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Table of Contents

Session: Heritage Languages	3
Revisiting contact and switching in bilingual New York from a speaker-centered translanguaging perspective (Otheguy)	3
(Heritage) Russian case-marking: Variation and paths of change	3
Setting {straight} the record {straight}: Acceptability of alternative word orders in resultatives by heritage Cantonese speakers (Leung)	5
Pronominal Expression in Child Heritage Georgian (Lowry)	6
Stability in the face of contact: Evidence from Toronto Heritage Tagalog /u/ (Umbal)	7
Session: Language in Urban Settings	8
The last L1 Judeo-Spanish speakers of New York City (Kaufman et al.)	8
/o/! They're j/u/st about the same!: Vowel Shift in Heritage and Homeland Seoul Korean (Griffin)	10
AM/P~OM/P merger in Hong Kong vs. Toronto Cantonese: An under-documented homeland sound change in a heritage language context (Tse)	11
Exploring variation in heritage Tamil retroflex perception and production. (Muthukumarasamy & Narayan)	13
Session: Language in Urban Settings 2	14
The New York City Metro Area Survey: language attitudes and the low back merger (Cutler & Intlekofer)	14
Race in the performance of a Baltimore persona (Malanoski)	15
Session: Multilingual Literacies	16
Assessing Literacy in the Home Languages of Immigrant Students (Chard et al.)	16
Navigating Varieties of Arabic in Literacy Assessment (Ayach & Trivedi)	17
Heritage Spanish writing complexity and its relationship to proficiency and writing genre (Gatti et al.)	17
Who Benefits? Bilingual Education Program Access for Immigrant Communities in New York City (Espinet et al.)	19

Session: Heritage Languages

Revisiting contact and switching in bilingual New York from a speaker-centered translanguaging perspective (Otheguy)

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The Latino population of New York City (NYC) provides the linguist with an opportunity to study in its formative stages the grammatical consequences of people contact (n.b., not the opportunity to study language contact). These consequences can involve differences between grammars of impacted bilinguals in NYC and grammars in Latin America. But there has not been sufficient attention paid to the questions of how exactly one determines where and when these differences arise, and especially of why they arise in the first place.

A study is sketched of subjunctive and progressive forms in the grammars of Latinos in NYC. The study stresses the distinction between cultural and grammatical differences, and advances quantitative predictions regarding sub-populations where one can observe greater cultural, and consequently larger grammatical, distance between speakers in NYC and Latin America.

The correct analysis requires a recognition of cross-cultural differences of conceptualization of the same or equivalent referent in the different precursor (pre-contact) settings. These cross-cultural differences of conceptualization hold even in cases where the precursor grammars have congruous meanings of lexical and morphosyntactic forms.

The different conceptualizations of equivalent referents constitute the trigger for, and therefore the explanation of, grammatical differences, even though they do not constitute themselves a grammatical difference. When the different conceptualizations can be expressively wrangled out of precursor meanings successfully, no grammatical innovation obtains in impacted bilinguals. When precursor meanings are insufficient to the task, the meanings of precursor forms can be observed to be different in speakers in the people contact setting in NYC. The overall picture is one where the notion of "language contact" has led to considerable overstatement of the grammatical differences between Latin America and NYC.

A connection is offered between the explanation based on cross-cultural differences of conceptualization of referents and the supporting translanguaging view of a single representation for the two languages of bilinguals. The translanguaging position de-licenses the articulation of such familiar notions as interference, convergence, transfer, and code switching. For the interest of applied linguistics, the analysis offers a picture of NYC bilinguals, including the people who have come to be known as heritage speakers, that is not entirely equivalent to the prevailing account.

(Heritage) Russian case-marking: Variation and paths of change

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Russian has a complex morphological marking system, with six cases and 87 noun classes, making case-marking potentially challenging ground for heritage speakers. Indeed, morphological levelling, “probably the best described feature of language loss,” has been substantiated experimentally. Polinsky (2006:250) showed that, in an experimental task, Heritage Russian speakers living in the USA produced canonical case markers for only 13% of prepositional oblique nominals (instrumental, prepositional, dative, genitive, or accusative case marking on a noun in a prepositional phrase). In contrast, Łyskawa & Nagy (2020) found 94% use of canonical case markers in conversational speech from Heritage Russian speakers in Canada. Why this difference?

Nagy (2015) outlines several possible accounts for the stark difference in these outcomes. The current paper makes three important contributions to this task:

1. We circumscribe the context to oblique nominals in Heritage Russian speech from the same Toronto corpus, mirroring the domain of investigation reported by Polinsky.
2. We compare oblique nominals produced by Homeland Russian speakers (residing in Moscow or St. Petersburg) in conversational contexts, using data from the Russian National Corpus (Institute of Russian Language, Russian Academy of Sciences, 2003). This allows us to compare the degree of variability in monolingual vs. multilingual speakers.
3. We examine the roles of lexical frequency, disentangling whether differences in morphological marking are tied to heritage speakers’ lexicon size.

