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# **A Critical Review of the Field of Heritage Languages on Occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Heritage Language Initiative: Successes, Blind Spots and Shortcomings**

DMV Spanish Heritage Language Symposium, April 20, 2018

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- Thank you to Prof. Manel Lacorte;
- Organizing Committee: Ana Patricia Rodríguez, Manel Lacorte, Elisa Gironzetti, and Evelyn Canabal;

Congratulations to Prof. Roberta Lavine for this important and well-deserved tribute;

- Research
- Teaching
- Institution building  
through pedagogical innovation





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*A Critical Review of the Field of Heritage Languages  
On Occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Heritage  
Language Initiative: Successes, blind spots and  
shortcomings*

(1) What is the state of heritage language (HL) education in foreign language departments?

(2) How has HL education changed the field of foreign languages?



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# **20 YEARS OF HERITAGE LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

# Heritage Language Initiative, 1998

- Launched in 1998 by the National Foreign Language Center and the Center for Applied Linguistics;
- Goal: *(B)uilding an education system that is responsive to heritage communities and national language needs and capable of producing a broad cadre of citizens able to function professionally in both English and another language (Brecht and Ingold, 2002, p. 5) .*

# Looking back and looking forward

(1) What is the state of heritage language (HL) education in foreign language departments?

How widespread is HL instruction?

(2) How has HL education changed the field of foreign languages?

Have HLs led to a paradigm shift in language education?



# The first 20 years of HLS: Vigorous innovation

- Research
- Pedagogy
- Field-level presence

## Research

- HL grammars (Polinsky 2018; Montrul, 2016; Pascual y Cabo, 2016)
- HL learners' experiences and aspirational and relational needs (Beaudrie, Ducar, & Potowski, 2014; He, 2010, Leeman, 2015)
- HL v. L2 Learners (Bowles, 2011; Bowles, Adams & Toth, 2014; Henshaw, 2016; Torres, 2013, 2018)
- Functional skills (Swender et al., 2014; Kagan & Kudyma, 2012)
- Literacy (Colombi & Harrington, 2012; Mikulski & Elola, 2011; Schwartz, 2003; Friedman & Kagan, O., 2008)

# Signature HL Pedagogy

- Building on HL learners' skills (Valdés, 1997; Kagan & Dillon, 2001) **Expanding their repertoires.**
- Developing authentic language for real-world contexts through top down/macro-based teaching and multiliteracies (Carreira, 2016; Zapata & Lacorte, 2017). **Using language.**
- Targeting specific aspects of grammar (Polinsky, 2018; Polinsky and Kagan, 2007, Montrul, 2016)
- Responding to HL learners' aspirations, experiences, and sociocultural needs (Beaudrie, Ducar, & Potowski, 2014; He, 2016; Porra, 1997; Valdés, 1997) **Situated language practices.**
- Differentiating instruction (Carreira & Hitchins Chik, in press): **Diversity**



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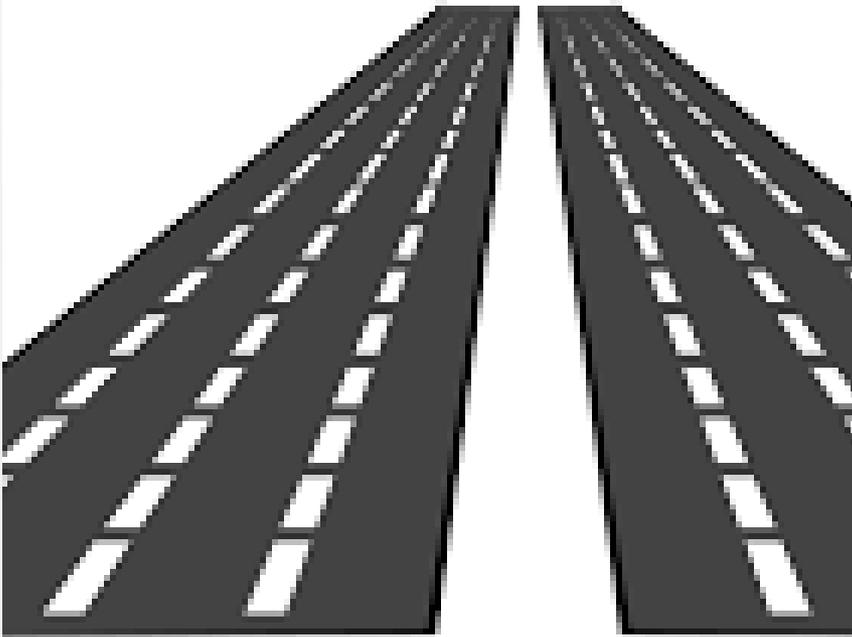
# Field-level presence

- Heritage Language Journal (2002);
- NHLRC (2006);
- Conferences;
- Mission statements (ACTFL, MLA, AATs, etc.);
- ACTFL SIGs (Spanish as a HL, HLs, in general);
- Workshops;
- Reports, white papers, etc.

