his audience while reading the story and students learn not only a folktale but also the traditional way of telling it.

A sweet story about a poor man who puts bamboo hats on statues to protect them from the snow. The statues come alive and bring him and his wife food and money.

Graphics ©2009 Paris Granville
In Kindergarten and first grade students start to learn characters. They begin with *hiragana* and then they learn some *katakana*. The teacher introduces *kanji* to the first graders and adding more characters each year. Celebrations are especially important in the kindergarten and lower elementary classes and children look forward to participating in *Hinamatsuri* (the Dolls' festival or Girls' day) in March and *Kodomo no hi* (Children's day or Boys' day) in May.

Throughout elementary school, pupils participate in hand-on projects combined with Japanese lessons in other subjects such as science and social studies. In the middle school to high school levels, students learn more about the modern Japanese society and history from news articles, journals and novels. Comparison between Japanese and other societies, especially that of the US is emphasized in the higher levels to meet the needs of students with diverse cultural backgrounds.

Unlike other heritage language schools that tend to emphasize traditional music, dancing and celebrations, our curriculum is parallel to that of the regular public schools even in the heritage course, since our school is an affiliate of the Japanese Ministry of Education and receives their financial support. We are trying to keep up with relatively high academic goals even at the high school level. This integration of culture, society and language provides an engaging and stimulating program for the heritage students who have enrolled in the school and keeps children and their families coming back for more each year.

For further information about PCJLS, please visit http://www.pcjls.org/e_index.html

Toshiko M. Calder chairs the Board of Trustees at PCJLS. Educated in both Japan and the US, she is a long-time resident of Princeton, NJ. Toshiko has also taught at Princeton University in the East Asian Studies Department and at Mercer County Community College.
Fostering Academic and Language Heritage Learners and ELLs

Nihat Polat, Duquesne University & Rae Balog, Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School

Fostering academic achievement of children with limited English proficiency has become a central educational goal for many educators. Current research indicates that many English language learners (ELLs) are struggling in content areas due to lack of proficiency in academic language skills (Crawford, 2004; Cummins, 1984). Although laws like the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act claim to address this problem, lack of academic scope, depth and rigor, and practicality in standardized assessment and their negative backwash effects have resulted in no greater achievement. Utilizing a hypothetical situation, this paper addresses the practices that Spanish teachers can engage in across subject areas to help heritage learners and English Language Learners (ELLs) achieve both language and academic goals. It further addresses how Spanish teachers can use selected components and strategies of content-based integrative approaches such as the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol Model (SIOP) to support ELLs academic and language development across the curriculum (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008).

English Language Learners in Our Schools

Rapid changes in the composition of the K-12 student population, particularly the exponentially increasing number of English Language Learners (ELLs), are posing new challenges for American schools. The most recent U.S. Census report in 2000 indicated that 1 in 5 school-aged children is a non-native English speaker and that this figure is anticipated to reach 40% by the year 2030 (Jamieson, Curry, & Martinez, 2001). According to the 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress report (NAEP) nationally only 31% of ELLs scored at or above the basic reading level and only 5% scored proficient in Math and Reading.

Inadequate professional development for English as a Second Language (ESL) educators have rendered only 13% of teachers qualified to teach linguistically and culturally diverse learners. This has positioned the content-area teacher as the primary source of academic language input for ELLs in the school (National Center for Education Statistics, 2000).

Academic Achievement of ELLs and Heritage Learners

Decisions regarding program models for educating ELLs in schools are mitigated by expediency, political biases, staffing, and funding concerns, often resulting in the adoption of self-contained ESL pullout programs. In ESL pullout programs children from one or more grade levels are removed from their content area classrooms to receive specialized language instruction. Isolating academic and explicit language instruction from content-area instruction, the ESL pullout program has failed to bridge the gap between linguistic minorities' oral and written language competencies based on Cummins' (1984) theory of BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) and CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) (Cummins, 1984). New pressure to facilitate their
Language Development of ELLs with the SIOP Model

CALP development through content area instruction in English has returned these children to the mainstream classroom with a demand for developmentally appropriate instructional accommodations, modifications, and adaptations. This has created new opportunities and challenges in Second Language (L2) teacher preparation, since ESL teachers must develop competencies in integrating language skills with content areas (Krashen, 1996; Ovando, Collier, Combs & Cummins, 2003).

Among the growing population of ELLs in U.S. schools is the confusing group of heritage learners who are amorphously defined in literature. Webb & Miller referred to heritage learners as people with personal or emotional connections to languages other than English (2000), while Valdés defined them as learners with a pre-existing language proficiency in a language spoken in the home (2000). The heritage learner's exposure to comprehensible input in English and development of BICS and CALP in their heritage language and English can vary tremendously. In fact, by virtue of a home language survey, they are often grouped with the ELL population. We now know that the population of Spanish-speaking ELLs comprises 80% of the total ELL population in US, a figure that includes some Spanish heritage learners (Batalova, 2006).

National dropout rates for the ELL population indicate a fundamental mismatch between current educational practices and student needs. Recent data from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) estimate the dropout rates in the non-native born Hispanic youth population between the ages of 16 and 24 years old to be 43.4%. Alarming test results and dropout rates have further heightened awareness for the need to adopt different forms of bilingual and sheltered instruction models that strive to integrate meaningful instruction in content areas with English language development, and to promote literacy initiatives across the curriculum (Hoover, Klinger, Baca, & Patton, 2008).

This paper specifically addresses practices that content area teachers can engage in across subject areas to help ELLs and heritage learners achieve both language and academic goals. It further addresses how teachers can use selected components of content-based integrative approaches such as the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol Model (SIOP) to support ELLs academic and language development across the curriculum (Echevarría et al., 2008).

Integrating Language and Content
An ELL's achievement in school and work rests upon the ability to master academic language. This involves training students to develop academic language and cognitive abilities, while acquiring content area knowledge. ELLs are distinct from other learner populations in that they must develop literacy skills for each content in their second language as they simultaneously learn, comprehend, and apply content area concepts through their second language" (Echevarría et al., 2008, p. 11). The only way to effectively bridge functional and formal language repertoires (BICS and CALP) is to foster the interconnectedness and interrelationship among different content areas to create non-segregated sustained programs that require all teachers to take responsibility for improving the students' cognitive-academic language proficiency.

The goals of language and content are intertwined in ESL instruction. Knowledge of English, knowledge of the content topic, and knowledge of how the tasks are to be accomplished constitute the major components of academic literacy (Short, 2002). Integrative and content-based approaches provide the necessary peer-peer and peer-teacher interactions for ELLs to engage in dynamic and scaffolded BICS and CALP.

The SIOP Model
The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) offers a content and inquiry-based framework for teachers to present concepts to ELLs in inclusive mainstream classrooms with strategies, techniques, and accommodations that make new information comprehensible for language learners. Intended for both language and content teachers, the SIOP offers eight research-based components that are grouped into 30 strategies for making content comprehensible for ELLs: Lesson Preparation, Building Background, Comprehensible Input, Strategies, Interaction, Practice/Application, Lesson Delivery, and Review/Assessment. While intended specifically to address the academic success and development of students' L2 learning, they share many features of quality academic instruction of all students, including the heritage learners.

A Proposed Lesson for Heritage Language Learners in a Foreign Language Classroom
We have designed a practical lesson plan for a middle-school Spanish language class using the SIOP to teach language and content area skills. This lesson is appropriate for an introductory course with ELLs. English speakers, and heritage
Spanish speakers. Considering the role of socio-cultural backgrounds, researchers like Tucker have proposed different program choices for heritage learners (2005). Structured independent and collaborative reading, writing, and speaking activities are incorporated into this lesson to enhance ELLs' language skills and content knowledge. Students are required to demonstrate that they have met language and content objectives in a presentational assignment combining written and spoken modalities.

This lesson focuses on an expository text from the Paso a Paso series on La Quinceañera, a traditional coming of age ceremony in Spanish-speaking cultures. Cultural materials and texts offer the unique opportunity to bridge explicit language and content instruction in both the first language (L1) and L2 for heritage learners. Interventions that empower language minority students help them to take pride in their cultural background (Crawford, 2004). Multicultural texts can pique students' motivation to participate in language learning activities by validating their cultural identities, giving them a stake in their learning environment, and allowing them to question and grow in their socio-cultural identities.

Lesson Objectives
The Students Will Be Able To:

- Select and define 3 key vocabulary words related to la Quinceañera.
- Discuss how la Quinceañera is similar and different to their native cultures' rites of passage.

Content and language objectives

Content and language objectives connect the students' new and prior academic and cultural knowledge of la Quinceañera celebration with their linguistic ability to use English and Spanish to compare and contrast information from multiple sources, transfer and use basic reading skills, and restate information orally in class and group discussion.

