

## Intergenerational change in Toronto's heritage languages



HERITAGE LANGUAGE VARIATION AND CHANGE IN TORONTO

[HTTP://PROJECTS.CHASS.UTORONTO.CA/NGN/HLVC](http://projects.chass.utoronto.ca/ngn/hlvc)

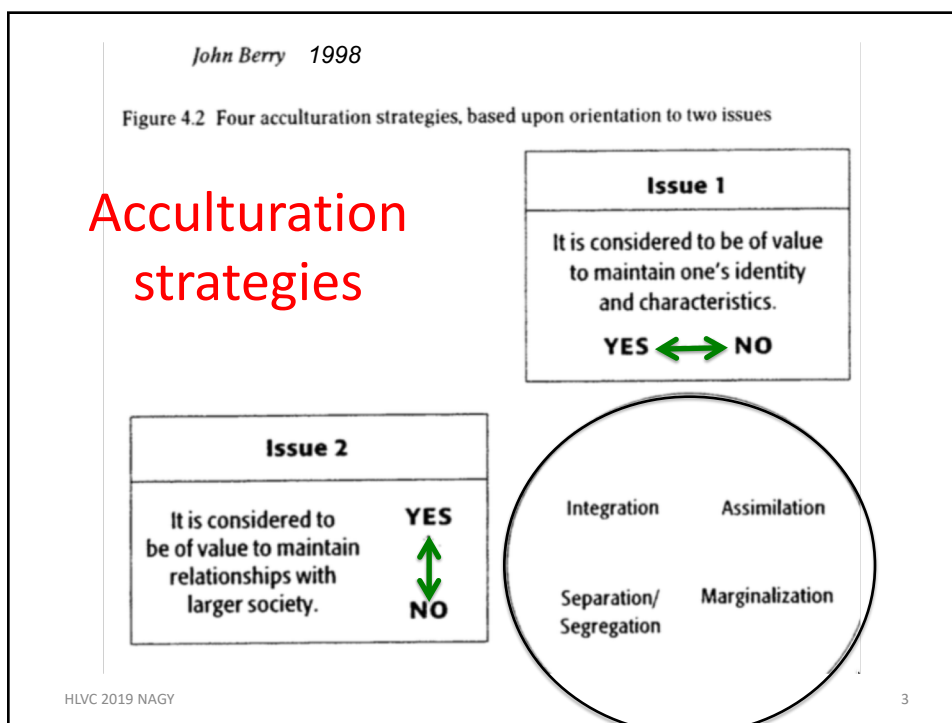
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 Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada  **UNIVERSITY OF  
TORONTO**

### What do you think?

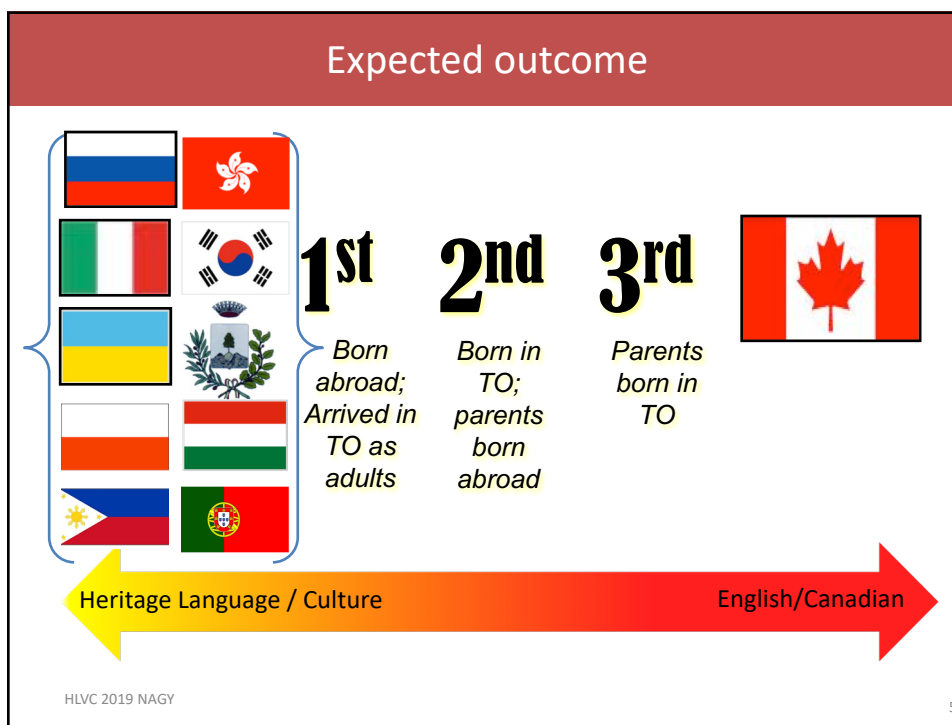
- Do you value maintaining aspects of your cultural/ethnic identity?
- Do you value maintaining connections with the larger society?

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"We need to expand our theoretical lens to consider both ends of the mobility/immobility scale"  
(Beaman *in press*, on Britain 2016)

**Intergenerational change**



“Sociolinguists often relate structural features of the language to **generation of immigration** and **degree of bilingualism** as a result of acculturation patterns” (Silva-Corvalán 1994, cited in Montrul (2012: 171).

**Table 7.2** Linguistic characteristics of heritage speakers

Generation	Range of possible language characteristics	
	From:	To:
First generation <b>Immigrants</b>	Monolingual in the heritage language	Incipient L2 learner of the majority language
Second generation <b>Kids of immigrants</b>	Dominant in the heritage language	Dominant in the majority language
Third generation <b>Grandkids of immigrants</b>	Dominant in the majority language	Monolingual in the majority language

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## Heritage languages

### Other names for heritage languages

- international
- allophones
- ethnic
- minority
- ancestral
- second / third
- modern
- non-official
- *langues d'origine*
- *langues patrimoniales / de patrimoine*
- ethno-cultural



## What are heritage languages?

- Particularly in studies on language acquisition, the term is used to indicate a language which was **incompletely acquired or attrited** by a speaker.
- In Polinsky & Kagan (2007), the following descriptors of a heritage language are provided:
  - limited vocabulary
  - incomplete morphology
  - impoverished syntax
  - spotty socio-cultural knowledge
  - not fully developed register

Does that agree with your understanding of heritage languages?