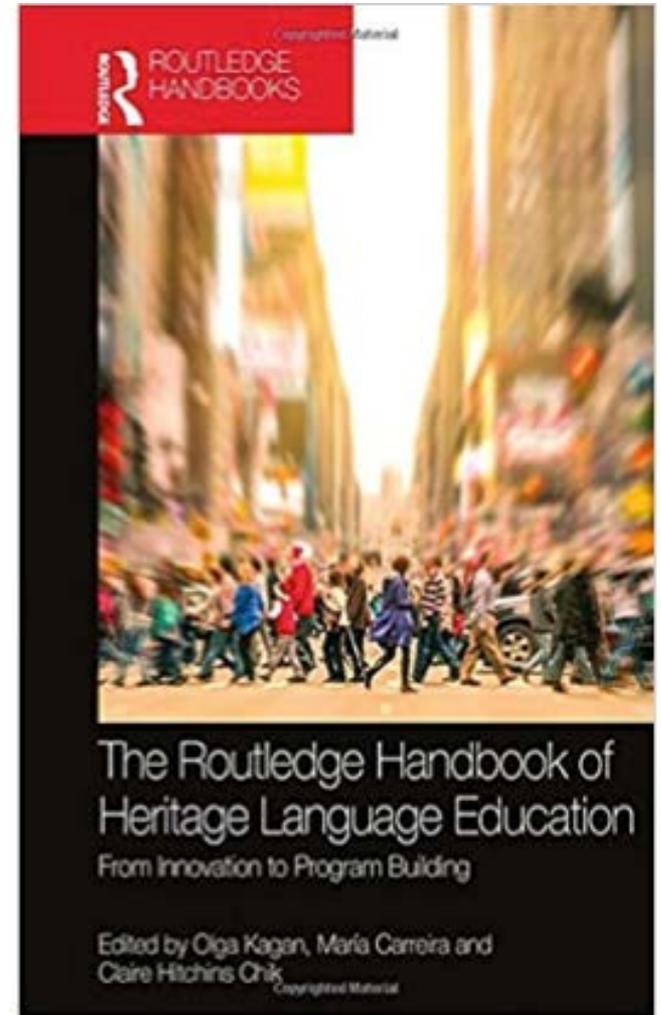
# Language education today

**Two instructional regimens  
or tracks**

1. L2 track
2. HL track



## **PRAXIS: WHAT IS THE STATE OF HL TEACHING IN INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING?**



Kagan, Carreira, Hitchens  
Chik (2017)



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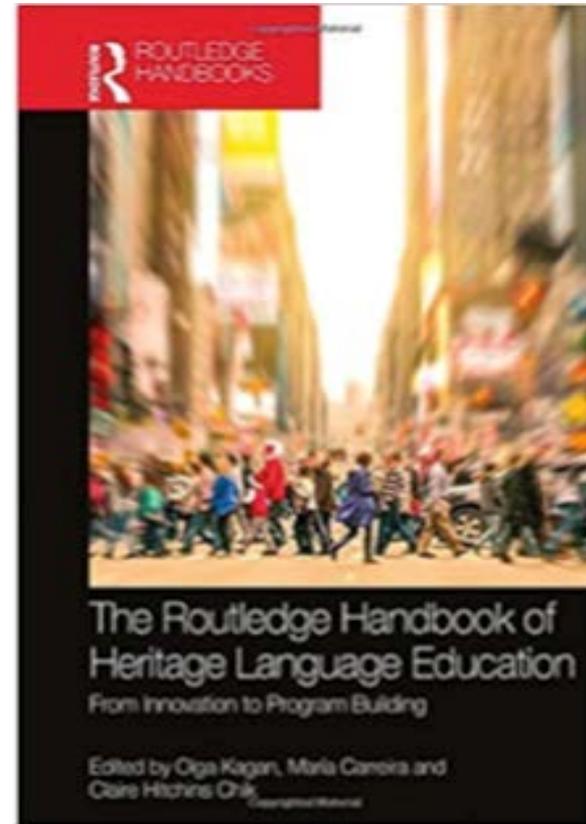
Geographical sites:

North and Latin America, Europe, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and Cambodia.