The Lesson
This lesson begins with the presentation of teacher-generated higher-order thinking questions (HOTS) and a survey of the text in which connections are made to students' background knowledge. Students work in integrated groups to complete an anticipation guide about la Quinceañera (Appendix A). This allows students to share experiences with peers as insiders or outsiders to the experience of the Quinceañera rite of passage. The teacher reconvenes the class to examine authentic visuals of la Quinceañera, on an overhead or LCD projector, and initiates a group discussion in Spanish focusing on preconceptions, opinions, and experiences of la Quinceañera sparked by the images of these celebrations found on the internet.
La Quinceañera: Guía de anticipación de pre-lectura

+= Estoy de acuerdo con la frase
-= No estoy de acuerdo con la frase
?= No estoy seguro/a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>¿Qué crees?</th>
<th>Mi opinión</th>
<th>La opinión del grupo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. La Quinceañera es una celebración importante para todas las culturas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. La Quinceañera es solamente para las hembrillas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. La Quinceañera se trata de una fiesta grande.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Yo he celebrado una Quinceañera o he asistido a una Quinceañera.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Alguien en mi familia ha celebrado o ha asistido a una Quinceañera.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Haley & Austin, 2004

Then the teacher models a first predictive question in writing such as, ¿"Qué tipo de celebración es La Quinceañera?" ("What kind of celebration is La Quinceañera?") and scaffolds other questions for the students. After students work in groups to create three of their own anticipatory questions, later used to generate a class reading comprehension guide. Representatives from each group ask one of their predictive questions of the class. The teacher then compiles common themes and predictions as a reading comprehension tool. Students read the expository text with a partner searching for answers marking a + (confirmed) or - (disconfirmed) symbol next to their questions. The universal comprehensibility of these symbols represents another strategy for engaging students from different cultures in this lesson. After reading, partners identify and define three Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS) words: key words central to understanding the passage. In the case of the Quinceañera reading; tradition. This practice coincides with Gersten et al.'s recommendation that "for English learners additional words need to be identified for instructional attention" (2007, p.13). These words form the basis for a collective reading response log (Appendix B) kept in a vocabulary notebook or archived with other unit materials. Such words could also be posted on a classroom word wall that documents and values students' learning.

Later, students return to small groups where they compare and contrast personal cultural traditions with La Quinceañera through a graphic organizer (Appendix C). Students choose a rite of passage in their culture and map out similarities and differences in the appropriate sections of the Venn diagram. Students would not necessarily have to write complete sentences. McLaughlin & Allen have argued that tools such as graphic/schematic organizers help learners identify key content concepts and infer relationships among them (2002). To debrief, the teacher leads a group discussion concerning similarities and differences in rites of passage across cultures drawing on information from student experiences documented in the graphic organizers. The teacher could use student volunteers throughout the discussion to create one large Venn diagram on the board to highlight individual contributions. In this discussion, ELLs and heritage learners are positioned as primary informants of Hispanic cultures for native English speakers (Faltis, 2008).

The lesson concludes with a brief video presentation of the La Quinceañera to help bring the celebration to life in a tangible way. To formally assess language and content objectives, students choose one of three tasks to produce a written and oral presentation.

1. Respond to one of the higher-order thinking questions from the introduction of the lesson 2.
2. Discuss ways in which the video segment differed from the textual representation of la Quinceañera.
3. Discuss how la Quinceañera compares to a rite of passage in their native culture.

While #2 aims to assess how well students are able to generalize the cognitive skill of comparing and contrasting to new contexts, #1 and #3 allow students to make connections between content knowledge and authentic personal experiences in a way that permits assessment of their CALP in English. Students who choose tasks 1 or 3 could base their responses on religious ceremonies such as a Confirmation in the Catholic Church, a Bar or Bat Mitzvah in the Jewish tradition, the Lakota celebration of the four parts of the human life cycle, the Mexican presentation of a three year old, or even family rites of passage such as birthdays or graduations.
Lesson Preparation
Incorporating clearly defined, displayed, and re-

Appendix B

Registro de respuestas a la lectura

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fecha</th>
<th>Texto o Tema</th>
<th>Vocabulario</th>
<th>Significado</th>
<th>Frase (Palabra en contexto)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nuevo (VSS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

*Adapted from Haley & Austin, 2004

viewed language objectives into all content lessons is the hallmark of the SIOP Model. As in this lesson, content and language objectives come from national and state standards to form the foundation of lesson activities.

Building Background
The lesson links students’ background experiences and prior learning to new concepts and vocabulary. In this lesson the teacher integrates students’ experiences and activates background schemata through an anticipation guide, supplementary visuals, VSS, and word wall.

Comprehensible Input
By Comprehensible Input, Krashen means that people acquire and develop their foreign or second language skills only when they understand the listening and reading messages that are presented to them (Krashen, 1985). Students need specialized teaching techniques to help them construct meaning of rigorous content material. This lesson includes modeling, structured graphic organizers, repeated exposure to concepts, language resources (dictionaries), and visual aids to achieve this objective.

Strategies
We used the Squeepers model that is premised on the steps of Survey, Question, Predict, Read, Respond, and Summarize (Echevarría et al., 2008). This model offers metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective strategies that are teacher-assisted, peer-assisted, and student-centered— to encourage students to monitor their own learning. The tasks of the Squeepers model address the levels of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation allow the instruction to help students expand their skills as laid out in Bloom’s Taxonomy (1956).

Interaction
This lesson highlights frequent opportunities for students to use academic language in meaningful oral and written interactions with teachers and peers. Flexible grouping configurations throughout the lesson provide opportunities for students to ask and answer questions, negotiate meaning, clarify ideas, and justify opinions.

Practice and Application
SIOP teachers carefully include activities in the lesson that support students’ progress in mastering language and content objectives. In this lesson, students use hands-on comprehension guides, organizers and scaffolded discussions to compare and contrast before they do so independently.

Lesson Delivery
This component consists of communicating and assessing language and content objectives throughout the lesson and engaging students 90-100% of the period. Students will demonstrate on-task behavior using numerous opportunities to talk about the lesson’s concepts and hands-on activities to reinforce learning.

Review and Assessment
This part provides informal assessment opportunities through teacher observation, class discussion, and solicited student responses. Small group and pair configurations allow the teacher to assess what students do or do not understand and to tailor large group discussion. Students are formally assessed on their chosen task through an integrative oral and written presentation.

Expected Learning Outcomes
We believe that this lesson will generate positive outcomes for all students. First, we anticipate that the SIOP will help all students achieve a greater understanding of and respect for other cultures and their rites of passage, such as la Quinceañera. Students will also develop their CALP and grow as independent learners through reading as they complete a variety of tasks, ranging from those focused on developing specific cognitive reading strategies to those with a more social orientation.

Last but not least, the ELLs and the heritage learners in the classroom will gain a greater sense of self-confidence and validation in their cultural identities as members of both the L1 and L2 communities, and develop the essential skills through the Squeepers model for approaching future expository reading and literacy tasks. Finally, we hope that by encouraging student presentations in the final stage of the lesson, students will not only realize the importance of their personal contributions to the classroom environment, but also the inherent connection between academic proficiency and oral interpersonal skills.
Appendix C
Organizador gráfico de comparaciones y contrastes

diferencias

semejanzas

diferencias

References


Webb, J. B., & Miller, B. L. (2000). Teaching heritage language learners: Voices from the classroom. (Eds.)

First author: Nihat Polat

Nihat Polat is an assistant professor and the director of the ESL Masters and Teacher Certification Program at Duquesne University. In addition to several years of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) abroad, he worked as a certified ESL teacher and program director in Austin, Texas. His research interests include socio-psychological factors and identity in second language acquisition and beliefs in L2 teacher education.

Second author: Rae Balog

Rae Balog is currently a cyber high school Spanish teacher at Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School. She is a certified Spanish language teacher in Pennsylvania and is pursuing her MS. Ed. and instructional certificate in teaching English as a Second Language at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. Her teaching experience includes several years work in the public schools of Brooklyn, New York and urban districts surrounding Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.
<Dobroye uشرو, rebyata! Pora vстатьu!> (Good morning, kids! Time to get up!) As soon as the words break the cool summer morning, dozens of children pour out of their log cabins. From Murmansk to Irkutsk, kids of all ages trot down the hill to a breakfast of bliny (crepes). It's the beginning of a typical day at Lesnoe Ozero (Lesnoe Ozero), Concordia Language Village's Russian immersion camp for children ages 7-18 in Bemidji, MN.

Fun, educational, and enthusiastically Russian, Lesnoe Ozero exposes children to Russian language and culture – as well as the cultures of the former Soviet Union. Like all of Concordia Language Villages, which currently has fifteen languages, each with a separate location, Lesnoe Ozero has a daily schedule that is structured to optimize opportunity for structured immersion and interaction through a variety of naturally occurring contexts and tasks. “Villagers,” the student campers at Lesnoe Ozero, come from a wide range of backgrounds. Some are learning Russian for the first time, some have studied it in school, and others have grown up in Russian-speaking families. The daily schedule provides varied language situations that match the specific learning needs of each student.