~100 (non-nominative) NPs were extracted from conversational speech of 26 heritage and 6 homeland [NN1] speakers and coded for match between prescribed and produced case (“match rate”), syntactic environment and lexical frequency. Predictions were tested that heritage speakers produce canonical case marking more often in more frequent nouns and in pronouns compared to nouns. Mixed Effects Models of Heritage and Homeland Russian compared the effects of linguistic factors across groups, finding similarity in the conditioning of variability for Heritage and Homeland speakers.

Small intergenerational differences in rate of use of canonical forms (see Figure 1) suggests some morphological levelling, evident through the higher rate of mismatch on nouns by speakers of second and third generations, but less than reported in Polinsky (2006). Yet, the 39 lexical classes used by these speakers cover ~97% of Russian nouns, alleviating concern that heritage speakers suffer from a reduced vocabulary or select only “easy” nouns in conversation (cf. Pechkina & Nagy, 2017). However, the data revealed an interesting trend: the later the generation since immigration, the more speakers’ mismatches are restricted to rarer lexical items (see Figure 2).

Comparing multiple generations of heritage speakers allows us to trace more precisely the way that lexical structure interacts with ongoing changes in a little-described variety of Russian.

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Setting {straight} the record {straight}: Acceptability of alternative word orders in resultatives by heritage Cantonese speakers (Leung)

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Heritage speakers are often similar to their homeland counterparts in their syntactic grammar. However, one domain where this generalization does not hold is word order, vulnerable to change by two main forces: transfer from the dominant language and amplification/overgeneralization of existing patterns (Polinsky, 2018). Much work in syntactic transfer/change in heritage languages focuses on situations with variable word orders in the languages in contact; in these cases, structures not present in the dominant language and/or non-canonical structures in the non-dominant language are often reduced in usage among heritage speakers (Lohndal, 2021). Little work has been done on phenomena in which there is little variability and/or no shared word order options between the languages in contact. We conduct a case study on such a phenomenon in heritage Cantonese speakers in Toronto, Canada—word order in the resultative construction—in order to shed light on how the two forces of change operate in these situations.

Resultatives represent a “conflict site” (Poplack & Meechan, 1998) between Cantonese and the majority language of English: while English has adjectival resultatives (1) in which the result (R) adjective (bolded) appears after a theme object (O), Hong Kong Cantonese (2a) puts the result component (bolded) directly after the means (M) verb (underlined), before the theme object (and aspectual marking, A, if present). It also presents a possible case of overgeneralization: many disyllabic verbal constructions allow aspectual markers such as perfective *zo2* to optionally intervene between the two syllables, as shown in (3), but this is generally resisted for resultatives in the homeland (Chan & Cheung, 2020).

Experiment. We designed an auditory yes/no acceptability judgement task to test Cantonese speakers' judgements of resultative constructions with different word orders. We test the acceptability of four word-order variants: the canonical M-R-A-O (2a), the English order M-A-O-R (2b), the morphological variant M-A-R-O (2c), and the ungrammatical baseline M-A-O-Adverbial-R (2d). We compare judgements from two groups: heritage speakers from Toronto (HER) and homeland speakers from Hong Kong (HOM). The experiment is run online on Gorilla (www.gorilla.sc). Sentences are presented auditorily, since (i) heritage speakers tend to have low literacy and (ii) judgements of written stimuli may be affected by the Mandarin-based literary register (cf. Sedarous & Namboodiripad, 2020). Stimuli were synthesized with the online voice generator by Narakeet (www.narakeet.com).

Data collection is ongoing. The canonical M-R-A-O order (2a) should be grammatical in both heritage and homeland speakers, while the intervening adverbial order (2d) is expected to be ungrammatical in both groups. We expect two possible differences between HER and HOM. First, HER may transfer the English word order into their grammar, in which case the M-A-O-R order (2b) would be deemed more acceptable than the baseline condition (2d). Similar outcomes have been found in other contact situations between Chinese varieties and M-O-R languages (Kwok, 2010; Lee, 2016). Second, HER may overgeneralize *zo2* intervention (3) to resultatives and would thus show higher acceptability of the M-A-R-O order (2c) than the baseline. In both these cases, HOM should instead show low acceptability.

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Pronominal Expression in Child Heritage Georgian (Lowry)

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The expression of personal pronouns in languages which allow both overt and null pronouns—so-called pro-drop or zero anaphora languages—is a well-studied topic in the variationist tradition. Given that sentences with either an overt or a null personal pronoun are grammatical in these languages, the factors that condition which pronoun type a speaker chooses are probabilistic in nature. Subject personal pronouns in Spanish varieties in particular have a rich literature in which numerous grammatical, discourse, and genre variables have been found to condition the choice of subject pronoun (Bayley, 2013; Flores-Ferrán, 2007). More recent work has employed variationist methods to investigate the same phenomena in non-Indo-European languages as well, including Mandarin (Li & Bayley, 2018) and several Oceanic languages (Meyerhoff, 2000, 2009; Schnell & Barth, 2020).