Educational levels: All (pre-K – 16)

Languages (20):

Albanian, Arabic, Armenian (Eastern and Western), Bengali, Brazilian Portuguese, Chinese, Czech, French, Hindi-Urdu, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Pasifika languages, Persian, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese, and Yiddish





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# Institutionalization

**Framework** for answering that question:

“a process through which an organization assimilates an innovation into its structure” (Ekholm & Trier, 1987, p. 13);

Organizations: Language departments, field of language teaching as a whole

Innovation: HL instruction/education

# Four indicators of institutionalization

1. *Acceptance by relevant participants who see the innovation as valuable and as legitimately belonging;*
2. *Widespread use of the innovation throughout the institution, organization, district, etc.;*
3. *Firm expectation that use of the practice and/or product will continue;*

# Indicators of institutionalization

4. *The innovation is stable and routinized in the sense that:*
  - *Continuation does not depend on the actions or motivations of specific individuals but on the culture or structure of the organization or on procedures that have been put in place to support the innovation; and*
  - *Time, space, personnel, funding, and other resources are routinely allocated.*

Adapted from Eckholm & Trier (1987, p. 17); Eiseman, Fleming, & Roody (1990, p. 12-13); Miles & Louis (1987, p. 26).



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# In this presentation

- Focus on the state of HL instruction in the U.S., and within that, higher education (for research on K-12, see Kagan, 2017);



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# Higher education

(Carreira, 2017)

Online survey of 296 language programs in the U.S. that teach HL learners (+ selective follow up interviews and class visits/observations);

Geographical sites: 34 states;

Institution types:

Roughly two thirds (202/296) of the institutions represented are public and the rest are private. One third (99) are **Ph.D. granting institutions**, 21.9% (65) are terminal **M.A. granting institutions**, 16.2% (48) are terminal **B.A. granting institutions**, and 11% (34) are **community colleges**



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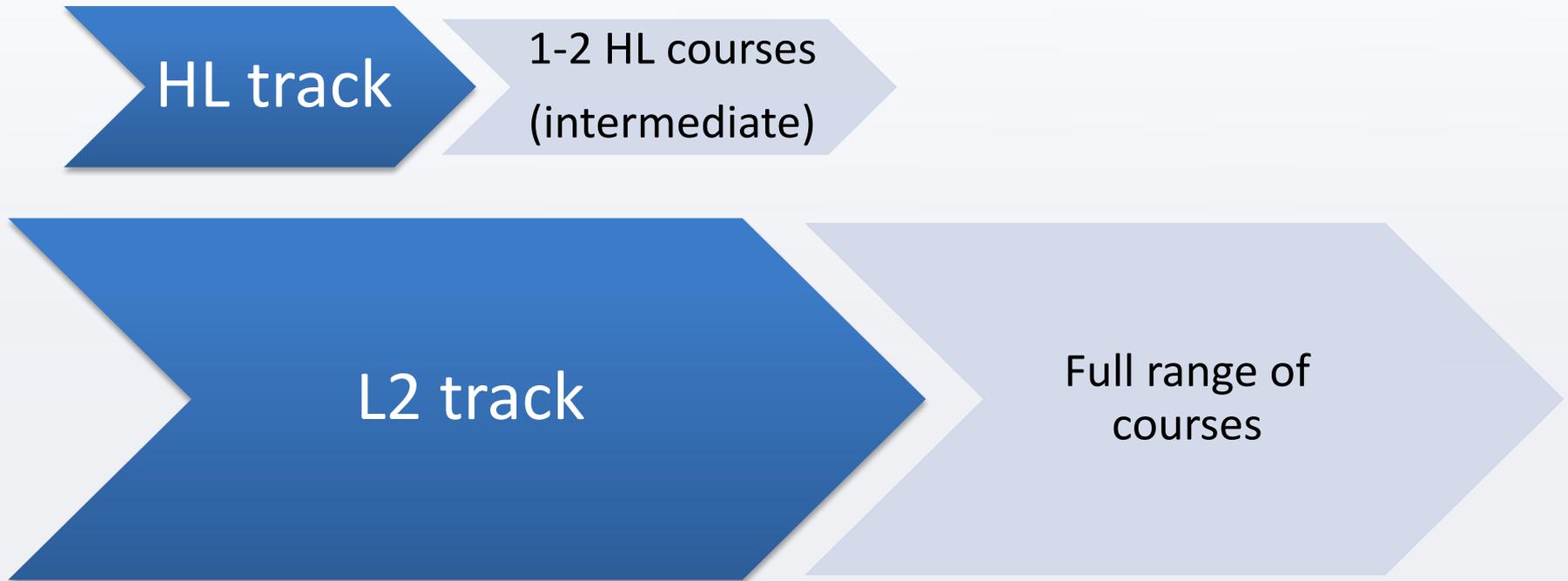
## 27 Languages

Spanish (76), Chinese (50), Arabic (44), Russian (36), Hindi/Urdu (32), Korean (13), Farsi (11), Vietnamese (5), Japanese (4), Tagalog (3), Hebrew (2), Portuguese (2), Punjabi (2), Serbo-Croatian (2), Yoruba (2), Armenian (1), Bulgarian (1), French (1), Greek (1), Hmong (1), Hungarian (1), Indonesian (2), Italian (1), Polish (1), Tamil (1), Thai (1), Yiddish (1).