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## What are heritage languages?

*“Heritage speakers, that is, individuals who have been exposed to an immigrant or a minority language since childhood and are **also very proficient in the majority language** spoken in the wider speech community, are bilinguals characterized by the complex interaction of all these factors.”* (Montrul 2012:168)

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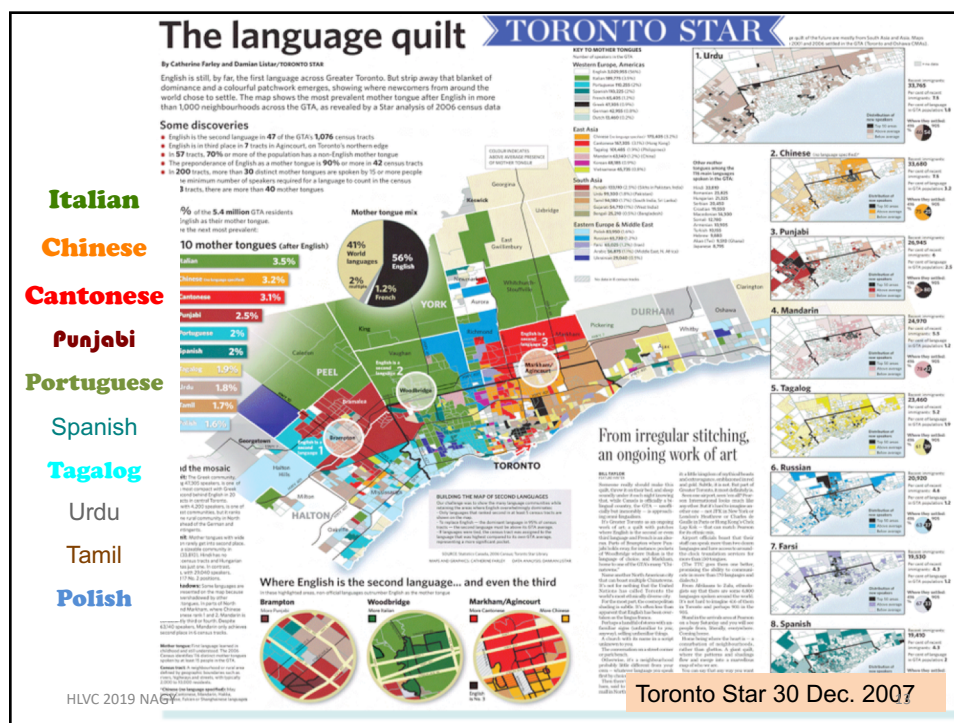
## What are heritage languages?

- Canadian definition = employed by StatCan, as defined by Brian Harrison (2000)'s "Passing on the language: Heritage language diversity in Canada":
- an individual with a cultural connection to a language other than English or French, born abroad or born within Canada and descended from speakers having learned the language in the homeland, and fluent enough to have a conversation in the language.
- For the purposes of the **HLVC project**, participants were required to be
  - fluent enough to participate in an hour-long sociolinguistic interview in the language
  - born in Toronto (Gen 2, Gen 3) or immigrated as adult (Gen 1)

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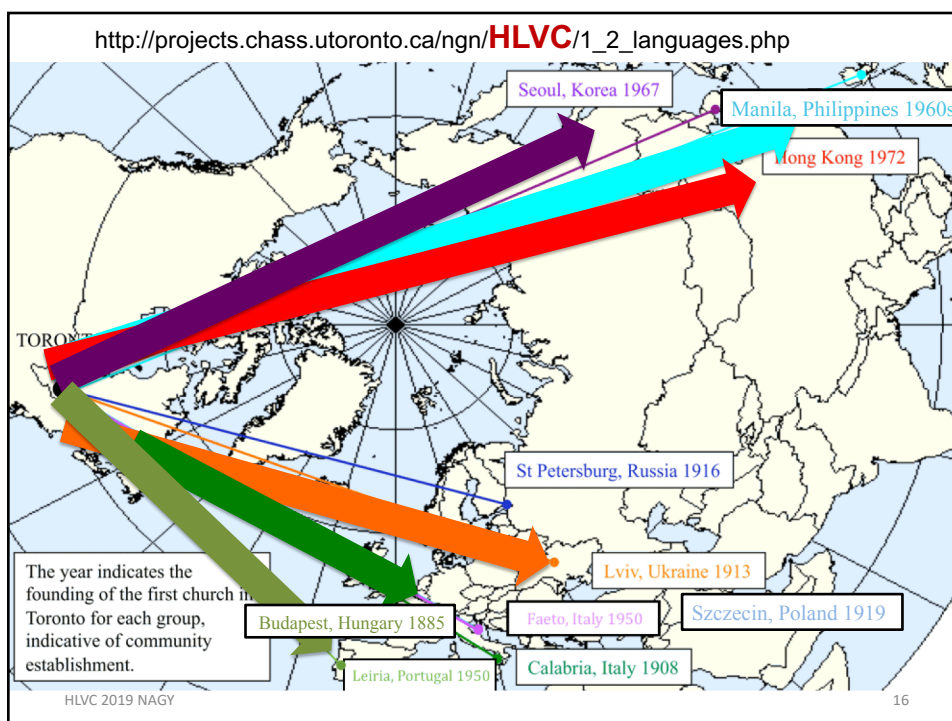
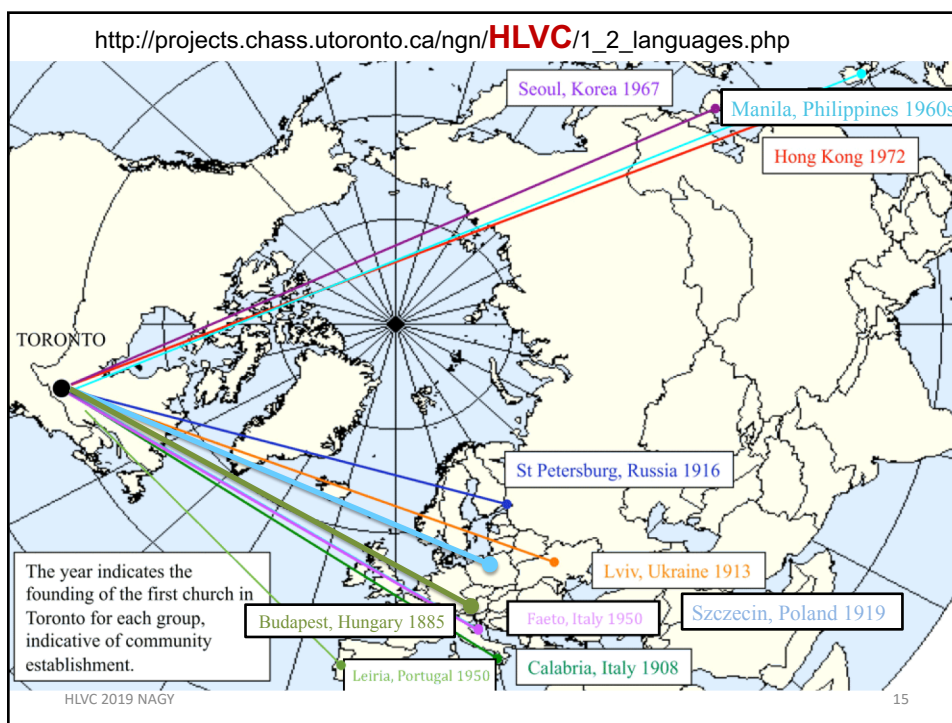
**Toronto**