This study investigates the use of phonetically overt and phonetically null (or zero) personal pronouns in monolingual and Heritage Georgian. Contrary to null subject languages of the Romance variety, such as Italian and Spanish, Georgian allows pro-dropping for all syntactic arguments, including objects as well as subjects. This study presents three studies investigating the linguistic constraints that determine the choice between overt and null pronouns in Georgian. First, a hand-coded analysis of a Georgian short story finds that the morphosyntactic features of person-number and the verb's tense-aspect-mood constrain the realization of pronouns. Study 2 replicates the results of the first experiment with a larger corpus analysis of 1,652 Georgian texts, and also finds syntactic position to affect pronoun realization, with the subject position favoring overt pronouns. Study 3 tests for these constraints in narratives produced by child Georgian heritage speakers ($n = 26$) and age-matched baseline monolingual peers ($n=30$). Contrary to what has often been found in pronoun production studies of bilingual speakers of other languages, Georgian heritage speakers produced more null subjects and fewer overt subjects than the baseline group. For pronouns in object position, the two groups did not differ. Taken together, the results suggest that overt optionally intervene between the

two syllables, as shown in (3), but this is generally resisted for resultatives in the homeland (Chan & Cheung, 2020).

Stability in the face of contact: Evidence from Toronto Heritage Tagalog /u/ (Umbal)

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Heritage languages provide an additional testing ground for investigating the complex interplay of internal and external factors on variation and change in language contact situations. This study presents a comparative variationist analysis of Tagalog /u/, comparing the F2 values among two generations of heritage speakers in Toronto (where Tagalog is the sixth largest heritage language), and two groups of age-matched homeland speakers in Manila, the hometown of the Toronto speakers' families.

Existing studies of Tagalog vowels suggest that the F2 of /u/ is not undergoing change (Gonzalez 1970; Delos Reyes et al. 2009; Intlekofer 2012). By contrast, the F2 of /uw/ in Canadian English (the majority language of the heritage speakers) is increasing in apparent time, indicating presence of on-going /uw/-fronting (Hoffman 2016). Previous work on heritage speakers in other languages have shown that variability in /u/ may be driven by dominant-language transfer (Tse 2022), language-internal factors (Cheng 2021), or identity marking (Cummings Ruiz 2019). What type of variability do Heritage Tagalog speakers exhibit; and which processes might account for the patterns?

1,617 tokens of /u/ were extracted from a forced-aligned corpus of Tagalog spontaneous speech, comprising 16 heritage speakers in Toronto, stratified by immigrant generation (GEN1 vs. GEN2) and gender (female vs. male); and 12 homeland speakers in Manila, stratified by age (Older vs. Younger) and gender. Tokens were Lobanov-normalized and then coded for relevant linguistic (i.e., preceding sound class, vowel duration), social (generation, age for homeland speakers, and gender) and contact-based (ethnic orientation scores for identity and language use/preference for heritage speakers) factors.

Analyses using mixed-effects linear regression show no evidence of on-going change in the homeland variety, and likewise, in the heritage variety. Heritage GEN1 females show more fronted [u] compared to GEN1 males, but this is attributed to speech rate (resulting in an overall reduction of the GEN1 females' vowel space area). For all groups (i.e., Homeland, GEN1 and GEN2 heritage speakers), the F2 of [u] is conditioned by the preceding sound: coronals have a favouring effect, resulting in more fronted [u], while noncoronals have a disfavouring effect. Crucially, the magnitude of this effect is smaller than that reported for English /uw/. Finally, more Filipino-oriented heritage speakers approximate the preceding class constraint of homeland speakers more closely than more Canadian-oriented speakers.

These findings are consistent with stable variation and absence of contact-induced transfer from English in both overall fronting and the magnitude of the preceding class effect (cf. Flemming 2011). Variable patterns in the heritage variety reflect inherent variation, conditioned by coarticulation, and the universal effects of speech rate. Further, heritage speakers may be using linguistic constraints (as opposed to mean values; cf. Hoffman & Walker 2010) as resources for ethnic identity construction. Taken together, this study demonstrates that phonetic convergence is not a necessary (or sole) outcome in language contact situations (Poplack & Levey 2010) and provides a nuanced account of how language-internal, social, and contact-based factors may conspire to give rise to variation (and change) among heritage speakers.

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Session: Language in Urban Settings

The last L1 Judeo-Spanish speakers of New York City (Kaufman et al.)