# Some findings: Programs with HL courses

- Close to half (47%, 141/296) of the programs surveyed have some separate instruction for HL learners (cf. Beaudrie (2011, 2012) for similar numbers for Spanish);
- A significant majority (65.2% 92/142) of programs with an HL track offer one or two levels of instruction. Programs with four or more levels are fairly uncommon (14% ).

# Typical dual-track program



# Programs without HL courses

- 53% of programs
- Among such programs, roughly half (48%) offer HL instruction in some kind of alternative/out-classroom format: independent studies, service learning, tutoring, internships, etc.
- If we factor these into the 47% of programs cited earlier, the percentage of programs that offer HL-specific instruction, in one form or another, rises to 73% (215/296).

# Institutionalization?

- On the surface:

Widespread implementation of HL instruction and acceptance of this innovation in foreign/world languages programs.

But acceptance by whom?

Administrators?

Instructors?

Students? (mixed picture)

Society at large? (America's Languages)

# Instructors, administrators

- The availability of HL instruction (HL classes and alternative options) often depends on high levels of volunteerism and initiative by committed faculty rather than institutional support.
- As a result, in many programs the availability of HL instruction fluctuates from one term to another.
- This creates problems of continuity and articulation across the curriculum.

# Institutionalization of HL courses in higher ed

1. Acceptance is primarily at the level of instructors, not the institutional level.
2. Limited scope of implementation.
3. High levels of volunteerism.
4. No routine allocation of resources.

# This situation contrasts with L2 education

- L2 courses and curricula are a staple of language programs across educational levels
- There is no need to justify them to administrators and resources are routinely allocated for them
  - L2 teaching is fully institutionalized
  - HL teaching is not



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# **FACTORS THAT WORK AGAINST HL COURSES**

# Low enrollments and limited resources

Consider a department with HL and L2 learners and with modest enrollments and resources:

Options: L2 class, HL class

Consideration: HL learners can “get by” in mixed classes (but L2 learners cannot get by in HL classes).

Result: Mixed classes make more economic sense than HL classes, particularly in relatively small departments or where enrollments are an issue.

# Lack of HL materials and trained teachers

Consider a department with HL and L2 learners struggling with finding qualified instructors:

Options: L2 class v. HL class

Consideration: More instructors can teach L2 classes than HL classes. Teaching HL classes involves creating pedagogical materials.

Result: Mixed classes make more staffing sense.

# Concerns over the integration of the two tracks

Consider a department with HL and L2 learners:

Options: One track v. Two tracks

Consideration: Eventually both tracks merge. At that point, there will be differences between HL and L2 learners that will interfere with the integration of the tracks.

Result: Single track make more programmatic sense than HL classes.



# Differences between HL and L2 learners in upper division classes

Study (Carreira, in progress):

- Survey: 201 respondents (164 HLLs, 37 L2Ls);
- Administered to upper division Spanish classes with HL and L2 learners;



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## Survey question

Suppose your teacher gives you the scenario below. What is your best guess as to what this activity is trying to review or teach? Please answer below.

*Imagine you are crowned king of the world tomorrow and can order anyone to do anything. Complete the following sentences: (1) I insist that everyone...; (2) I want schools to ...; (3) It's better that all businesses ...; (4) I will not permit parents to...*



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# What's this activity about?

## Teaching the subjunctive



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# **CATEGORIES OF RESPONSES BY HL LEARNERS**

# Category 1: Meaning/content, **non-grammar related**

- *This activity wants to show the different ideas that the students might have about the world;*
- *Responsabilidad;*
- *Maybe the teacher wants to know how you think the world should be or how you would run things;*
- *Esta actividad quiere ver nuestras opiniones, y quiere saber lo que nosotros valoramos.*

# Grammar-related goals

a. On-point answers:

- *My best guess as to what this activity is trying to review is work on the subjunctive.*

b. Very general grammar-related answers:

- *This activity is trying to teach how to finish sentences and what phrases or grammar can go into them.*
- *Usage of verbs.*

## Category 2

c. Off-base grammar-based answers:

- ***review the tense of the adjectives;***
- *Preposiciones;*
- *Using relative pronouns;*
- *I believe that this activity is trying to review the future tense in a sentence. Because it is something that has not been done yet.*



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## Category 3

“No sé” (I don’t know) type answers;

# Intro to Spanish Linguistics (423)

## HL learners n=55

### On point answers:

Subjunctive: 2/55 (4%);

Indicative: 2/55 (4%);

Category 1: Focus strictly on content/meaning, not language

23/55 (41%);

Category 2: Spanish grammar (correct, but vague or incorrect):

Correct: 9/55 (16%)

Incorrect: 4/55 (8%)

Category 3: No sé:

4/55 (8%)

## L2 learners n=14

Subjunctive: 12/14 (86%);

1/14 (7%)

Correct but vague: 1/14 (7%)

0

# Intro to Spanish Linguistics (423)

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## L2 learners n=14

Subjunctive: 12/14 (86%);

1/14 (7%)

Correct but vague: 1/14 (7%)

0



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## **This student's answer...**

*This activity is trying to review/teach how to complete statements that pertain to what you "the king" would want to do.*

# Is this student really an L2 learner?

- Why are you studying Spanish?

I want to learn Spanish because **my family members speak Spanish**, I want to be able to use it in the professional field.

- Short bio:

We spoke English almost always, **but there was some Spanish too** like when relatives stayed with us or when we visited family in Mexico.

# What do we learn from this?: Context of learning matters

- HL learners are more focused on content than language (Torres, 2013, 2018);
- HL learners have limited disciplinary literacy –i.e. expertise related language learning in a formal context (Carreira, 2016);
- This is not just a result of their having learned their HL in a naturalistic context, but also a result of HL pedagogy.

- HL instruction – when done correctly - exacerbates the differences between HL and L2 learners, making it harder to manage instruction at the point at which both populations come together in mixed classes

# Concerns over the integration of the two tracks

Consider a department with HL and L2 learners:

Options: One track v. Two tracks

Consideration: Eventually both tracks merge. At that point, there will be differences between HL and L2 learners that will interfere with the integration of the tracks.

Result: The single track make more programmatic sense than HL classes.

# Recapping

- Mixed classes make more economic sense than HL classes, particularly in relatively small departments or where enrollments are an issue.
- Mixed classes make more staffing sense.
- Mixed classes make more programmatically sense than HL classes.

These factors may create a ceiling effect on the availability of HL classes (**widespread use of the innovation**) within the current realities of foreign language teaching.

1. What is the state of heritage language (HL) instruction in foreign language departments?

How widespread is the innovation? Scope: Change in the organization →

HL courses are fairly common, but there are limitations.

2. How has HLs education changed the field of foreign languages?

Change to the organization (depth).

Have HLs led to a paradigm shift in language education?



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# **MIXED CLASSES (CLASSES WITH L2 + HL LEARNERS)**

# Mixed classes can be more complex than that

- L2 learners +
- HL speakers of the target language (+)
- HL speakers of a language or dialect that is closely related to the language of instruction and/or HL speakers of a regional language that is not genetically related to the language of instruction (e.g. Tamil speakers in a Hindi class);
- Native speakers of the target language or of other related languages (Gambhir, 2008).

# In principle

Mixed classes should employ specialized pedagogy for teaching HL and L2 learners together



HL-based instructional practices

+

L2-based instructional practices

+

????

Mixed classes  $\neq$  L2 classes



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## In practice...

Many mixed classes are often indistinguishable from L2 classes in terms of practices, syllabi, curricula, etc.

# Survey: Respondent comments

*I did not give particular consideration to HL--they are usually a very small segment of the class.*

**(Name of book) does not address the needs of HL but it does a good job at the beginning level where the majority of our students take the (name of language) as a general language requirement and where we have less HL (15%) than at more advanced levels.**

*In the past five and half years of our program, we only had 2 heritage speakers. So we focus on true beginners, and we don't address the needs of the HL learners.*

(Carreira 2014, 2017)

# Survey responses (cont.)

- All mixed classes use L2 textbooks/materials.
- No mixed classes use HL textbooks, even when such books exist and HL students are the majority population.
- In fact: There are no textbooks or materials for mixed classes
  - L2 books will have marginal notes on HL learners
  - HL books do not have similar notes for L2 learners

# Furthermore...

Asymmetry:

Programs with HL classes always have L2 classes

But programs with L2 classes don't necessarily have HL classes

**ALL OF THIS SUGGESTS THAT THE L2 PARADIGM IS THE DEFAULT IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION**

# What mixed classes tell us about HL instruction

1. What is the state of heritage language (HL) instruction in foreign language departments?

HL courses are fairly common, but there are limitations.