The daily routine at Lesnoe Ozero

Each day begins with morning exercises and the singing of the Russian national anthem as we raise the Russian flag. Breakfast, like all other meals, begins with a meal presentation, a short skit in which children and counselors introduce the menu. The villagers invent creative ideas for the skit, like feeding off zombies by attacking them with pelmeni (dumplings) and sour cream or trying to fix a car which, it turns out, has had its engine hampered by the presence of sausage, beet salad, and tea cookies.

Announcements follow the meals – the “Grandmother of Cleanliness” hands out the award for clean cabins; the dean passes out medals for “Heroes of the Russian Language,” those who elect to speak only Russian all day. Two energetic counselors and village volunteers present a skit explaining the proverb of the day; lifeguards announce activities at the beach; and language-learning groups explain the news of the day.

Singing and dancing are favorites for the younger villagers as we make an effort to focus on cultural authenticity. At dance time, counselors demonstrate the troika while counting in Russian and encourage villagers to chant along as they move to their left and then their right. During singing, villagers learn folk songs and children's songs through a call and response with song boards as a visual support promoting letter recognition. Villagers grab a tambourine, play the role of a lovelorn sea captain, or race to display the scenes from the rollicking folksong Kalinka (snowball berry bush).

Free time is also full of opportunity for language use. Whether going for a swim at the płyazh (beach) or playing shakhmaty (chess) in the biblioteka (library), villagers are encouraged to use Russian and engage in ritualized interaction everywhere they go. In fact, Russian is required in the bank, where children can withdraw money from their village account – in rubles, of course! – and in the store, where tempting wares from Russian shokolad (chocolate) to trendy Cyrillic t-shirts are for sale.

At the end of the day, the village comes together for evening program where they might play team-building games or simulate a Russian holiday. One favorite is Novy God (New Year's), when Grandfather Frost and the Snow Maiden come to visit and villagers dance around the New Year's tree after a sumptuous banquet of chicken kiev and an overwhelming variety of salads and appetizers.

Throughout the day, villagers also have small-group cultural activities; for example, they may choose a week-long workshop on making nesting dolls or decide to sharpen their skills in futbol (soccer). In these activities, the teachers explain, encourage, and redirect in Russian, occasionally focusing on vocabulary that is required for the task at hand, but generally prioritizing the activity over language goals.

Then, in language classes, those priorities are turned around. Here, teachers use games, tasks, and the content of village life to focus on explicit language learning. These classes, unlike the activities, are organized along a notional-functional line for most levels, with the needs of navigating the village providing the framework for learning outcomes.
Our heritage villagers

Although many of our villagers are learning Russian as a foreign language, Lesnoe Ozero enjoys a large population of heritage speakers, sometimes more than half of the villagers. Usually about 60% of the heritage speakers are adoptees who came from Russian-speaking countries and have retained some language, while the remainder immigrated to the U.S. with their families.

Like all situations that mix heritage and traditional learners, the heterogeneous population is both a rich potpourri and, at times, a challenge. The positive aspects are many: heritage learners help their peers learn more about Russian language and culture from a kids' perspective, they can take leadership positions that they might not have in the English-speaking world, and they grow up to be talented counselors. And of course, heritage learners, especially at younger ages, generally have far greater language proficiency than traditional language learners. On the other hand, adoptees and immigrants bring with them complicated feelings about the language that, for the former, might represent a time when they were undernourished and lonely or, for the latter, might be associated with the extremely "uncool" parental generation.

Curriculum priorities for our heritage speakers

At Lesnoe Ozero, we were lucky to receive funding from Concordia Language Village's curriculum budget to create a curriculum for our younger heritage speakers, who attend one- or two-week sessions during our summer programming.

As we designed our curriculum, we followed the approaches recommended in Kagan and Dillon (2001) with accommodation made for campers' interests and age. Kagan and Dillon recommend that a heritage curriculum be content-based and address three specific areas: linguistic lacunae (grammar and vocabulary gaps), communicative lacunae (moving heritage learners from the interpersonal modes, in which they are comfortable, to the interpretive and presentational domains), and cultural lacunae (literacy & historical references). Similarly, we followed their recommendation that grammar be addressed from a "macro" perspective, rather than a micro, one-case-at-a-time deductive approach.

When we began this project, we also knew that we had to meet certain constraints. First of all, the curriculum needed to be flexible enough to be used with a variety of language proficiencies; since some of our heritage...
speakers are pre-literate, and others may not be orally productive, it needed to accommodate diverse proficiency across modalities. In addition, it needed to present Russian language and culture as "cool", fun and appropriate for well-adjusted, happy kids; that is, it needed to help our learners view their Russian identities as additive, rather than a threat to their American selves.

As we worked to meet these goals, we developed a content-based curriculum that incorporated elements of task- and project-based learning. We also focused on creating detailed lesson plans, so that our teachers, who are generally young college students, would have support in creating pedagogically sound learning environments.

Another challenge in developing this curriculum was in determining appropriate outcomes. Since the group of young heritage learners varies widely from year to year, the program is only two weeks long, and some learners may not return in subsequent years, it was unreasonable to take an approach that detailed specific learning points. Rather, we took an individual approach – that is, within the frameworks for a very general level, in a given session, the teacher chooses a materials packet with sets of activities that allows each child to improve at an appropriate pace in the areas identified by Kagan and Dillon (2001). For example, a presentational task might allow for a more literate learner to write multiple paragraphs for a newspaper about current events, while a newly literate learner takes and captions photographs.

The curriculum is divided by age (older/younger) and level (basic/advanced), so there are four distinct tracks within the curriculum. While it may be quite difficult to tease out whether a class should be considered basic or advanced, these tracks are conceived of as a means of providing easily employed flexibility and variety in what might otherwise be an unwieldy guide. Each track then contains a literature unit and a social science unit, as well as corresponding materials.

In a typical literature unit, based on the popular children's story Doctor Aibolit, the class begins with pre-reading questions. These help to build learners' content schema by activating their prior knowledge.

1. How do you feel about going to the doctor? Have you ever had a doctor you really liked? What did you like about him or her?

2. What are your favorite kinds of wild animals? What kind of problems do you think these animals might have that a veterinarian could take care of?

In two small groups, learners work together to answer these questions and then report back to the class. As the groups report, the teacher draws graphic organizers on the board – for the first question, a circle, with the good doctor in the center and the positive characteristics branching off.

For the second question, students complete a chart indicating animals, potential health problems, and the necessary cure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animal</th>
<th>Health Problem</th>
<th>Cure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rabbit</td>
<td>Thorn in paw</td>
<td>Remove thorn with tweezers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Then, depending on the students' reading abilities, the teacher may read the story first, or the children may take turns reading it, or there may be individual quiet reading with the teacher circulating to help each student as necessary.

During the reading, at short intervals, there are questions designed to further learners' top-down and bottom-up processing. For example, the class may skim the reading to try to determine important points (top-down), or they might use context to guess the meaning of vocabulary words (bottom-up).
Assessing progress in our heritage speakers

Summative assignments are designed to be creative, flexible and both interpersonal and presentational. Written assignments might include paragraphs hypothesizing about what a character might do if she or he came to live at Lesnoe Ozero, imagining a series of letters to a character, or inventing a new chapter in the story. Further oral assignments might be an interview with a character, a shortened reenactment of a scene, or a short film with a new twist on the story.

Social science units focus on a topic of interest, such as a current event, natural phenomenon or a culture of the Russian-speaking world. These units feature reading skills practice and summative assessments that are similar to those in the literature unit, so that learners experience a spiraling effect, addressing the same skills in a variety of contexts. In addition to the newspaper project referenced earlier, another typical project for this unit would be a group research presentation. Learners would read about a topic of interest in a children's encyclopedia and work together to write a report that might take the form of a brochure, a poster, or a comic strip. Then, they could choose to present their report to the village at the talent show, film a documentary, or interview other proficient speakers about the topic.

Conclusion

Here at Lesnoe Ozero we plan carefully to provide rich language and cultural experiences for both our traditional learners and our heritage children. By incorporating variety into our curriculum and flexibility into its implementation we bring Russian alive for our campers as they improve their language skills and deepen their knowledge of Russian culture.

References


Lara Ravitch is the Dean of Lesnoe Ozero, Concordia Language Villages’ Russian program. Her interest in Russian was first awakened when she came to Lesnoe Ozero as a villager, and she went on to live in Moscow for three years. She received her MA in Teaching Foreign Languages from the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

Avram Lyon is the Assistant Dean at Lesnoe Ozero, where he has spent every summer since he first arrived as a villager, at age 17. He is currently earning his PhD in Russian Language and Literature at UCLA, where his research is focused on language attrition and re-acquisition in Russian adoptees.
It's another Saturday morning, and cars make their way into the church parking lot located on a small, wooded road in Kerhonkson, NY. "Where's that?" most would ask and they would learn that "Little Ukraine" is approximately 100 miles north of New York City. Ukrainians moved here to escape big cities and to enjoy an area that is reminiscent of Ukraine's Carpathian Mountains. In the Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church's spacious basement, on Saturday morning, a little before 10 a.m., Ukrainian children, aged 4 to 14, and their parents arrive for school. Though our school is quite small, it has great heart and a wonderful sense of community. The children enter with smiling faces, excited to see the friends that they are with but once a week. Nevertheless, they share a close bond because of the uniqueness of their Ukrainian heritage.