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We present an overview of the *Languages of New York City* digital map (Perlin et al. 2021) and take an in-depth look at the community of Judeo-Spanish speakers based on recently conducted interviews. While the historical development of Judeo-Spanish has been described in detail (Bunis 2015 and refs. therein), less attention has been paid to the linguistic practices of contemporary L1 speakers in NYC under more recent layers of language contact (see Kraus 1951, Harris 2006, Varol 2006, Romero 2008 for situations outside of NYC and Agard 1950, Harris 1994, 2006 for an earlier look at New Yorkers). The goal here is two-fold: to better understand the distinguishing features of Judeo-Spanish as spoken by the last generation of local L1 speakers, and to understand those aspects of the community that are most problematic for purposes of mapping in the context of our digital map.

Four of the speakers forming our current corpus were born in Izmir/Smyrna (Turkey), Rhodes (Greece), and Tetouan (Morocco), while three were born in the Bronx, as first or second generation Americans. We focus on the speech of these seven speakers with occasional comparisons made to two other recent public audio-visual corpora. Judeo-Spanish is characterized by the retention of several archaisms from Medieval Spanish (e.g. the *b/*v distinction) as well as unique innovations both in the historical phonology (e.g. *r*-metathesis, *r/*r merger, excrescent nasals, sporadic *n>m) as well as the lexicon (e.g. *meldar* 'to read'). Regional dialects share most of these features but are distinguished by contact effects from a large number of co-territorial languages, as well as from more recent contact situations of the 20th century, including French, English, Argentinian Spanish and Caribbean Spanish (in New York). We show that English appears to exert a far stronger influence on NY-born speakers than other Spanish varieties, although there is wide variation by speaker in the extent of contact effects. Despite five centuries of intense multilingualism, we argue that it is the highly conservative nature of Judeo-Spanish, even in the face of language attrition, which remains its most surprising characteristic.

Our second aim focuses on questions of identity and language use. Earlier endonyms, most popularly *Spañol* or *Español*, did not distinguish Judeo-Spanish from other varieties. In New York, however, terms such as *Muestro Spañol* 'our Spanish' came into more popular use for just this purpose, as distinguishing features became newly salient in the local context. Interestingly, interviewees often identified Judeo-Spanish not as a (geographic) dialect of Spanish but rather as a "chronolect", ostensibly frozen in time and standing in contrast to *Español moderno*, a term meant to encompass all other varieties of Spanish. Several speakers furthermore view themselves as the last speakers of their *language* despite being esconced in Spanish-speaking communities, in distinction to younger language activists participating in online revitalization efforts (Brink-Danan 2011). We conclude with a reflection on the lessons of NYC Ladino and its community of speakers for the larger language mapping project.

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/o/! They're j/u/st about the same!: Vowel Shift in Heritage and Homeland Seoul Korean (Griffin)

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The back vowel space in Seoul Korean is currently undergoing a chain shift with /u/ fronting and /o/ raising (Figure 1) (Han and Kang 2013, Kang 2016). This vowel shift appears to be age-graded, with younger female speakers producing more fronted and raised realizations of /u/ and /o/ (Han and Kang 2013). This shift has been largely uninvestigated in diaspora Korean populations. I compare spontaneous speech of homeland and heritage Seoul Korean speakers and show that heritage Korean speakers participate in the vowel shift, sharing a similar vowel space to homeland speakers.

Interview data comes from the Heritage Language Variation and Change Corpus (Nagy 2009, 2011): 8 first generation and 8 second generation heritage speakers in Toronto and 10 homeland speakers in Seoul. Vowels with duration >5 ms and <200 ms (n = 60,082) and their formant values were extracted from Praat (Boersma and Weenink 2014) by script with 5,941 tokens of /o/ and 2465 tokens of /u/. Data was not normalized due to low token numbers per speaker.

Linear mixed effect models in R using RStudio (RStudio Team 2020, R Core Team 2022) tested for effects on F1 and F2 values with speaker as a random intercept and generation (Homeland, Gen1, Gen2), gender, preceding and following manner and place of articulation as factors. Age and phonological factors are not significant main effects for F1 or F2 values, suggesting that the vowel shift is stable. Gen1 and Gen2 speakers produce less peripheral realizations of /u/ and /o/. Generation is not a significant effect for F1 value of /o/, suggesting that the chain vowel shift began with /o/ in the homeland and that this shift has been completed. Figure 2 presents a comparison of average F1 values of /o/ across gender and generation, showing that heritage speakers pattern closely to their homeland counterparts.

Heritage speakers of both genders have overall lower F2 of /u/ than of their homeland counterparts, but only Gen2 female speakers and Gen1 male speakers have significantly lower realizations ($p < 0.05$). Figure 3 presents a comparison of average F2 values of /u/ compared to homeland speakers. Gen2 female speakers have an average F2 value of 1423 Hz while homeland speakers have an average F2 value of 1541 Hz. Male Gen1 speakers have an average F2 value of 1192 Hz compared to an average homeland value of 1267 Hz, which may be negligible.