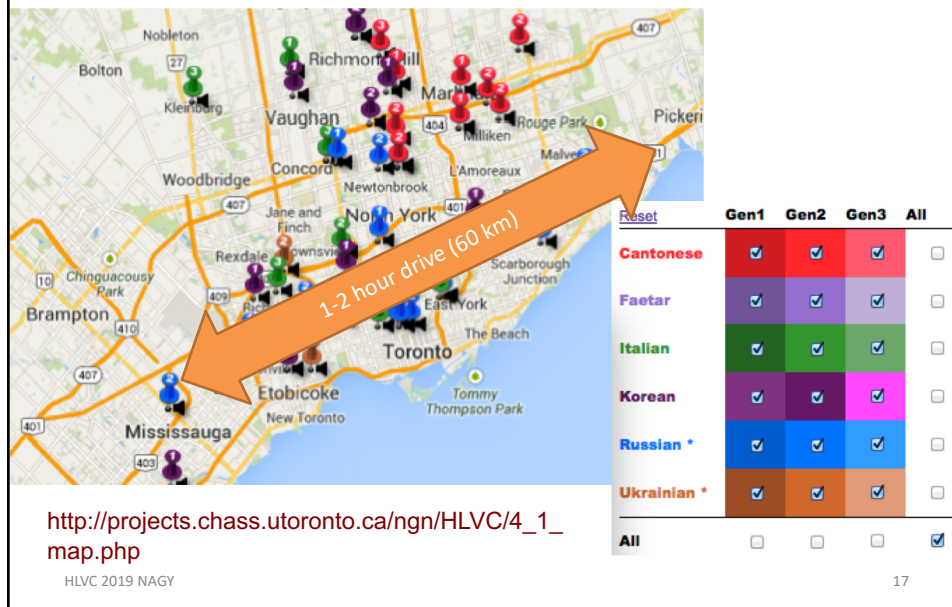
## Mother Tongue 2016 Census



	Toronto	Ontario
<b>Official languages</b>		
English	6,187,365	13,312,870
French	5,945,455	12,946,960
<b>Aboriginal languages ...</b>	3,397,250	9,393,040
<b>Non-Aboriginal languages ...</b>	3,326,120	8,902,320
Cantonese	71,130	490,715
Italian	605	22,765
Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino)	2,547,600	3,531,160
Portuguese	248,980	275,315
Russian	153,095	231,040
Polish	137,800	163,415
Korean	103,775	150,000
Ukrainian	83,105	101,100
Hungarian	72,345	121,075
Chinese, n.o.s.	55,300	69,775
<b>Multiple responses</b>	27,470	40,375
English and non-official language	19,770	36,740
French and non-official language	11,210	15,645
English, French and non-official language	241,910	365,910
	213,300	288,285
	6,205	12,565
	6,550	11,010



## HLVC Speaker Distribution



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## Variation & Change

## Sociolinguistics

- Examines connections between what groups you are part of and how you speak

➤ **macrosociolinguistic** – variation in the choice of languages (e.g., lg. shift, code-switching)

➤ **microsociolinguistic** – variation within the language (pronunciation, grammar, vocab)

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## What is the HLVC Project?

