Intergenerational change in Toronto’s heritage languages

What do you think?

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

“We need to expand our theoretical lens to consider both ends of the mobility_immobility scale” (Beaman in press, on Britain 2016)

Intergenerational change
Heritage Language Variation & Change
Project

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**Expected outcome**

1st: Born abroad; Arrived in TO as adults
2nd: Born in TO; parents born abroad
3rd: Parents born in TO

Heritage Language / Culture

English/Canadian

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"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).

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**Table 7.2 Linguistic characteristics of heritage speakers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Range of possible language characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First generation Immigrants</td>
<td>Monolingual in the heritage language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second generation Kids of immigrants</td>
<td>Dominant in the heritage language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third generation Grandkids of immigrants</td>
<td>Dominant in the majority language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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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?

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)
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)
Language quitl

Toronto Star 30 Dec. 2007

Mother Tongue

2016 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Toronto</th>
<th>Ontario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official languages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>3,326,120</td>
<td>8,902,320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>71,130</td>
<td>490,715</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aboriginal languages ...</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>22,765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Aboriginal languages ...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>248,980</td>
<td>275,315</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>153,095</td>
<td>231,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tagalog (Pilipino, Filipino)</td>
<td>137,800</td>
<td>163,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>103,775</td>
<td>150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>83,105</td>
<td>101,100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>72,345</td>
<td>121,075</td>
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<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>55,300</td>
<td>69,775</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>27,470</td>
<td>40,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>19,770</td>
<td>36,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese, n.o.s.</td>
<td>11,210</td>
<td>15,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple responses</td>
<td>241,910</td>
<td>365,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English and non-official language</td>
<td>213,300</td>
<td>288,285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French and non-official language</td>
<td>6,205</td>
<td>12,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English, French and non-official language</td>
<td>6,550</td>
<td>11,010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The year indicates the founding of the first church in Toronto for each group, indicative of community establishment.
HLVC Speaker Distribution

http://projects.chass.utoronto.ca/ngn/HLVC/4_1_ map.php

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)

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
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

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

Insider interviewers

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

Picture Description Task
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?

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
Ethnic Orientation Questionnaire

A. Ethnic identification
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 Italian or English?

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

Time-aligned Transcription with ELAN
www.lat-mpi.eu/tools/elan
Initial transcription is broad Additional tiers added for details.
Candidate cross-linguistic variables

- **Phonetic**
  - Voice Onset Time
  - KOR, ITA, UKR, RUS, CAN

- **Phonological**
  - Word-final devoicing
  - POL
  - ITA, RUS, UKR, TAG

- **Morphological**
  - Case and gender marking
  - POL, RUS, UKR

- **Syntactic**
  - Word order

- **Lexical**
  - Borrowings
  - CAN, KOR

- **Other ideas?**

Comparative Variationist Analysis

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
Expected outcome

Heritage Language / Culture

Use of linguistic innovation(s)

Ethnic orientation

Sampled from transcribed speech

Calculated from Ethnic Orientation Questionnaire responses
Contrasting experimental and sociolinguistic/variationist findings

Some HLVC Results

Voice Onset Time

from:
Long-lag voice onset time (English)

English release ≈ 0.06 sec. (vs. 0.01 sec. in Italian)

"aspiration"

Short-lag voice onset time (ITA)

Italian release = 0.01 sec. (vs. 0.06 in English)
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 dento-alveolar Korean stops (aspirated /th/, plain /t/, tense and /t’/), the heritage speakers did not perform like the native speaker groups...
Italian VOT

- 12 speakers
- ~75 tokens/speaker

Toronto English VOT (Hoffman 2012 data, N=336)
NO Change toward English

Cosenza Italian VOT (Sorianello 1996)
NO Change from Homeland

(Pearson’s) Correlation across EOQ indices
(Nagy et al. 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Language choices</th>
<th>Cultural envir.</th>
<th>Lg. use</th>
<th>Cultural choices</th>
<th>Discrimination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic ID</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language choices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural envir.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lg. use</td>
<td>0.81*</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural choices</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrim.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

*Strong & significant correlation
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)

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.”
Using speech rate as a proxy for proficiency, we see no correlation with VOT

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.”
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

Match

Муж мой поехал купил карточки
Muzh moj poexal kupil kartochki
Husband my went bought cards

‘My husband went and bought cards.’
(R1F47A 00:10:55.396)

• Prescribed and observed case: accusative
Mismatch

У нас не было времени запомнить
U nas ne bylo vremja zapomnit'
By us not was time to memorize

‘We didn’t have time to memorize.’
(R2F12A 00:11:38.993)

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

Case Mismatch Rate (all contexts)
(Lyskawa & Nagy 2019)

Mismatch rate in Experimental study (Polinsky 1997)
### Homeland and Heritage

**(rec. 2009-2011)**  
*(Nagy, Iannozzi & Heap 2018)*

#### Homeland shifted 17 years

![Graph showing Homeland and Heritage factor weights](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>FW of null-subj</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Heritage vs. Homeland differences in variationist analyses of spontaneous speech

*(Nagy IJB 2018 +)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic feature compared</th>
<th>FAE</th>
<th>KOR</th>
<th>ITA</th>
<th>CAN</th>
<th>RUS</th>
<th>UKR</th>
<th>POL</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic vocab</td>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Nagy 2011b)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case</td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Łyskawa &amp; Nagy 2019)</td>
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<td>Classifiers</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Nagy &amp; Lo 2019)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Null subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td>S</td>
<td>(S)</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Nagy 2015, Nagy et al. 2018, Chociej 2010)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>VOT</td>
<td></td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>D!</td>
<td>D!</td>
<td>D!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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
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
References