These results show that heritage Korean speakers participate in the chain shift, exhibiting /o/-raising and a slightly lower degree of /u/-fronting. Generation and age are generally not significant factors, indicating that the vowel space is stable in spontaneous speech. Heritage Korean speakers do not have more conservative vowel spaces and instead pattern similarly to homeland speakers, suggesting that heritage speakers receive enough input to participate in the chain shift. The popularity of Korean media may contribute to the amount of input received. First and second generation speakers' lesser degree of /u/-fronting demonstrates that the shift may not be completed but is still progressing.

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AM/P~OM/P merger in Hong Kong vs. Toronto Cantonese: An under-documented homeland sound change in a heritage language context (Tse)

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Hong Kong Cantonese has been described as having developed a dissimilatory merger in which /o/ becomes /ɐ/ in pre-labial contexts (/m/ and /p/). The /ɐ/ vs. /o/ distinction (henceforth AM/P vs. OM/P) is illustrated in the following minimal pair (with 35 indicating a mid-rising tone):

[kɛm35], ‘embroidered’, 錦

[kom35], ‘thus’, 噏

Acoustically based studies of this change, however, are lacking presumably because, as Bauer & Benedict (1997:

419–420) claim, the contrast disappeared by around the middle of the 20th century. Can this claim be confirmed through an acoustically based apparent time study? Furthermore, if Cantonese speakers born before the 1950s have settled in other cities such as Toronto, Canada, would heritage speakers there also participate in this change?

The current study specifically addresses the following:

Q1) How are AM/P vs. OM/P produced in terms of F1, F2, and F3?

Q2) How do Pillai Scores (Nycz & Hall-Lew 2015) vary based on Year of Birth?

Q2) Are there differences based on City (Toronto vs. Hong Kong) or on Generational Group (Gen1 vs. Gen2)? The data comes from sociolinguistic interviews from the Heritage Language Variation and Change (HLVC)

Corpus (Nagy 2011). The 38 participants analyzed include eight from Hong Kong and 30 from Toronto (including 15 Gen1 and 15 Gen2). Year of Birth ranged from 1922 to 1998. For each recording, vowel formant measurements were collected using a Praat script. All vowels were normalized and scaled to

Hertz values using the Nearey technique (Thomas & Kendall 2007) based on a vowel space of 12 monophthongs. Historic vowel class information was based on Eitel (1877).

Mixed effects modeling of all AM/P ($n = 889$) and OM/P ($n = 816$) tokens (with Speaker and Word as random effects; Vowel Category as a fixed effect; and midpoint F1, F2, or F3 as the dependent variable) show that OM/P is significantly raised (lower F1, $p < 0.001$), significantly retracted (lower F2, $p < 0.001$), and significantly more rounded (lower F3, $p < 0.01$) than AM/P. Pillai Scores ranged from 0.04 to 0.86 (with 0 indicating most merged and 1 the least merged). While a Pearson correlation test shows lower Pillai Scores with more recent Years of Birth ($r(36) = -0.361$, $p < 0.05$), the change appears to be ongoing, contrary to Bauer & Benedict's (1997) claim. In fact, the highest Pillai Score comes from a Toronto speaker born in 1969. Nevertheless, neither City nor Generational Group, came out as significant in any model.

To conclude, through acoustic analysis of Homeland speakers, this study shows that a change that was previously described as complete is, in fact, still ongoing. This study, thus, contributes to the description of Hong Kong Cantonese vowel variation, which has been under-researched compared to consonantal and tonal variables (cf. Matthews & Yip 2011: 73–76; Fung & Lee 2019). This study also contributes to a growing number of studies addressing the extent to which heritage speakers participate in Homeland sound change (ex: Thepboriruk 2015; Kang & Nagy 2016; Cheng 2019).

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Exploring variation in heritage Tamil retroflex perception and production.

(Muthukumarasamy & Narayan)

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This presentation investigates how sociolinguistic factors impact the psycholinguistics of heritage Tamil liquid retroflex perception and production. Heritage Tamil is an understudied language, with minimal literature on how speakers acquire, retain, and maintain their language. Since heritage language acquisition relies heavily on language input, familial usage, consistent exposure, individual attitudes, aligning beliefs, and personal motivation, this results in incredible variation among heritage language speakers, their proficiencies, and language abilities. In our presentation, we explore how social factors affect the perception and production of the alveolar-retroflex liquid contrast ([l]-[ɭ]) in heritage Tamil speakers in the greater Toronto area, a region with a high concentration of multi-generational Tamil speakers from India and Sri Lanka. Since heritage input differs greatly from majority or dominant language input, the relationship between these socio and psycholinguistic factors provides new insight into heritage phonological contrast retention and maintenance. In particular, we examine the connection between language and identity in the maintenance of this acoustically fragile contrast with similar spectral characteristics, shown through low perceptual salience. Heritage Tamil speakers (n=18) were recruited for participation in production and perception tasks, as well as a detailed language use questionnaire about language use and exposure, and follow-up sociolinguistic interviews about identity and motivation.