- Large-scale project investigating variation and change in Toronto's heritage languages.
- Goals
  - To **document and describe heritage languages** spoken by immigrants and 2 generations of their descendants
  - To **create a corpus** available for research on a variety of topics in [CANTONESE | FAETAR | ITALIAN | KOREAN | POLISH | PORTUGUESE | RUSSIAN | TAGALOG | UKRAINIAN]
  - To **push variationist research beyond its monolingually-oriented core (and its majority language focus)** (Nagy & Meyerhoff 2008)
  - To **promote HL vitality** through research, training, and “knowledge mobilization” in and out of the classroom

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## HLVC Methods



## HLVC Corpus design


### 10 languages

- 3 generations / language
- 4 age groups / generation
- 4 speakers / age group

≈ **400 speakers**

- Balanced for sex
- Varying in fluency, usage, and ethnic orientation

• + **~12 Homeland speakers/language**



## 3 Generations X 4 Age Groups

Generation	Age
1 <sup>st</sup> : born in homeland; moved to Toronto after age 18; in Toronto 20+ years	60+
	39-59
2 <sup>nd</sup> : born in Toronto (or came from homeland < age 6); parents qualify as 1st generation	60+
	40-59
	21-39
	<21
3 <sup>rd</sup> : born in Toronto; parents qualify as 2nd generation	60+
	40-59
	21-39
	<21

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## Insider interviewers


- Native speakers
- Local
- Outgoing,  
friendly,  
adventurous, but  
careful
- Working in pairs



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## Sociolinguistic Interview

- “Guided conversation”
- Designed to elicit relaxed, conversational speech
- Minimize the effects of a person (stranger) w/ a tape recorder and microphone asking questions

Why did your family move here?  
Because of work?  
Because of community roots?  
To be close to other Italians? Close to relatives?  
Do you know where your family came from?  
When did they come here? Why did they come?  
**Do you remember hearing stories about how your family came to Toronto? ...**  
**Was it hard for them to get set up here?**


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## Picture Description Task




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## Methods to measure “ethnic orientation”

General questions:

- Does a speaker considers herself more "Korean" or more "Canadian" or "Korean-Canadian"?
- (How) does this influence her speech?
- Is it the same for all groups we are investigating?




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## Ethnic Orientation Questionnaire

- **Identità etnica**
  - Ti identifichi come Italiano? Canadese? Italo-Canadese?
  - La maggioranza dei tuoi amici sono italiani?
  - La gente nel tuo quartiere è italiana?
  - Quando eri piccolo/a i tuoi compagni di scuola erano italiani? I tuoi amici?...
- **Lingua**
  - Parli italiano? Parli bene? A Che livello diresti? Parli italiano spesso? Quante volte per giorno/settimana/mese?
  - Dove hai imparato l'italiano? A casa? A scuola?
  - Preferisci parlare italiano o in Inglese? ...
- **Scelta delle lingue**
  - Che lingua parla la tua famiglia quando siete tutti insieme ?
  - Che lingua parli con i tuoi amici?
  - Che lingua usi quando parli di cose personali? Quando sei arrabbiato/a?...
- **Cultura**
- **Genitori**
- **Moglie/Marito/fidanzato/a**
- **La cultura italiana**
- **Discriminazione**

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## Ethnic Orientation Questionnaire

**A. Ethnic identification** Italian or English? ...

1. Do you think of yourself as Italian, Canadian or Italian-Canadian?
2. Are most of your friends Italian?
3. Are people in your neighbourhood Italian?...

**B. Language**

1. Do you speak Italian? How well? How often?
2. Where did you learn Italian? At home? In school?
3. Do you prefer to speak Italian or English?
4. Do you prefer to read and write in

**C. Language choice**

1. What language does your family speak when you get together?
2. What language do you speak with your friends?

**D. Cultural heritage**


**E. Parents**

**F. Partner**

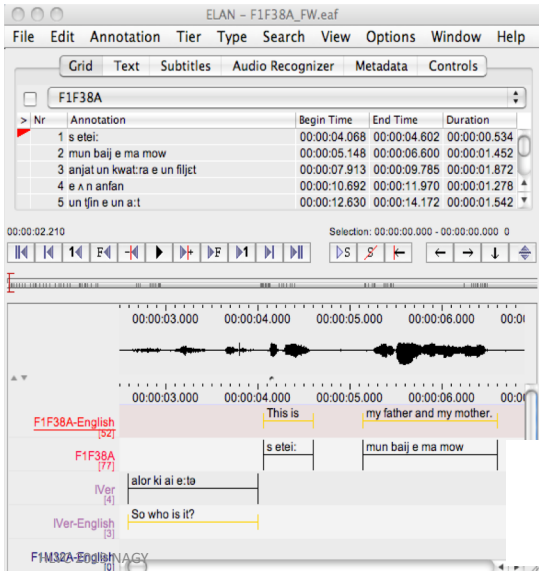
**G. Italian culture**

**H. Discrimination**

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## Time-aligned Transcription with ELAN



[www.lat-mpi.eu/tools/elan](http://www.lat-mpi.eu/tools/elan)  
Initial transcription is broad  
Additional tiers added for details.

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## Candidate cross-linguistic variables

- \* **Phonetic**
  - \* Voice Onset Time KOR, ITA, UKR, RUS, CAN
- \* **Phonological**
  - \* Word-final devoicing POL
  - \* /r/ vs. /ɹ/ ITA, RUS, UKR, TAG
- \* **Morphological**
  - \* Case and gender marking POL, RUS, UKR
  - \* Classifiers CAN, KOR
  - \* Pro-drop (Variable subject presence) CAN, ITA, RUS, FAE, KOR
- \* **Syntactic**
  - \* Word order
- \* **Lexical**
  - \* Borrowings CAN, KOR
  - \* Use of (home country) archaisms FAE
  - \* Verbs of Quotation
- \* **Other ideas ?**

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## Comparative Variationist Analysis

(cf. Labov 1972, Tagliamonte 2006, Walker 2010)

1. Look for **linguistic & social predictors**
2. Compare **rates** of variant use across groups
3. Compare **constraint effects** across groups