Change in the organization (scope).

2. How has HLs education changed the field of foreign languages?

Change to the organization (depth): Have HLs led to a paradigm shift in language education?

Not really

# Global professional

*Globalization requires us to focus less on predetermined, stable, predictable facts of a linguistic, functional, or cultural nature, and more on such **fluid discourse processes as comparison, contrast, analysis, interpretation**...If we teach FL not primarily for academic purposes but for their use in the real world by secondary school students and first- and second- year students at colleges and universities, most of them nonmajors, then FL instruction must take into account the **discourse skills necessary to navigate this new global world** (Kramsch, 2014, p. 308).*

(see also Firth & Wagner, 1996, LoBianco, 2014)

# The contact zones

(Pratt, 1991)

*All communities that involve interactions between diverse languages and cultures are contact zones. It is not only that a community is in contact with other communities, adopting changes deriving from this ongoing history of interaction: the community itself constitutes members who bring with them diverse values, identities, and repertoires that are in contact (Canagarajah, 2017, p. 66).*

# The contact zones

- Many languages spoken in non-Western multilingual communities are in contact zones (Canagarajah, 2017).
- English in many parts of the world inhabits a contact zone, as a *lingua franca* (Canagarajah, 2007).
- All HLs in the U.S. inhabit a contact zone by virtue of the diverse values, identities, and repertoires of the communities of speakers (monolinguals, bilinguals of different proficiency levels, multilingual, etc.).

# Canagarajah (2007)

## Competencies for the contact zones (professionals)

- Procedural knowledge (the how of communication);
- Exploratory practices and expanding repertoires
- Grammar of practice
- Collaboration to achieve shared meanings and norms
- Diversity

## SLA constructs

- Propositional knowledge (the what of communication);
- The primacy of the native speaker;
- Competence of grammar;
- Adhering to fixed forms
- Homogeneity

# Alignment with the dual track paradigm

## The HL track

- Procedural knowledge (the how of communication);
- Exploratory practices and expanding repertoires
- Grammar of practice
- Collaboration to achieve shared meanings and norms
- Diversity

## The L2 track (mixed classes)

- Propositional knowledge (the what of communication);
- The primacy of the native speaker;
- Competence of grammar;
- Adhering to fixed forms
- Homogeneity



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# Tecnología en el campo médico

Spanish 250 / Fall 2016  
Aracely Ochoa & Andrea  
Toyofuku

# Hitos (milestones)

- La tecnología ha permitido muchos avances en el campo de la medicina.
- Ejemplos:
  - El microscopio compuesto
  - El desfibrilador
  - Las vacunas
  - La técnica aséptica