First, an AX discrimination task with non-word Tamil VCVs was administered. D-prime, a bias free measure of perceptual distance, was computed from the discrimination data. Then, participants provided minimal pairs with the target consonants in an elicited production task. An F3-F2 (Hz) score was taken as a measure of productive salience, with alveolars having a larger difference than retroflexes. Results showed a high degree of variation in productive salience, i.e., some speakers with clear differentiation between alveolar and retroflex, and others very little. Likewise, perceptual distance was also variable, with some participants clearly showing categorical discrimination while others have very perceptual space for both liquids. Interestingly, a simple language exposure metric did not predict productive or perceptual scores. Follow-up interviews, however, revealed that personal motivations, a concrete embedding of the heritage language within their individual culture, as well as a strong linguistic identity served as a strong indicator of accuracy in perception and production. Since diverse variation is so prevalent in heritage speaker populations and their language abilities, it is important to highlight both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data analysis to broaden our understanding of these speakers. Our research addresses whether acoustically fragile contrasts are realized in an understudied heritage language, and importantly, how, and why cultural identity and motivation serve to maintain them. Implications of this research include contributing to the literature on variation in understudied languages, the sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic patterning of heritage speaker populations, as well as providing baseline literature for further research on heritage Tamil and other heritage Dravidian languages.

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Session: Language in Urban Settings 2

The New York City Metro Area Survey: language attitudes and the low back merger (Cutler & Intlekofer)

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This study examines the relationship between the low-back merger and attitudes towards New York City English (NYCE). The project builds on data from the New York City Metro Area Language Survey distributed via social media in 2021-2022 yielding 716 responses. Participants represent all major demographic categories and were raised and attended school in New York City and surrounding areas that make up the NYCE dialect region (Newman 2014). The questionnaire included “same or different” homophony judgments for five LOT/THOUGHT minimal pairs as well as Likert-scale responses to statements that rely on respondents’ individual interpretations of the local accent: “I like the New York City accent”; “I would be sad if the New York City accent disappears”; and “I sound like a New Yorker.”

With regard to the sociolinguistic distribution of the merger, the results replicate the findings of Haddican et al. (2016), showing there is a relationship between the low-back merger and social factors like age and ethnicity. First, there is a strong correlation between age and the low-back merger: the rate of merger is just 5% for people over 55 but rises steadily to 39% for people under 25 ($r = .88$, $p < .00001$). There are also differences between ethnic groups with low rates of merger among those with a long-standing presence in the city, i.e., self-identified European Americans and African Americans (5-10%), but higher rates among groups whose presence is more recent, i.e., Latinos, West Indians, East Asians, and South Asians (23-42%) (cf. Johnson 2007).

With regard to language attitudes, there are two notable findings. Perhaps unsurprisingly, there are different rates of the merger among those who express positive feelings towards the NYC accent compared with those who express negative attitudes. Specifically, there is a lower rate of merger among people who say they sound like a New Yorker and would be sad if the NYC accent were to disappear. On the flip side, there is a higher rate of the merger among people who don’t think they sound like a New Yorker and wouldn’t mind if the NYC accent were to disappear. These trends help to explain real- and apparent-time shifts towards the low-back merger in NYCE. Speakers with negative attitudes towards NYCE avoid local variants (Labov et al. 2013, Tamminga 2019) and/or a “classic New Yorker” register (Becker 2016). Consequently, such speakers reverse THOUGHT-raising, a stereotype of NYCE, bringing the vowel closer to LOT and feeding the low back merger. The findings point to the importance of analyzing language attitudes in order to understand the factors that drive linguistic change.

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Race in the performance of a Baltimore persona (Malanoski)

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Dialect performance reflects indexical relationships between linguistic features and place (Johnstone et al. 2006). I discuss the role of language in the performance of the Hon, a persona based on white working-class women from 1950s Baltimore. I consider two questions: which linguistic features are involved in the performance of the Hon, and how does this performance differ between Black and white speakers? The present work constitutes one of the first studies of Baltimore English, and adopts a third-wave approach (Eckert 2012) to the growing literature on regional African American Englishes and their relationship to white varieties.

The Hon is the focus of HonFest, a Baltimore festival where many attendees dress up as Hons and adopt features of "Bawlmerese", white working-class Baltimore English. HonFest's main event is the Best Hon contest, where contestants compete for the title of Baltimore's Best Hon. While attendees are mostly white, the organizers have pushed to increase diversity at the event, and several Black women participated in last year's Best Hon Contest.

This study's participants are seven Baltimore-area women (six identified as white/"Caucasian", one as Black) who attended HonFest dressed as a Hon. Most were previous winners of the Best Hon contest. I conducted sociolinguistic interviews with two reading passages and two wordlists. Participants were asked to read the first passage and wordlist "normally" and the second passage and wordlist "as a Hon." Presentation order was counterbalanced across participants.