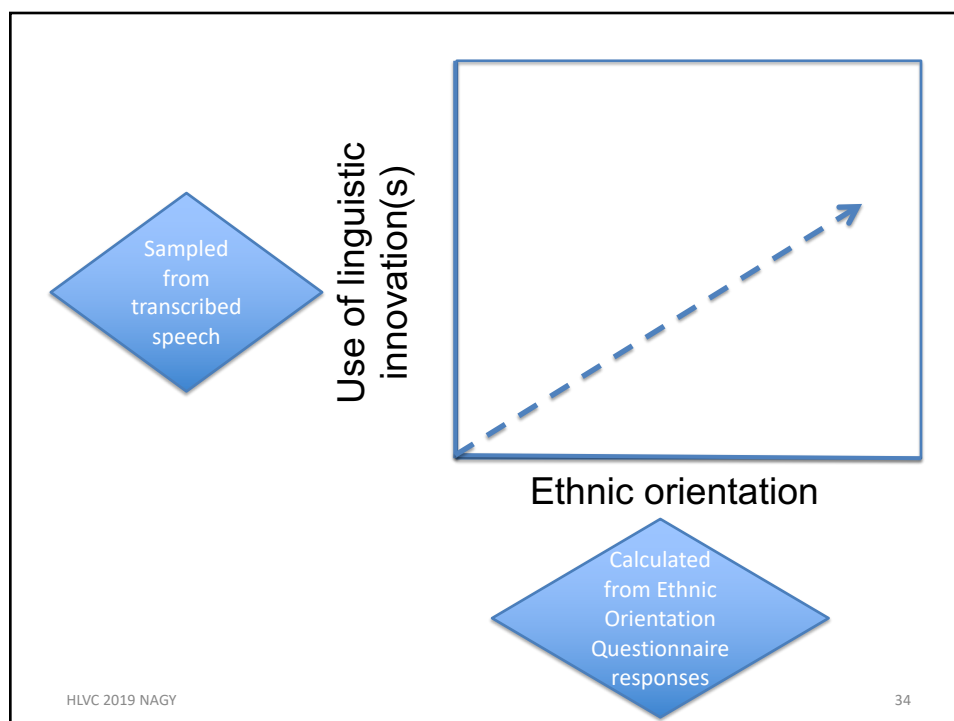
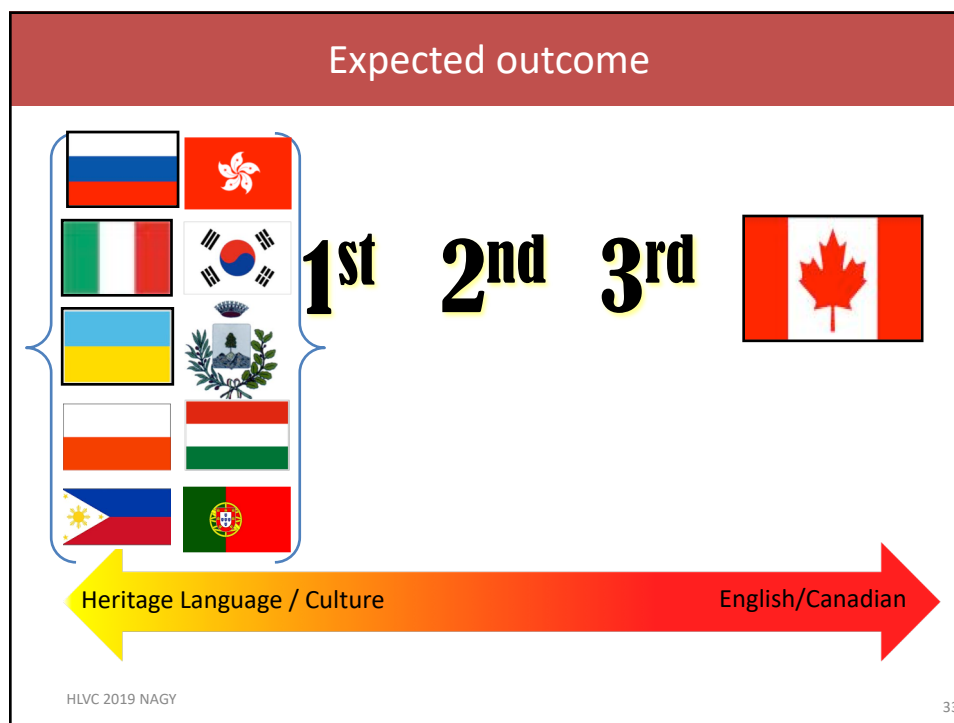
Analysis by undergraduate and graduate students and colleagues:

- Yoonjung Kang
- Alexei Kochetov
- James Walker



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## Contrasting experimental and sociolinguistic/variationist findings