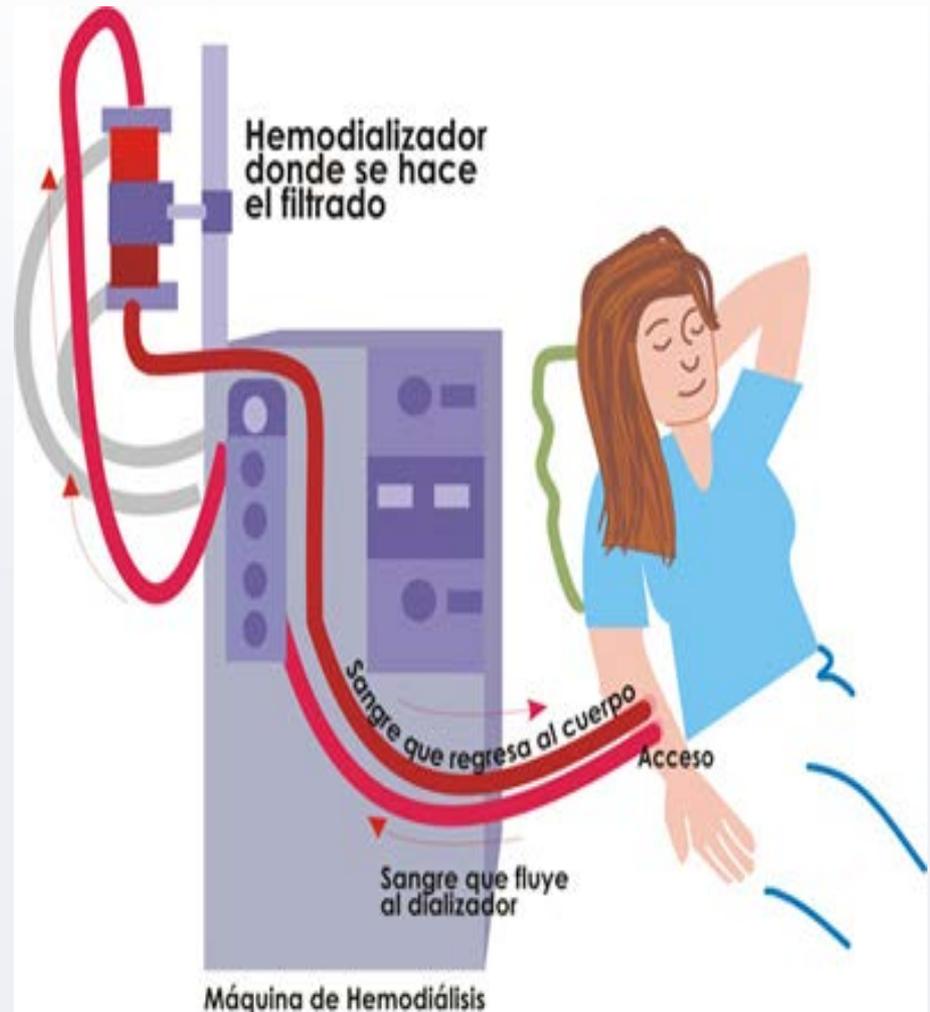


Es un **dispositivo** (**mecanismo**) de plástico y titanio, que puede durar en funcionamiento hasta 10 años.



# Hemodiálisis

- **Definición:** Un tratamiento médico que sustituye las funciones renales cuando los riñones fallan.
- En 2015, aproximadamente 468,000 individuos necesitaron diálisis.



**IF THESE ARE DESIRABLE  
COMPETENCIES FOR HL LEARNERS,  
WHY ARE THEY ALSO NOT SO FOR  
L2 LEARNERS?**

Default ↓

### The HL track

- Procedural knowledge (the how of communication);
- Exploratory practices and expanding repertoires
- Grammar of practice
- Collaboration to achieve shared meanings and norms
- Diversity

### The L2 track (mixed classes)

- Propositional knowledge (the what of communication);
- The primacy of the native speaker;
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- Homogeneity

# Shortcomings of the default

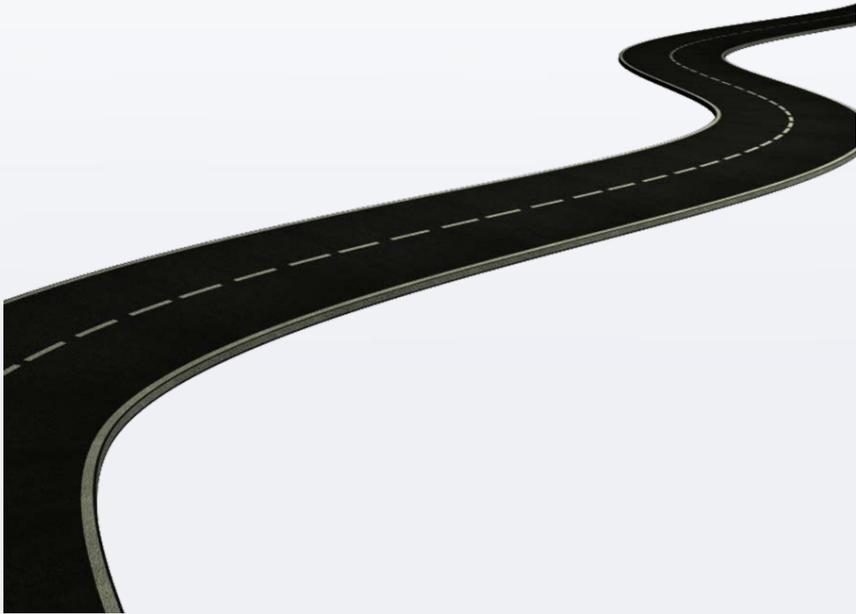
*Globalization requires us to focus less on predetermined, stable, predictable facts of a linguistic, functional, or cultural nature, and more on **such fluid discourse processes as comparison, contrast, analysis, interpretation**...If we are teach FL not primarily for academic purposes but for their use in the real world by secondary school students and first- and second- year students at colleges and universities, most of them nonmajors, then FL instruction must take into account the **discourse skills necessary to navigate this new global world** (Kramsch, 2014)*

# Mixed classes

- L2 learners +
- HL speakers of the target language (+)
- HL speakers of a language or dialect that is closely related to the language of instruction and/or HL speakers of a regional language that is not genetically related to the language of instruction (e.g. Tamil speakers in a Hindi class);
- Native speakers of the target language or of other related languages (Gambhir, 2008).

# A paradigm shift in language education

A common regimen for  
**all students**



Based on desired output:  
Developing a competence of  
practice for communicating  
effectively in the contact  
zones, abroad and in the U.S.