Our School Routine Begins

After business is settled, students, teachers and parents stand in a large circle and begin the school day with a prayer led by the school director who has been at the helm of the school for many years. After announcements, movable walls transform the huge open space into classrooms, one for each level. The classes are broken down into four grade groupings: The preschool/kindergarten and first grade, second to fourth grade, fifth to seventh, and eighth to tenth grade levels. The biggest challenge facing our Ukrainian Heritage teachers is getting and keeping their students' interest. Let's face it -- going to school on Saturday morning, after a whole week of school, is not usually at the top on a child's 'to do' list. They enjoy playing and socializing but getting them to sit in class sometimes requires some creativity. Teachers work hard to overcome this and the children usually catch on quickly to the spirit of the school. Since Ukrainian is a phonetic language, learning to read Ukrainian is quite easy after students have mastered the sounds. Students learn language (reading and writing), geography, history, culture, traditions, folk dancing and music. Equally important, it gives the students a feeling of community.

The classes are small; a student gets ample one-on-one instruction.

Our Four Classes

The pre-K, kindergarten level begins the introduction to their Ukrainian heritage through conversation, song and play. Their class always starts with the Dobrydens song and a handshake from each classmate as they introduce themselves using their Ukrainian name. Students also sing a Ukrainian exercise song, naming head, shoulders, knees and toes to learn the body parts while having fun and being silly with the speed of the song. Next, the children sit around the classroom calendar to review the days of the week, month and numbers. Weather is always an exciting topic to discuss, especially in the Catskill region, and a song about the weather is in order afterwards. This young
group is beginning to identify and write the Ukrainian alphabet, which consists of 33 letters in the Cyrillic form. The abetka (alphabet) is then sung to an echo, marching song that the young children enjoy. This portion of the day usually ends with a Ukrainian folktale and craft. Favorites include The Ripka, the story of a large turnip, or The Mitten, a tale of a lost mitten that becomes a warm haven for forest animals.

The next level, usually for ages 7 to 9, focuses on reading and writing words, then putting these words into sentences and short paragraphs. Also, the teacher introduces some geography and history in this class. Students enjoy word searches. Students answer questions about a story they read in class. The students also enjoy playing ‘hangman’ on the blackboard, using words or phrases that they are working on that day.

At level three, for ages 10 through 14, the students are expected to understand what they are reading and to write their own compositions. Teachers encourage the students to converse in Ukrainian and they continue learning geography and history.

At the top level, the students are usually age 14 and older. They focus on advanced reading, writing and conversational skills. Geography and history lessons are more in depth and these students recite poetry, learn culture and study literature. Teachers assess student progress using periodic testing, written homework, and in class reading. In June all students receive report cards.

Dancing and Singing for All

In addition to the intensive language classes, all the students form a chorus. The music instructor travels a considerable distance to help students learn traditional carols and contemporary Ukrainian songs. The children prepare these songs and poems for two performances, St. Nicholas’ Day in December and the Taras Shevchenko (Ukrainian poet) program in March. Ukrainian dance lessons follow the academic portion of the day. After a lunch break, all the students come together to take part in folk dancing. Students seem to especially look forward to this activity. The enthusiastic dance instructor ignites enthusiasm in his students. They perform these dances at numerous Ukrainian school and church functions and have taken part in a few community events.

By now it is 1:00 pm and parents are returning to peek into the last moments of dance lessons. They are scrambling to collect their children’s belongings... coats, lunch boxes and backpacks and converse for a few more minutes. Dance class ends and many students run out side to play. The hall empties. Lights are turned off and the school director locks up the large wooden church doors. That is, until next Saturday.

This is Marianne Hawryluk’s first year teaching pre-k-1st grade. She attended this Ukrainian school as a student and now has her three children enrolled in school. She also works as an assistant teacher at a local elementary school.

Mary Panychshyn teaches 1st & 2nd grade. She has taught for nearly 20 years and attended a Ukrainian Heritage School in New Jersey. Mary also works as an administrative assistant in the Geology Department at a local SUNY college.
The Challenge

Many foreign language teachers are putting their textbooks, conjugation charts, and established methods away to meet the needs of a new, growing population of language students. These students are often more comfortable than their academically-trained teachers with speaking in dialects and using colloquialisms, yet, at the same time, they often lack literacy skills in the language of study. Who are these students? They are heritage language learners: students having familial and/or ancestral connections to a language other than English (Hornberger & Wang, 2008).

In the United States, heritage languages include indigenous languages spoken by Native American tribes (e.g., Cherokee, Navajo, Sioux) as well as immigrant languages, which range from Spanish, the nation’s second-most common language, to those used within rather small immigrant communities, such as Albanian or Twi. In 2007, the number of school-aged children who spoke a language other than English at home accounted for 20% of the total population in this age range in the U.S. (Gunning, 2008), and these numbers are likely to grow, considering the demographic trends from the recent years. Exposed to their familial language and culture from an early age, heritage language learners are gifted with skills in languages reflecting the diverse patchwork heritage of the U.S. Proponents of bilingual education have long argued that heritage language learners present a unique national resource, as their rich linguistic and cultural inheritance can contribute to the country’s economic competitiveness, national security, diplomacy, and scientific success, as well as enhance the diversity of the nation (Brechtl & Ingold, 2002; Peyton, Ranard & McGinnis, 2001). In addition to societal benefits, positive individual effects of heritage language maintenance include greater academic achievement, improved literacy skills in other languages, better psychological well-being, enhanced cognitive development, increased creativity, and delayed onset of cognitive aging (Baker, 2006; Bialystok, 2001; Suarez, 2007).

Unfortunately, linguistic and cultural resources can become extinct if neglected (Hornberger & Wang, 2008). Linguistic studies have documented that it is typical for U.S. immigrant communities to lose proficiency in heritage languages with every generation: by the second and third generation, most heritage speakers become English-dominant and their heritage language abilities significantly weaken; the fourth generation of immigrant communities is predominantly English monolingual (Valdés, 2001). This is not surprising, as historical overview of U.S. education policy shows that mono-lingualism has been and is still viewed as the desirable educational objective, an outcome of the underlying ideology of assimilation (Hornberger & Wang, 2008; Shannon, 1999). Current federal education policies as enacted through the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 place a heavy emphasis on prompt development of English skills and “mainstreaming” into all-English instructional settings (Wright, 2007). Ironically, proficiency in a foreign language is viewed positively when achieved by elite monolingual students; yet, the maintenance and development of heritage languages are viewed as unpatriotic and are ignored by policy-makers, leading to negligent loss of national, familial, and personal resources. Given the right of heritage speakers to receive educational support in the development of their native language and in light of the recognized need for more responsible language education policy, the question is: How can the system of language education ensure maintenance and development of heritage languages?

Identifying Educational Needs of Heritage Learners

The first critical step involves identifying the educational needs of heritage language learners, which presents a formidable challenge. These learners are not a monolithic group: the circumstances of their upbringing vary in socio-cultural, educational, economic, dialectal, and ancestral terms. As a result, they come to school with a broad range of skills from purely receptive to fluent, depending on the amount, quality, and contexts of exposure to the heritage
In 2009: State of the Field

language. In spite of a growing body of studies, the topics of heritage language acquisition and pedagogy remain under-researched with many questions pertaining to the dynamics and profile of heritage language acquisition still unanswered. Coherent pedagogical theories that would guide and inform research on heritage language learning and teaching are yet to be fully articulated (Valdés, 2001).

There is some consensus in the literature about the general strengths and weaknesses that apply to students whose parents speak the heritage language at home. Because they are typically exposed to their familial language from birth, these students come to school with significantly more developed speaking and listening comprehension skills than traditional foreign language students (Kondo-Brown, 2005; Valdés, 2005). However, their profile often does not fit upper-level academic courses. Although heritage language learners may be well-versed in everyday topics (e.g. house chores, prayers, play talk), their academic lexicon and knowledge of the formal register is limited, and oral speech might abound in colloquialisms, non-standard forms, and dialectal variations. What particularly sets heritage language learners apart from students who learned foreign languages in academic settings, is that they either completely lack literacy skills in the heritage language or lag behind the traditionally educated students in reading and writing abilities (Friedman & Kagan, 2008; Valdés, 2005).