Table 1 gives the target variables. I assume variants found in dialect respellings are stereotypes. Other variants shown by prior research (Hisley 1964, Labov et al. 2005) to be associated with Baltimore are assumed to be markers or indicators. Montreal Forced Aligner (McAuliffe et al. 2017) was used to align transcripts, and FAVE (Rosenfelder et al. 2022) was used to extract formant measurements.

Figure 1 compares the difference between the normal and Hon guise for the Black speaker, Ms. Annett, to the difference between guises for the white speakers. In the Hon guise, both Black and white speakers produce frontier GOOSE and MOUTH, stereotypes of Bawlmerese, but white speakers otherwise use a wider range of Bawlmerese stereotypes (fronted GOAT, monophthongal PRICE/TILE,

tensed BATH, monophthongal TOIL). On the other hand, Ms. Annett dramatically raises THOUGHT in the Hon guise, suggesting that raised THOUGHT may be a stereotype of local speech among Black Baltimoreans. Ms. Annett also raises TRAP in the Hon guise, erasing the Bawlmerese short-a split. These data suggest that Ms. Annett's performance does not target the same norms as the white speakers'. Indeed, before reading the passage and wordlist in the Hon guise, she said that she would read them in "[her] African American style." Although we cannot know without comparing Ms. Annett to other Black speakers whether her performance is idiosyncratic or normative, it is likely that her performance targets a Black counterpart of Bawlmerese. Even if such a register is not yet established, performances by Ms. Annett and others like her will bring it into being.

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Session: Multilingual Literacies

Assessing Literacy in the Home Languages of Immigrant Students (Chard et al.)

Jennifer Chard, Anthony Vicario, Elizabeth Garza Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener

This presentation describes a multilingual assessment tool used in New York State during public school intake for newcomer immigrant students. The battery of assessments includes reading comprehension and math tests in 18 languages (the most common languages of instruction for newcomers prior to arriving in New York State). Students who are new to English and who arrive in New York State public schools from other countries are given these assessments if educators believe that the student may have had an interruption or inconsistency in education prior to arriving in the United States. These tests can help school personnel understand students' abilities in reading comprehension and math, regardless of their proficiency in English. The results of these multilingual tests are provided to school personnel in English, which allows them to make better informed placement, programming, and instructional decisions to best support students as they transition to school life in the United States.

Home language testing is important for several reasons. First, the knowledge and abilities students have in the home language (for example, in mathematical skills or critical thinking while reading a passage text) can help them as they learn English. The students taking the tests are usually new to English and can't describe their academic history to teachers easily; however, by understanding some of the skills and abilities students have upon arrival, educators can build instructional plans for students

which build on these skills, while teaching the English needed to express these skills in the United States. In the presentation we will discuss specific ways that home language skill transfer can assist students as they learn English.

As part of developing these tests, we analyze the text complexity of passages by grade level across a wide number of countries. Text complexity increases as grade level increases, and we will discuss generalizations from analyses of texts in Arabic, English, and Spanish.

Navigating Varieties of Arabic in Literacy Assessment (Ayach & Trivedi)

Alkhodor Ayach, Nishta Trivedi

Multilingual Literacy SIFE Screener

Arabic is a term that encompasses a large variety of spoken and written languages; there are 375 million Arabic- speakers in the world. This presentation describes written and spoken varieties of Arabic, from Classical and Modern Standard Arabic to the different varieties of present-day spoken Arabic across the Arabic-speaking world, touching upon their characteristics, use, and mutual intelligibility. We emphasize the differences between Modern Standard Arabic, a formal variety that is not a native language, and the varieties spoken throughout the Arabic- speaking world.

As part of our work developing online semi-adaptive home language skill assessments for Arabic speakers, one challenge is to make a single assessment that is appropriate for students from throughout the Arabic-speaking world. This presents a particular challenge because students are taught to read in Modern Standard Arabic but at home, speak varieties that may be very different from Modern Standard Arabic. Students therefore must learn vocabulary and grammar of Modern Standard Arabic in school as part of their early elementary education. This presentation describes some of the ways in which we have created assessments of early literacy and foundational reading skills, reading comprehension, and math to serve all students who report Arabic as their language of education.

One of the issues we explore is how textbooks of mathematics look different depending on which Arabic- speaking country students learn math in. Some Arabic-speaking countries use the “Eastern Arabic” or “Indo- Persian” mathematical writing system [٩٨٧٦٥٤٣٢١٠], while others use the “Western Arabic” or “Hindu- Arabic” system [9876543210]. Moreover, number pronunciation can vary across different spoken varieties of Arabic. Additionally, there are differences in mathematical notation, such as directionality and decimal notation. Equations are read from right to left in the Arabic-speaking countries using the “Eastern Arabic” system, and from left to right in the countries using the “Western Arabic” system. However, starting in 6th grade, equations in Western Arabic are printed from left to right. We have devised a way to show the math equations using a display that will be appropriate for all students.