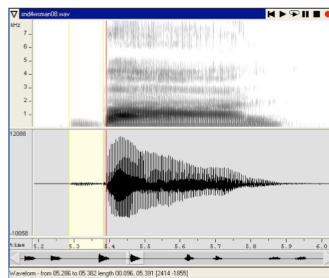
Some HLVC Results



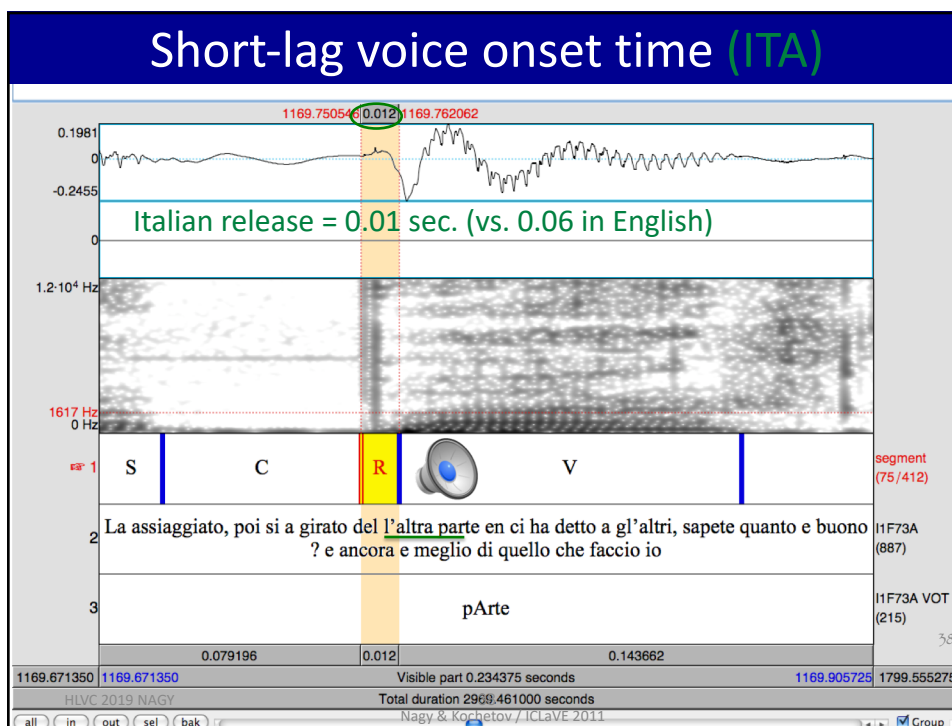
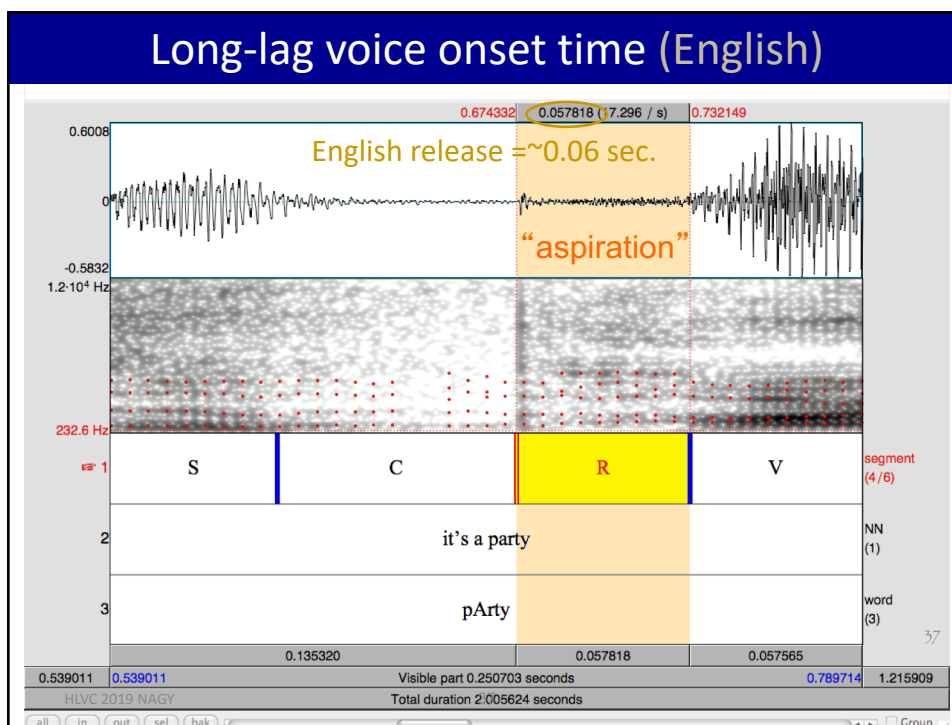
## Voice Onset Time

from:

Hrycyna, M., N. Lapinskaya, A. Kochetov & N. Nagy. 2011. VOT drift in 3 of Heritage Language speakers in Toronto. [Canadian Acoustics](#) 39.3:166-7.



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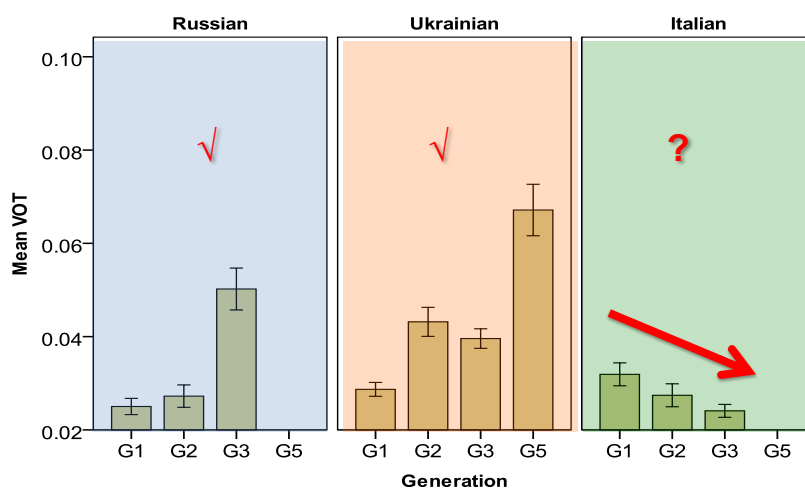
From the experimental literature (Montrul 2012:173-4)

According to tests of pronunciation and VOT measuring the Spanish voiceless stops (labial /p/, dental /t/, velar /k/) and the denti-alveolar Korean stops (aspirated /th/, plain /t/, tense and /t'/), the **heritage speakers did not perform like the native speaker groups...**