Existing Models of Heritage Language Education

Most heritage language students enroll in traditional foreign language courses, where their language teachers are likely to have no prior knowledge of how heritage language and "true" foreign language acquisition systems differ and how the academic needs of these two populations can be met (Schwartz, 2001; Valdés, 2005). Hybrid courses in which both heritage and non-heritage students are placed together may fall short in serving the needs of both learner groups (Sohn & Shin, 2007). As traditional students struggle with oral skills, they may feel threatened by the seeming fluency of heritage language students. At the same time, activities characteristic of initial foreign language instruction, such as listening to simplified dialogues, engaging in basic vocabulary drills, and producing scripted output exercises, do not contribute to the linguistic development of heritage language students and decrease their levels of motivation. Harklau conducted ethnographic case studies documenting experiences of several high school heritage language students placed in traditional Spanish classes (Harklau, in press). She found that while the students entered the classes with neutral or positive expectations, they left with antipathy, frustration, low course averages, and the perception that Spanish classes are boring (in fact, "the boringest "). The students additionally felt disempowered and stigmatized by the teacher's dismissal of the regional dialects they spoke.

Language courses or articulated tracks specifically designed for heritage language learners are still exceptions rather than a rule. According to the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in Washington, D.C., courses for heritage speakers are now offered in such languages as Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Danish, Denaakk'e Athabascan, French, German, Ilokano, Hebrew, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Navajo, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Samoan, Spanish, Swedish, Tamazight, Tiberian, Tongan, and Ukrainian (CAL, 2009). While the number of students enrolled in these courses is not known, the trends are likely to vary from state-to-state and to depend on the demographic situation, state and local policies, levels of support for minority language education, funding. For example, Gwinnett County in the Atlanta Metropolitan Area, one of the fastest growing counties in the nation, saw a dramatic increase in the number of students with
languages other than English from 2002 to 2008; the numbers grew from 28,454 to 56,791, with Spanish-speaking heritage students as the largest linguistic minority group (Jahner, 2009). As a result of proactive educational efforts in the county, the number of students enrolled in Spanish for Native Speakers courses increased tenfold over the last 6 years. Still, less than 2% of students in the county’s public schools received heritage language instruction in 2007-2008.

The number of states offering foreign language immersion programs and two-way or dual immersion programs has been increasing. In immersion programs (which can be total or partial), content subjects are taught exclusively in the foreign language in lower grades (K-2), with increased instruction in English in the upper grades. In two-way immersion programs, content and literacy instruction are split equally between English and the other language of study. The latest updates in the CAL’s online directory report that in 2006 there were 263 foreign language immersion programs in the U.S., and the number of two-way immersion programs reached 335 in 2007. Originally designed for and still serving largely monolingual English-speaking communities, immersion programs nevertheless can be effective in helping heritage language students develop biliteracy and reach academic success (Christian, 2008; c.f. Wang & Green 2001). (Information about the success of the first two dual immersion elementary public charter schools in Georgia is reported in the next section of this article.)

Offering more language courses designed specifically for heritage language students is constrained not only by such issues as funding, policy, or logistics, but also by a shortage of interested or qualified teachers. While this is a problem for the K-12 system in general, the shortage of teachers who have the understanding, knowledge, and skills necessary to teach heritage languages is particularly dire (Schwartz, 2001). The demands of teaching heritage language students, as already discussed, are not trivial: it requires significant revisions of pedagogical practices, creation of well-articulated course tracks and lesson plans, development of material, selection of appropriate textbook, assessments, and placement tools. Added challenges often include hidden, but demanding responsibilities, such as translating for heritage students’ parents and performing multiple roles as surrogate counselors, administrators, and ESL teachers (Colomer & Harkla, in press). Most problematic of all is the fact that teacher education programs have not responded to these new demands in the field, and only a few universities have developed methodology courses specifically oriented towards the needs of heritage language educators.

**Georgia Educators Take Action**

As one of the fastest growing states in the country, Georgia has witnessed a significant influx of immigrants over the last decade. Foreign language educators in K-16 are acutely aware of the growing demand for heritage language education and have recently launched several initiatives to meet the needs of heritage language learners and teachers.

**Unidos Dual Language Charter School**

In 2006, the first Georgia public dual language charter school Unidos opened its doors to K-1 students in Clayton County. Today 312 students are enrolled in K-3 grades, 46% of whom are heritage speakers of Spanish, and the school is continuing to grow. In accordance with the dual language immersion model, English-speaking and Spanish-speaking children study together and receive content area and literacy instruction in both languages, following a “one language – one teacher” principle. Students in grades K-1 start out with 70% of instruction time in Spanish and 30% of instruction time in English before switching to a 50/50 model in levels 2-5. There are no language courses per se, as language instruction is grounded in content-based curriculum. For example, students learn science-related academic vocabulary in English and Spanish as they engage in meaningful contextualized reading, discussions, and writing activities in science classes in each of the two languages. Spanish, Language Arts, and English Language Arts classes zoom in on literacy skills. One of the school’s primary goals is for all of its students to reach bilingualism and biliteracy by the time they finish fifth grade. Unidos has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year since it opened in 2006 and in 2008 received the Superintendent’s Distinguished Achievement Award from the Georgia Department of Education for improvement in Grade One Reading on the CRCT (Criterion Referenced Competency Test).

**The World Language Academy**

In 2008, the World Language Academy followed suit by launching into the first year of the dual language immersion program at Hall County School System’s first charter school of choice. During the first academic year, the additive English-Spanish bilingual program was open to grades K – 1, and as this cohort of students progresses through the grades, the dual-immersion format will follow them. Similar to Unidos, about half of the students the school serves are heritage speakers of Spanish, i.e. the World Language
Academy integrates native English speakers and heritage Spanish speakers in the same classroom and provides quality, standards-based content instruction in both languages. Grades K and 1 are in a 70/30 model, which will shift to 60/40 in the next year reaching a 50/50 balance when this year's first grade students progress to grades three through five. The World Language Academy is unique, as in addition to promoting bilingualism and biliteracy in English and Spanish, Mandarin Chinese is taught to all students in grades K-5 at this innovative school. Carrie Woodcock, the Dual-language Coordinator at the WLA comments:

"Our faculty works to ensure that language acquisition is emphasized through instruction based on the standards while fostering an environment of multiculturalism and linguistic understanding.

In addition to the cognitive benefits of bilingualism including creative thinking, linguistic awareness, and communicative sensitivity, the multicultural competency that is gained in our school is what will change our world. There will always be differences between people, but differences can be powerful teaching tools for our students. A dual-immersion school such as this can serve as an important step toward unifying a community. At the World Language Academy, parents, students, school employees, and community members are invited to celebrate the multitude of cultures that are featured at this school and around the world.

Both charter schools have generated much excitement in their respective counties and the state, with hopeful parents turning up in such high numbers, that the schools will hold a lottery to establish the order for the waiting list for the 2009-2010 academic year.

Recruitment of Teachers

Many school systems have turned to the heritage communities for help. Falls Church, Virginia has experimented with such teacher recruitment programs in their "growing teachers from the grassroots" initiative: they recruit middle school bilingual students to assist teachers with heritage speakers and reimburse them with savings bonds for college. Universities and schools are establishing partnerships to provide "pathways" for heritage language learners into college and teacher education programs by encouraging them to engage in teaching activities for credit (Schwartz, 2001). Recruitment is not the end in itself: teachers who take on the challenges of teaching heritage language students are passionate and devoted educators, but they also require support and training in the topics of heritage language acquisition, pedagogy, bilingualism, sociolinguistics, and dialectology. Given that heritage language learning is closely intertwined with highly charged sociopolitical tensions, it is critically important that these teachers be aware of the sociopolitical context in which the heritage language communities function. The shortage of materials for heritage language students, particularly in less commonly taught languages, means that teacher education courses in materials development and curriculum design are of acute need. Teacher training certification programs should develop working relationships with mentor teachers in local K-12 heritage language programs and secure placements for students interested in teaching heritage languages to establish apprenticeship programs to support beginning teachers.

Heritage Language Studies for Pre-service and In-service Teachers

At the University of Georgia, we have also taken steps to address the educational needs of in-service and pre-service teachers interested in offering heritage language courses. In the spring of 2009, I offered a graduate-level seminar titled "Heritage Language Education in Georgia" with the goal of exploring the issues related to providing high quality heritage language education, particularly as they apply to our local context. In this seminar, we have explored the dynamics of heritage language acquisition, factors that promote or inhibit retention of heritage languages, methodological considerations, instructional needs of heritage language students and professional needs of teachers, state demographics, and types of programs serving heritage language communities in Georgia. This year the Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach supported the seminar, which allowed us to approach, access, and work with different constituents involved in heritage language education in Georgia, including representatives from the Georgia Department of Education, experienced instructors of heritage language courses, heritage
language education researchers and heritage language learners themselves. Thus, in addition to academic assignments, students had an opportunity to engage in contextualized discussions with the guest speakers representing the above groups. To observe high quality heritage language instruction, we took a field trip to visit a Spanish class at West Hall High School (which boasts offering the first International Baccalaureate Spanish for Native Speakers Advanced Placement course in a public school in the US). In the spirit of serving local heritage language communities, all students participated in a service-learning project by running bilingual story time sessions in Spanish and Korean at the local library during the course of the semester. Next year, we are planning to offer the course on a satellite campus in the Atlanta Metropolitan Area, so that more of the in-service teachers typically commuting to the University of Georgia from Atlanta could have an opportunity to benefit from taking the course.