Heritage Spanish writing complexity and its relationship to proficiency and writing genre (Gatti et al.)

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Heritage languages (HL) are characterized by variation across domains, and yet are traditionally compared to what the field calls non-heritage “baselines,” languages which have inherently less variation. This comparison can result in reducing HLs to “imperfect replicas of their source grammars”

(Laleko & Kisselev, 2021, p. 2). An alternative approach is complexity theory, which analyzes language development as a dynamic system. Complexity research (e.g., Kisselev et al., 2021; Kuiken & Vedder, 2019; Park, 2017) has shown correlations between syntactic complexity and heritage speakers' (HS) standardized proficiency levels (following ACTFL, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2012). However, no study we have seen has investigated the complexity-to- proficiency relationship while also controlling for the genre/level of the writing sample (i.e., the type of elicited writing). Finally, existing work on HS writing using the standardized ACTFL proficiency measure (Gatti & O'Neil, 2017; 2018) does not incorporate the more fine-grained complexity measure, creating two gaps in the literature.

This presentation shares results of a study on complexity and accuracy in the writing of Spanish heritage language learners (HSs enrolled in HL courses). We used a tool we modeled after the WPT (Writing Proficiency Test), which, following ACTFL standards, elicits four samples from each subject, at four levels of prompt difficulty: Intermediate, Advanced, combined Advanced/Superior, and Superior. Samples were double-rated by certified ACTFL raters, leading to a single ACTFL writing proficiency rating of each subject.

For this study, we analyzed the Intermediate-proficiency subjects: 92 total, 33 Intermediate Mid (IM), and 59 Intermediate High (IH). The first three of the four samples of each subject were then separately hand-coded by two L1 Spanish coders, who calculated syntactic complexity (finite clauses ÷ total t-units) and accuracy (error-free t- units ÷ total t-units). They made three passes to ensure intercoder reliability. The scores were averaged by writer proficiency level (IM and IH) and by prompt difficulty.

Results show a statistically significant relationship between complexity, accuracy, and proficiency sublevel (IM or IH), as well as between complexity, accuracy, and the difficulty level of the prompt that elicited the writing (a finding unattested in the literature).

* An independent t-test was conducted on the mean complexity and accuracy rates between the IMs and IHs; see Tables 1 and 2.

* A paired-samples t-test was conducted on the means of each of the three prompt samples, with all subjects (at both proficiency levels) combined.

* All t-test results were significant at the .05 level, two-tailed.

First, both complexity and accuracy increased from IM to IH writers, something that speaks to the usefulness of

the ACTFL proficiency scale. Second, across all subjects, as the prompt increased in difficulty, (1) the complexity score accordingly increased, while (2) the accuracy score decreased, something that speaks to the usefulness of complexity measures. Interestingly, this accuracy decrease illustrates "linguistic breakdown" (following ACTFL, 2012), known to occur when learners are pushed beyond their proficiency limits.

We tentatively conclude that establishing (1) standardized proficiency of subjects and (2) writing type is critical for accurately investigating complexity in language-learner writing.

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Who Benefits? Bilingual Education Program Access for Immigrant Communities in New York City (Espinete et al.)

Ivana Espinete, Kingsborough Community College, CUNY

Kate Menken, Queens College, CUNY

Maite T. Sánchez, Hunter College, CUNY

María Cioè-Peña, University of Pennsylvania

This presentation shares the results of our mixed-methods research examining the access of multilingual learners (MLLs, also known as English learners) to bilingual education programs in New York City (NYC). Research indicates that MLLs in bilingual education programs typically outperform their peers in English-only programming and experience numerous academic, cognitive, and socio-emotional benefits (Baker & Wright, 2021; Goldenberg & Wagner, 2015; Umansky & Reardon, 2014). In spite of the ample research base in support of bilingual education and New York state policies that mandate bilingual education be provided, only 17% of all MLLs in NYC schools are actually enrolled in bilingual education programs. The city has in fact opened hundreds of new dual language bilingual education (DLBE) programs over the past decade, yet only a very small portion of MLLs - just 7% - are enrolled in them.

Our research involved demographic and geographic information system (GIS) analysis, as well as interviews with district and school leaders. NYC is divided into 32 school districts, and our analysis of NYC Department of Education data revealed wide disparities in the availability of bilingual education for MLLs by district. Additionally, our GIS mapping of the location of DLBE programs exposed significant inequities in access to these programs by race and language. Our findings offer clear policy

recommendations by (a) suggesting that school district leaders play a significant role in determining access to bilingual education, thus education reform efforts should focus on school leadership, and (b) by highlighting where bilingual education programs should be provided to ensure equitable access to them.