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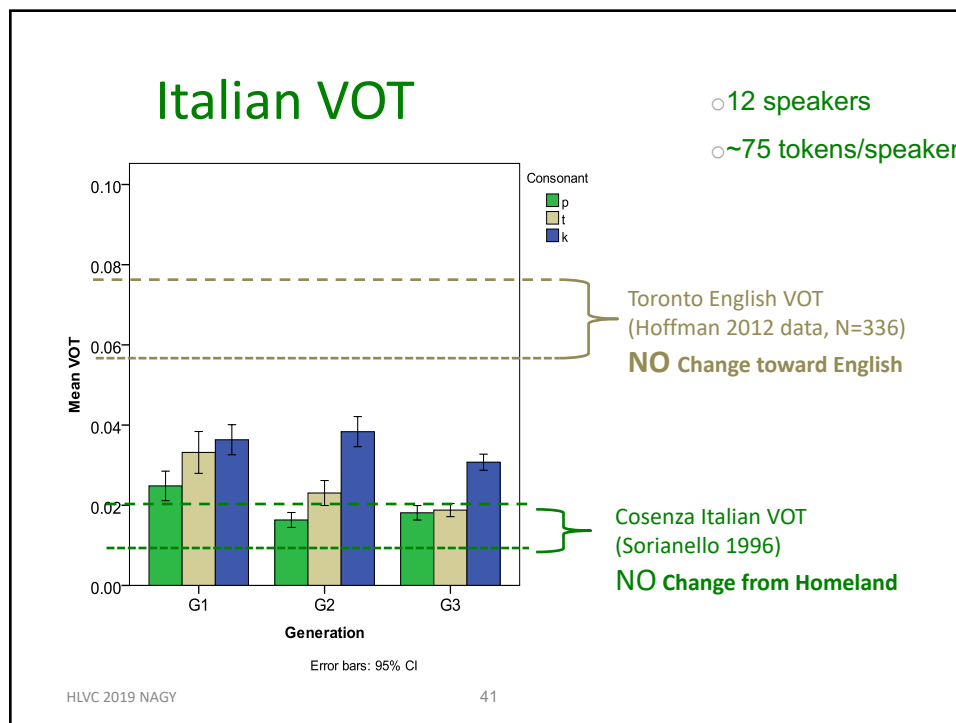
### VOT: 3 languages



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### (Pearson's) Correlation across EOQ indices

(Nagy et al. 2014)

	Language choices	Cultural envir.	Lg. use	Cultural choices	Discrimination
Ethnic ID	0.23	0.10	0.30	0.29	0.01
Language choices		0.81*	0.21	0.20	-0.11
Cultural envir.			0.25	0.12	-0.17
Lg. use				0.10	-0.02
Cultural choices					0.09
Discrim.					

EOQ data from ITA, RUS & UKR (114 speakers)  
VOT data from 16 speakers

\*Strong & significant correlation

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### *Incomplete acquisition* or *innovation*?

Some scholars object to the use of the term *incomplete acquisition* to describe the grammatical behavior of adult heritage speakers (Carreira and Potowski 2011) preferring instead the sociolinguistic view that heritage speakers' language is 'different.'

- Difference does *not* imply deficiency.
- Heritage speakers speak a different regional variety.
- Claims are based on the structural characteristics of US Spanish. (from Montrul 2012:178)

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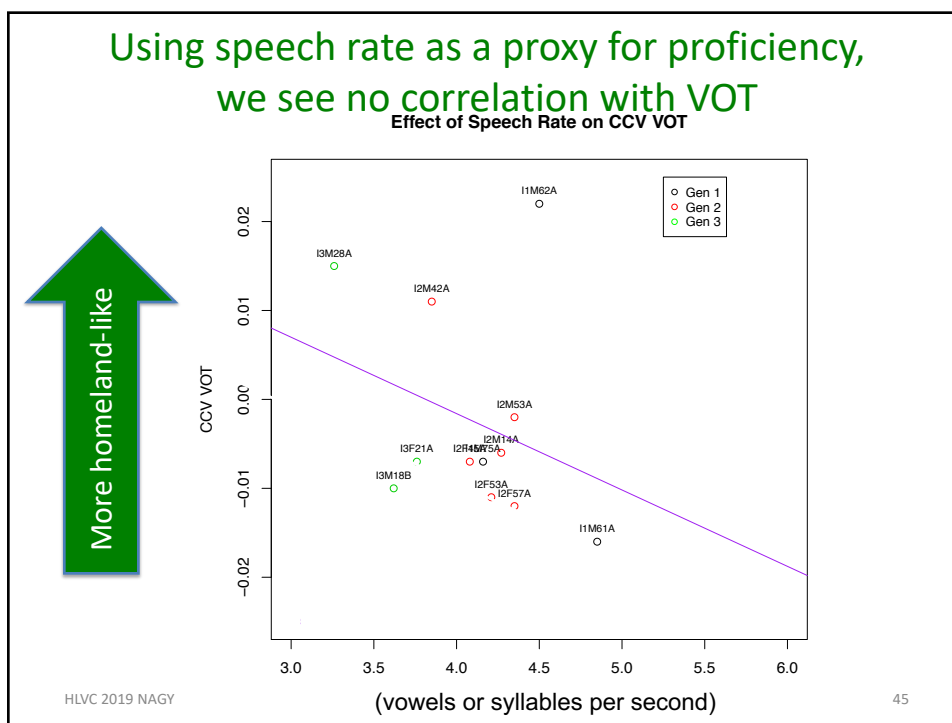
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### Montrul's critique (2012:178)

- "What makes it difficult to see the language of heritage speakers as a variety of its own is that there are clear proficiency effects.
- That is, heritage speakers with the lowest levels of proficiency in the language are the ones who have reduced vocabularies, basic word order, and make morpho-syntactic errors with case, gender agreement and other morphology."