Conclusion

It is encouraging to see the emergence of innovative efforts, interest, and acknowledgement of the importance of heritage language education, as highlighted in this issue of Learning Languages. Yet, we still have much to do. Heritage language learners and teachers need attention, support, respect, and representation in the schools, government, universities, funding agencies, and the community. Therefore, I conclude with the call to action: “In a nation of diverse languages and cultures, we must do what we can to ensure that our linguistic wealth and cultural heritage are passed down to the next generation.” (Wang & Green, 2001, p.187).

References


Dr. Viktoria Hasko is Assistant Professor in the Department of Language and Literacy Education at the University of Georgia. She teaches courses and conducts research in the areas of foreign language methodology, bilingualism, and heritage language education. She studies the dynamics of language development as it interrelates with students’ learning histories and sociocultural milieus. She has recently explored such topics as identity repertoire, affective talk, and expression of culturally-mediated concepts in the speech of foreign and heritage language learners.

Dr. Hasko would like to thank Dell Perry from the Unidos Dual Language Charter School and Carrie Woodcock from the World Language Academy for taking time to share information about their innovative schools.
Quick Takes

This feature introduces products that may interest early language educators.

**Flash Speak in a Week! 1001 Flashcards**

There are more flash cards in this set than you can imagine. They are color-coded by nouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs. On one side is a word in the target language often with an illustration. The backside contains a translation in English. They provide great sentence and story starters for Heritage speakers who will also enjoy playing charades using the cards. Emerging readers can use the words to help them write original sentences. You could also use the cards as the source of the word of the day and focus on the phonics of the word.

**Information**

1001 Flashcards is available in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian and Spanish from Penton Overseas. ([www.pentonoverseas.com](http://www.pentonoverseas.com)) for $16.95

**iVideo**

These videos for learning French, Italian, German, and Spanish offer basic expressions for travel. The videos are ipod compatible so they are perfect for travel. They are best for the parents of students who would like to learn language on their own.

**Information**

iLearn iVideo is available in French, German, Italian and Spanish from Penton Overseas. ([www.pentonoverseas.com](http://www.pentonoverseas.com)) for $20.00

**Write Away! Chinese**

This innovative book and CD combination allows students to practice forming 300 carefully chosen Chinese characters. The tracing guides show the order of the strokes and empty squares for independent practice. The book comes with a special write and erase pen, so the book can be used over and over. The 50 minute CD models pronunciation of all the words.

**Information**

Write Away! Chinese is available from Penton Overseas. ([www.pentonoverseas.com](http://www.pentonoverseas.com)) for $18.95

**Hear Say: The Kid's Way to Learn**

Easy to use vocabulary for English, French, German, Italian, or Spanish. Vocabulary themes are illustrated with cute illustrations and the words in the target language. The book also includes a fun CD with sound effects of the vocabulary for kids to identify and the pronunciation of the words. Great for heritage learners who need to focus on decoding and spelling.

**Information**

Hear Say is available for English, French, German, Italian, and Spanish from Penton Overseas. ([www.pentonoverseas.com](http://www.pentonoverseas.com)) for $12.95
The NNELL Award selection committee is proud to announce that Mr. William Gavaghan is the distinguished recipient of NNELL Award for Outstanding Support of Early Second Language Learning. Mr. Gavaghan established a Spanish immersion program 12 years ago at Lawrence Township in Indianapolis, Indiana. The 6th grade class of Craig Middle School conducted science, social studies and language arts in Spanish. Mr. Gavaghan was able to negotiate with the state to offer three core subjects taught in Spanish in grades 6-8. Each subsequent year a new curriculum was written to support the immersion program through 8th grade. To enrich the science curriculum, Mr. Gavaghan assisted in the implementation of a Spanish Science Fair.

According to Barbara de Gortari, Associate Professor of Spanish at the University of Indianapolis, Mr. Gavaghan was very involved in building a sequential program at the high school level as well. He knew he would need to present the latest research to the community for their support, so he attended sessions at the University of Minnesota. Not only did he study the latest brain research related to children's second language acquisition, he secured extra training in the field for his immersion teachers.

In addition to program implementation and professional development opportunities for his teachers, Mr. Gavaghan actively worked with the Spanish Embassy to qualify the entire Lawrence K-12 immersion program to enter the Spanish Academy. Today students are interacting with Spanish immersion students nationally, and internationally. Mr. Gavaghan exemplifies what this nation needs, by advocating and supporting early language learning for all students.
Introduction

In 2000, a visionary principal, Dr. Peggy Smith, embraced the idea of beginning a daily Spanish program for the children at East Clayton Elementary School in Clayton, North Carolina. Her bold commitment to providing daily foreign language instruction in grades K-5 was the first step in designing an innovative program model that is now in its sixth year. While the program at East Clayton has been highly successful, each year has presented challenges requiring Smith to be both creative and resourceful in sustaining the program. The daily Spanish program at East Clayton Elementary School began as the first pilot site for the statewide initiative called "VISION 2010: A Plan for Improving Foreign Language Instruction in the North Carolina Public Schools" which is a joint project sponsored by the Alliance for Language Learning and the Foreign Language Association of North Carolina. The Alliance is a non-profit organization comprised of business and education leaders from across the state who are committed to promoting high quality foreign language study beginning in the elementary grades and continuing in an uninterrupted sequence through grade 12 (Alliance for Language Learning, 2001).

Program Innovation – From Conceptualization to Reality

The successful implementation of any foreign language program relies upon the commitment and support of the stakeholders involved in the school and its community including faculty, staff, administrators, and parents. Following several months dedicated to gathering information from VISION 2010 project leaders about the design and implementation of a K-5 articulated program, collaboration between all the stakeholders at East Clayton began in earnest during the fall of 2001.

First, school leaders shared their proposal with the School Improvement Team and the Parent Advisory Council that were very supportive. In the spring of 2002, school leaders asked parents of kindergarten children to complete an interest survey that yielded results in favor of beginning the first phase of the program. The daily Spanish program began in the fall of 2002 with approximately 50 kindergarten students. In order to offer thirty minutes daily instruction for the students, Smith called upon a variety of resources already in place at East Clayton. An elementary grades teacher, Linda Griswold who was also an early grades Spanish specialist became the lead teacher and guiding force of the program, relinquishing her planning period and lunch break to teach Spanish in two kindergarten classes of 24 students.

At the end of the first year, in spring 2003, the school surveyed the parents of kindergartners in the program who, overwhelmingly, requested that their children continue Spanish in first grade. In year two of the program, 86 new students in kindergarten, 44 continuing first graders, and 24 new first graders enrolled in the program. This enrollment now demanded a total of seven class groups. Determined not to turn away any interested students, the school sought the personnel and other resources to meet the needs of the increase in enrollment. Three other members of the teaching staff and a teacher assistant were highly proficient in Spanish. The English as a Second Language teacher, a classroom teacher in grades 4-5, and the teacher assistant each taught one daily class of Spanish. The lead Spanish teacher taught four groups, again using her planning and a free period.

At the end of year two, consultants from the Center for Applied Linguistics conducted the Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment (ELLOPA) with the first graders. The results indicated positive gains for all children who had completed two years of thirty minutes of daily language:

"The students were assigned ratings in five skill areas: oral fluency, grammar (speaking), vocabulary (speaking), listening comprehension, and communication strategies. The ELLOPA results revealed that these first graders are making reasonable progress in acquiring listening comprehension and speaking proficiency in Spanish, according to the Realistic Performance Outcomes (ACTFL, 1998). Over 75% of the East Clayton VISION 2010 first graders can use
memorized phrases and create some short phrases on their own. One student can create some sentences successfully but is not yet able to maintain conversation at the sentence level. Many of the students received higher ratings in listening comprehension than in speaking, a natural outcome for students in classroom language programs and for language learners in general. These results provide solid baseline data for assessing the students’ future progress in learning to communicate in Spanish.” (CAL Report, 2004).

These data and the findings gathered from the second parent survey gave the program much needed impetus to continue. Smith shared the data with the School Improvement Team, the Parent Advisory Council, and the Johnston County Board of Education. The stakeholders affirmed continued support of the program although they did not give it any additional resources. In year three, 2003-04, the foreign language teachers collaborated about ways to implement the fourteen classes needed for the 237 students enrolled in the program: 106 kindergarteners, 88 first graders, and 43 second graders. The lead Spanish teacher taught seven classes, the ESL teacher taught four, and the teacher assistant one. The school hired a native Spanish speaker to teach kindergarten and first grade, providing daily instruction for these children.

In year four, 2005-06, enrollment grew to 283 students, again creating the need for additional teachers. Eighty-eight kindergarteners, 83 first graders, and 79 second graders joined the 33 grade four Spanish students. Due to the opening of a new elementary school in the district, some students in the original cohort left the program. Smith’s creative approach to program design and use of limited resources moved the program into its fourth year. The school employed three native speakers to be classroom teachers of grades one, two, and three allowing them to provide Spanish instruction for their students. A kindergarten teacher who is also a native speaker continued to teach one class of daily Spanish, while classroom teachers in grade three who possess a high level of proficiency and the lead Spanish teacher taught the remaining classes.

As the program articulated to grade five in 2006-07 and enrollment climbed to 319 the challenges to continue became more complex. Students went to remediation in math and/or reading, enrichment classes, or daily Spanish during a dedicated thirty minute time slot, staggered throughout the day to maintain the schedule. The same teachers who had taught in 2005-06 continued to teach and another native speaker was hired to teach a kindergarten class. After much collaboration regarding the continuation of the program in 2007-08, the School Improvement Team, parents and other stakeholders determined that holding daily Spanish classes during the time dedicated to the enhancement class period would allow flexibility in the schedule for classes including remediation and enrichment. The teachers of daily Spanish classes would have time to collaborate and plan on the fifth day of each week. Those classes not taught by regular classroom teachers (the five native or highly proficient speakers) would have music, art, or media/computer lab co-taught by the lead Spanish teacher and the enhancement teacher for 45 minutes three days per week. The fourth day would be a forty-five minute class of Spanish. As a result of this unique approach, the teachers recognized increased usage of Spanish by both students and the co-teachers of enhancement classes who were not Spanish speakers.

The Results

In 2008-09, the first cohort of Spanish students at East Clayton Elementary School matriculated to middle school. During their experience in the daily Spanish program, these students had attained a distinguished record of accomplishments, including a presentation to the Board of Education and many school performances and presentations in Spanish. According to Smith, these students who are now in their seventh year of Spanish language study have developed a positive attitude toward language and culture and have a motivation for learning beyond that of their peers who did not participate in the daily program. They have come a long way from their awkward embarrassment as very young children making efforts to greet each other in Spanish. Now they are more confident in their ability to converse with their teachers in Spanish and are accustomed to having informal dialogue with
their friends in the hallway. Parents report great enthusiasm from their children as a result of learning a second language during the past six years. In addition to the intangible positive effects the daily Spanish program has had on the participants, recent data show a significant impact on student achievement. Data gathered in the spring of 2008 compared the End-of-Grade test results of students in the daily Spanish program with those of their peers at East Clayton who were not in the daily program. Although the classes contained a rich mixture of below-average (many children with exceptionalities) to academically gifted children, students in the daily Spanish program scored significantly better on their End-of-Grade tests. The data below show the results of their End-of-Grade Reading and Mathematics tests comparing the daily Spanish group with their peers in the school, the district, and the state.

Lessons Learned
The daily Spanish program at East Clayton Elementary School has made extraordinary progress since its beginning in the fall of 2001. Under the leadership of a principal with unwavering dedication, East Clayton has been able to open the doors of the Spanish-speaking world to children in grades K-5. Smith shares several lessons from this journey:

- Keep the vision alive. Of all the lessons learned, this is the first and most important. Teachers, parents and the students must all realize the value of the learning and appreciate the benefits of a second language.
- Communicate and collaborate often. Surveys are the best way to find out what parents think and if the program is meeting its goals. Communication is a must, as with any initiative.
- Assess your students’ progress. Several instruments can be administered locally. For example, the Center for Applied Linguistics is an external validation of program goals. While there is a cost associated with this assessment, there is good reason to invest, particularly for policy makers and district officials.

Table: School Year 2007-08 End of Grade Test Data for Reading and Mathematics by Grade Level and Percent Proficient (Level III or IV)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GRADE 3</th>
<th>GRADE 4</th>
<th>GRADE 5</th>
<th>OVERALL</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>READING</td>
<td>MATH</td>
<td>READING</td>
<td>MATH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Clayton</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
<td>87.3%</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
<td>84.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Number of</td>
<td>tests taken</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>East Clayton</td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>tests taken</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School with</td>
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<td>97.6%</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
<td>91.9%</td>
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<td>42</td>
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<td>49</td>
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<tr>
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<td>62.5%</td>
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<td>64.1%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>54.5%</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
<td>72.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction: School Report Card
† Source: Johnston County Public Schools – Testing and Accountability
- Keep enrollment as diverse as your school’s population. Exceptional children are huge beneficiaries of the program. The increased capacity to learn as well as the confidence it builds are priceless.

- Plan for your heritage language speakers. It is important to maintain the native speakers’ skills in reading and writing. Include them in daily Spanish classes. Playground and cafeteria conversations are beneficial to both groups of learners.

- Continue to engage students in language experiences outside of the school year. Summer camps are an excellent way to maintain the learning. Our summer Spanish enhancement camps develop the students’ cultural awareness and focus on a different country each year, giving participants a greater appreciation of the diversity of the Spanish-speaking societies and the richness of the heritage of each.

- Involve children in as many activities as possible. Take them to restaurants where they can speak the target language. Field trips, both virtual and real, are excellent learning tools. Hands-on materials are a necessity.

- Share your successes. It is important to involve as many parents and community stakeholders as possible. The school holds Hispanic/Latino nights each quarter, many at the grand auditorium in downtown Clayton, at which participants in the daily Spanish program perform. Children display and describe their projects to all the attendees. Native speaker parents share their favorite covered dish foods and artifacts from their culture. Discussion centers on issues such as community resources, processes and policies of the school and opportunities for involvement. The school’s after school care program counselors provide childcare.

- And finally, celebrate! Children love learning and celebrating their accomplishments motivates them to want to learn more. The strategic use of second language students as “interpreters” at assemblies is a welcomed way to celebrate and validate the students’ learning.

References


Dr. Mary Lynn Redmond is Associate Professor and Chair of the Education Department at Wake Forest University where she is a professor and chair of the Department of Education. She teaches K-12 methods and research courses and supervises Foreign Language Education students at the undergraduate and graduate level. She has taught French in grades K-12 and at the university level. She has served in many positions at the state and national level, including president of the Foreign Language Association of NC, president of NNELL and Executive Secretary of NNELL. She frequently presents at state, regional, and national conferences. Her scholarship and research focuses on K-12 articulation, curriculum design, technology, and literacy.

Dr. Peggy Smith was the 2005 recipient of the NNELL Award for Outstanding Support of Early Language Learning.

The authors would like to thank Linda Griswold, the lead Spanish teacher at East Clayton Elementary School, for contributing background information for this article.

The authors would like to thank Linda Griswold, the lead Spanish teacher at East Clayton Elementary School, for contributing background information for this article.
This article will offer some strategies to foreign language teachers of Spanish who are uncertain about having heritage language learners in their classrooms. Many foreign language teachers are unprepared to teach heritage language learners. This often leads to problems for both the teacher and the heritage language learner. As schools become more and more diverse teacher preparative institutions might do more to assist foreign language teachers who undoubtedly have heritage language learners in their classrooms since there are small numbers of heritage language learners in the foreign language classrooms now in many schools across the country. A number of strategies are available to assist foreign language teachers in order to engage mixed groups of students in meaningful learning.

Introduction
Many colleges and universities have a specified curriculum for pre-service teachers who want to teach a foreign language (FL). The coursework focuses on second language methodology, second language acquisition theory, assessments, field experience, student teaching, multicultural education, and to some degree, working with learners with diverse needs. This training for pre-service teachers provides them with a foundation for teaching a FL, such as Spanish. However, methods courses oftentimes do not address the issue of heritage language learners (HLLs) in the FL classroom. State school systems are now or soon will be facing the issue of how to place and instruct HLLs in FL classrooms. Valdés et al. (2008), state that very few programs prepare instructors to teach HLLs: as a result “these instructors frequently have little understanding of bilingualism and bilingual individuals, contact varieties of language, and factors influencing the retention or abandonment of heritage languages” (p. 5). HLLs bring various dialects with them into the classroom other than standard Spanish. The dominant language in any country has created changes to the minority language, for example the dominant language is English in the U.S. Therefore because Spanish in the U.S. is in constant contact with English it will evolve and change because of the close contact with English. HLLs’ instructional needs are often at odds with the needs of FL students.

This challenges FL teachers who have little to no experience with HLLs to adapt their teaching methodologies to accommodate both HLLs and FL learners. Teachers faced with such challenges must find a way to bridge the gap between HLLs and FL learners in the classroom. One way to start would be to understand how the needs of HLLs differ from those of FL learners by taking into consideration several issues relating to bilingualism. The present inquiry will address Spanish HLLs and FL learners of Spanish.

Heritage Language Learners
HLLs are on a continuum – abilities in reading, writing, speaking and listening vary from person to person. Blake and Zyzik (2003) maintain: Spanish heritage speakers are far from forming a homogeneous grouping with respect to their language abilities. They obviously share certain linguistic and cultural characteristics with monolingual Spanish speakers, but there also exist significant differences, depending on the individuals’ present and past opportunities to use Spanish in their daily lives. (p. 520).