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## Analysis of Case-marking

(Łyskawa & Nagy 2019)

- Dependent variable: *case matching*
  - prescribed vs. observed case
    - **Match**: observed = prescribed (majority)
    - **Mismatch**: not the same
- Distributional & multivariate analysis
  - ELAN → Rbrul
  - To determine the effects of each predictor
  - Balancing for the uneven distribution and messy data produced by spontaneous speech

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## Match

Муж	мой	поехал	купил	<b>карточки</b>
Muzh	moj	poexal	kupil	<b>kartochki</b>
Husband	my	went	bought	<b>cards</b>

**'My husband went and bought cards.'**

(R1F47A 00:10:55.396)

- Prescribed and observed case: **accusative**

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## Mismatch

У	нас	не	было	<b>время</b>	запомнить
U	nas	ne	bylo	<b>vremja</b>	zapomnit'
By	us	not	was	<b>time</b>	to memorize

**'We didn't have time to memorize.'**

(R2F12A 00:11:38.993)

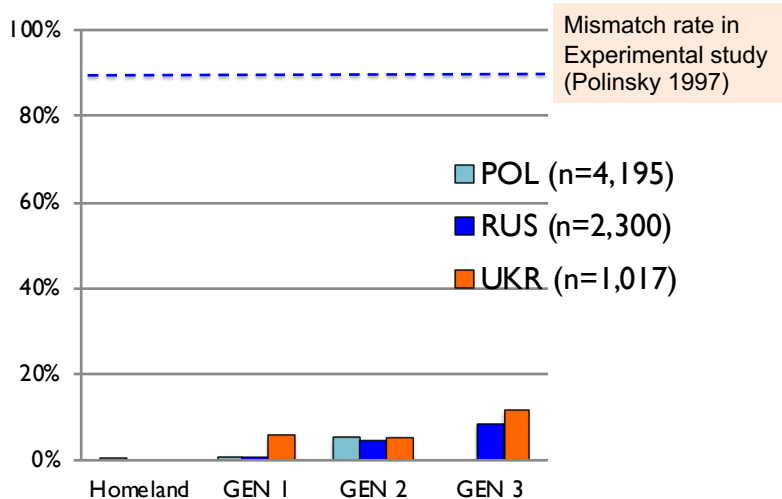
- Prescribed case: **genitive (времени)**
- Observed case: **nominative**

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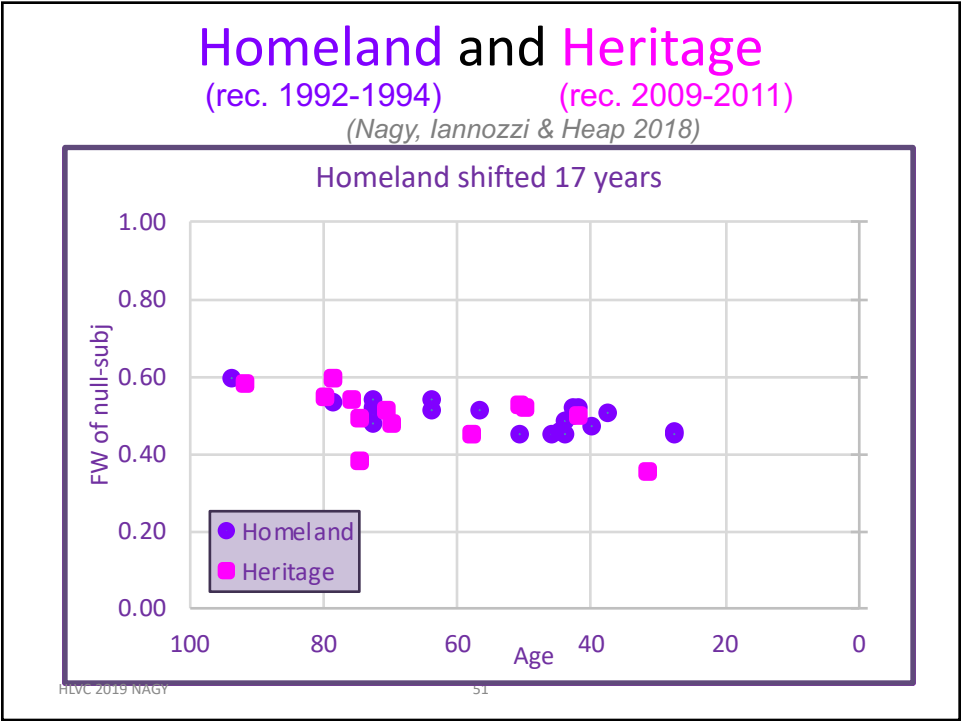
## Case Mismatch Rate (all contexts)

(Łyskawa & Nagy 2019)



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**Heritage vs. Homeland differences  
in variationist analyses of spontaneous speech**  
(Nagy IJB 2018 +)

Linguistic feature compared	FAE	KOR	ITA	CAN	RUS	UKR	POL
Basic vocab (Nagy 2011b)	S						
Case (Łyskawa & Nagy 2019)					D	D	D
Classifiers (Nagy & Lo 2019)		S		D			
Null subjects (Nagy 2015, Nagy et al. 2018, Chociej 2010)	S	(S)	S	S	D		D
VOT (Kang & Nagy 2016; Nagy & Kochetov 2013; Nodari et al 2017; Tan & Nagy 2017)		S	S	S	D!	D!	

**S** = HOM & HER varieties have same rates and constraints  
**D** = Some differences between HOM & HER rates and constraints  
**D!** = Differences that can be attributed to contact with English

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## Why are these results different from many experimental studies?

- Different sample
- Different population
- Different methodology
- Different physical/social/(psychological?) context of data collection
- Standard Language Ideology

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감사합니다 Дзякую Grazie molto Спаси́бо 多謝 gratsiä namuor:ə

<b>HLVC RAS:</b>	Tonia Djogovic	Teresa Kwok	Jamie Oh	Katharine Sung
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Vanessa Bertone	Tim Gadanidis	Carmela La Rosa	Olenka Pankiw	Awet Tekeste
Ulyana Bila	Matt Gardner	Natalia Lapinskaya	Anya Pechkina	Letizia Tesi
Marisa Brook	Catarina Gomes	Vina Law	Andrew Peters	Josephine Tong
Rosanna Calla	Julia Grasso	Kris Lee	Josephine Petrolo	Sarah Truong
Minji Cha	Rick Grimm	Nikki Lee	Alessia Plastina	Holman Tse
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Derek Denis	Mariana Kouzela	Jonathan Ng	Christine Stelchuk	

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