There are complete bilinguals who have full command of both English and Spanish. There are receptive bilinguals who are English dominant but understand almost all spoken Spanish; howev-
er, the speaking skills in Spanish of receptive bilinguals are limited. There are bilinguals who have unequal levels of proficiency in English and Spanish. Having received their education in English, they possess some literacy skills in Spanish (Peyton, Lewelling & Winke, 2001). Teachers must also take into account regional varieties and registers of Spanish that HLLs use when evaluating their language skills. This variability creates a number of challenges as to where to place HLLs who enroll in Spanish as a FL class.

Attitudes towards Placement of Spanish Heritage Learners

At the elementary grades the model for foreign language instruction is often a Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools (FLES) program in which the foreign language teacher comes into the classroom to teach language class. In this situation all students in a given classroom receive instruction at the same time, often in short class periods. Heritage learners and second language learners are together and because of the way foreign languages are taught in these FLES classes this joint placement is often problematic. This “one size fits all” placement may continue into the middle school where, frequently, expediency in scheduling dictates that schools place HLLs in a grade level language class regardless of appropriateness. In other schools teachers and guidance counselors can use discretion to place students but even then placements are not always optimal and HLLs may be in classes where their skill sets do not align with those of the second language learners. Inconsistency in placements suggests that there is no one right way to approach HLLs and that no one way will meet all the needs of such a diverse group of learners. The uncertainty of where and how to place HLLs can make instruction difficult for FL teachers who already have learners with diverse learning styles in their classrooms. Therefore, this places a burden on FL teachers who, as previously stated, know little about bilinguals and bilingualism. Teachers and counselors frequently place Spanish HLLs according to their grammatical knowledge and according to their use of “standard” Spanish. Many FL teachers are confronted with diverse varieties of Spanish that their HLLs may bring into their classrooms and may consider these different varieties of Spanish as grammatically incorrect. The result is that these negative attitudes towards diverse varieties of Spanish may possibly affect how teachers correct their HLLs’ Spanish. Potowski (2002) maintains, “Instructors may not be aware of the messages they are sending when they correct heritage Spanish-speaking students’ language” (p. 39). Teachers who mean well by acknowledging only the standard variety might be unconsciously reinforcing to the HLL that the language they speak is substandard. In addition, HLLs also face challenges with their language variety. The U.S. Spanish variety has borrowed many words from English i.e. “lunch” (lunch) for “almuerzo”, “truck” (truck) for “camión” etc. English surrounds native Spanish speakers in the U.S. so that it is natural to borrow English words and incorporate these words into any one of the U.S. Spanish varieties i.e. southwestern variety, Newyorikan Spanish (New York Spanish) etc.

Native Spanish speakers’ attitudes toward HL varieties

Potowski (2002) documents the negative comments HLLs receive about their Spanish from their own communities. It is not uncommon to hear HLLs classify their Spanish as “bad”, “pocho”, etc. Negative comments from their own communities and families reinforces HLLs beliefs that their Spanish is substandard. According to Potowski some HLLs have internalized negative language judgments based on comments within their own communities (p. 37). It is important for FL teachers to recognize that HLLs have language anxiety and should not be considered walking dictionaries and grammar references to assist their FL classmates. It is also important for FL teachers to understand that HLLs are also learners and they have their own linguistics needs that should be addressed just as any other FL student needs are addressed. The FL teacher must bridge the gap between the needs of the FL student and the HLL in one classroom. There are ways for FL teachers to make learning meaningful for both the FL and HLL learners.
Suggestions for FL Teachers

- Find ways to learn about bilingualism and bilinguals. This will be the first step to understanding the needs of HLLs. The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) http://www.cal.org/ is a rich resource for learning about HLLs. Heritage Languages in America www.cal.org/heritage/ is another resource and is sponsored by CAL. There is also the National Heritage Language Resource Center www.international.ucla.edu/languages/nhlrc/. These organizations are all resources that can assist FL teachers learn more about heritage languages.

- HLLs bring unique insights into the target language culture. Highlighting them is one way to validate what HLLs do know rather than focusing on what they don't know.

- Be empathetic to the language varieties HLLs bring with them into the classroom. Exposing FL learners to other language varieties helps them understand that there is no "standard" variety. Political reasoning often dictates why one variety is considered to be better than other varieties. For example, in the U.S. the midwestern dialect is used on national news networks and also by telephone operators. You will not hear southern, northern, or western dialects on national networks i.e. ABC, NBC, and CBS.

- Putting students in mixed groups and setting up peer tutoring are other ways to play to each group's strengths. One example would be to have HLLs help FL learners with pronunciation and FL learners could help HLLs with grammar.

- When discussing the varieties of Spanish that exist among Spanish speaking countries, it seems that Spanish in Mexico is not exactly the same as Spanish in Guatemala just as there is a difference between U.S. English and British English. Use this opportunity to discuss also the differences between Spanish and English so students learn the underlying structure of both languages. For example "me gustan manzanas" is translated into English as "I like apples," but the literal translation is "Apples are pleasing to me."

- Look to the ACTFL Foreign Language standards to benefit both Second Language learners and HLLs. For example, following Standard 1.3 (Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics) (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language, 1999, p. 9), have the HLLs demonstrate the differences between formal and informal language. This will bring the language so much more alive to students than if they just read about this concept in their texts.

Conclusion

As more and more HLLs enter the public P-12 system, FL teachers will need to better understand how to teach this segment of the population. There are strategies FL teachers can use to assist HLLs and FL learners and serve the needs of both groups. Teacher preparative institutions might also begin to provide teacher candidates with strategies that will assist them understand the needs of HLLs and give them approaches to provide instruction for mixed groups of students. FL teachers who are informed and prepared to understand HLLs can provide meaningful learning for HLLs as well as FL students.

References


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When my daughter Kira was to start kindergarten, I wanted to find an immersion school for her to continue with the language that had been her first, and the language that I treasured and had used to communicate with her for five years. Unfortunately, the schools in our area did not offer any immersion programs. Well, I thought, I will teach her everything. I am a World Language teacher and have years of experience. Little did I know that mixing the jobs of parent and teacher was going to be challenging.

From infancy Kira had understood when I spoke Spanish and that did not change when she entered school; the problem was now to get her to answer in Spanish. Of course, the more time she spent at school in English, the more reluctant she was to make the effort to speak Spanish with me.

The reading part was easier. Every day, I would read her a few books in Spanish that she enjoyed. However, in the first and second grade when I tried to teach her how to read in Spanish, she rebelled. Spanish is phonetic and easier to read than English is, but she insisted that she could not read in Spanish.

It was not until fifth grade that I heard her read a book in perfect Spanish. But by then, I realized that the books at her reading level did not have stories and themes that would interest 5th graders. Just like the immersion students whom I had taught, she had a 2nd grade reading level in Spanish, but was bored with the subjects presented to eight year olds. So, I read stories in Spanish that would interest Kira while she listened.
As a freshman, Kira started her "formal" learning of Spanish as a second language that is really her first language. In the typical high school Spanish class, she was tested on the mechanics of grammar that she knew how to use, but could not name. She was frustrated and I was afraid she would give up on her Spanish. Luckily, she adapted to the naming of verbs, tenses, and other parts of speech. The traditional grammar instruction bent Kira to its will, but it did not meet her real needs.

Now in her sophomore year, Kira is taking advanced placement classes. She is still learning lists of words and lots of grammar in isolation. She is happy to study towards an exam that will give her college credits if she passes it, but she is not enjoying it. At home, finally, we have reconnected in Spanish over the homework; however, I have a dream that one day our connection will be more about the joy of using the language and discussing Spanish literature: reciting together the poems of Federico García Lorca, expressing the depth and richness that only a language used for pleasure can give.

Maria Martínez is a World Language Content Specialist and the Spanish World Language Coordinator for the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD). She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and a Masters of Arts in Foreign Language Instruction. She has taught Spanish for 13 years in elementary and High School immersion, bilingual, World Language programs in San Francisco, Oakland, and Spain. Maria is now working on the K-12 Spanish Immersion Program articulation project and helping to develop the Middle School Spanish Immersion curriculum for the SFUSD.
Submission Guidelines

Learning Languages, the journal of the National Network for Early Language Learning (NNELL), serves the profession by providing a medium for the sharing of information, ideas, and concerns among teachers, administrators, researchers, and others interested in the early learning of World languages. Learning Languages embodies NNELL’s commitment to promote opportunities for all children to develop a high level of competence in at least one language and culture in addition to their own.

In an effort to address the interests of the profession, Learning Languages publishes both scholarly articles and invited features. Both types of submission must demonstrate the author(s)’s awareness of language learning theories and early-language learning classroom practices.

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Scholarly articles are evaluated by at least three members of the board of reviewers through a process of blind review. Reviewers evaluate these articles on the basis of content, originality, information accuracy, clarity, and contribution to the field. These articles are clearly identified as Refereed Article in the journal.

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