# What might that look like in practice?

- A lot has been written about new paradigms of language teaching and learning, competencies, languages in a globalized world, etc...
- Little, if any at all, by practitioners. All of it is much too abstract to be of direct application to the classroom context, which is quite complex and varied.
- There is a need for more specificity.

# Project-based language learning

- Learning by doing (Dewey, 1966; Stoller, 2006);
- Language instruction is organized around the overarching goal of solving real-world problems or challenges;
- Stages of working with information to create a product that represents that solution
  - Gathering **Input**
  - Processing **Focus on form, meaning connections**
  - Presenting **Output**

# Project-based language learning

- Sample project: The medical glossary;

- Not just for higher levels of proficiency

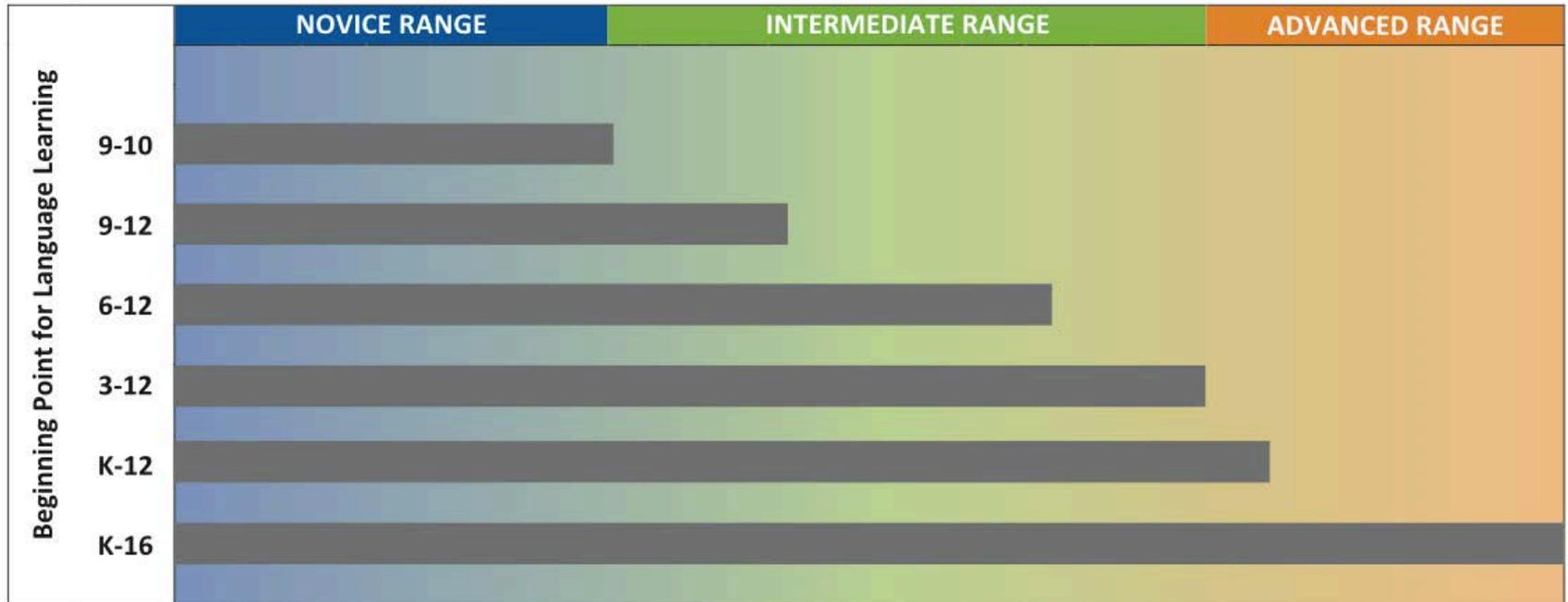
An entire language curriculum configured around increasingly demanding projects. (Much like a piano repertoire)

- ACTFL Can-do Statements

- Beginning projects: Input oriented products (collecting and using other people's words, focus on the self and the mainstream school curriculum)
- Intermediate and advanced: Output oriented products. Creating with language, self -> professional fields

# Mapping a curriculum of projects

## TIME AS A CRITICAL COMPONENT FOR DEVELOPING LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE



ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners, 2012, p. 13

# Advantages of this approach

- Develops competencies for a global work and the contact zones: performance based, real- world communication, grammar of practice.
- A project-based curriculum lends itself to dealing with diversity
  - Makes it possible to attend to the needs of HL and L2 learners in the same class
  - Enables multiple level classes
- May be a way to increase offerings in languages

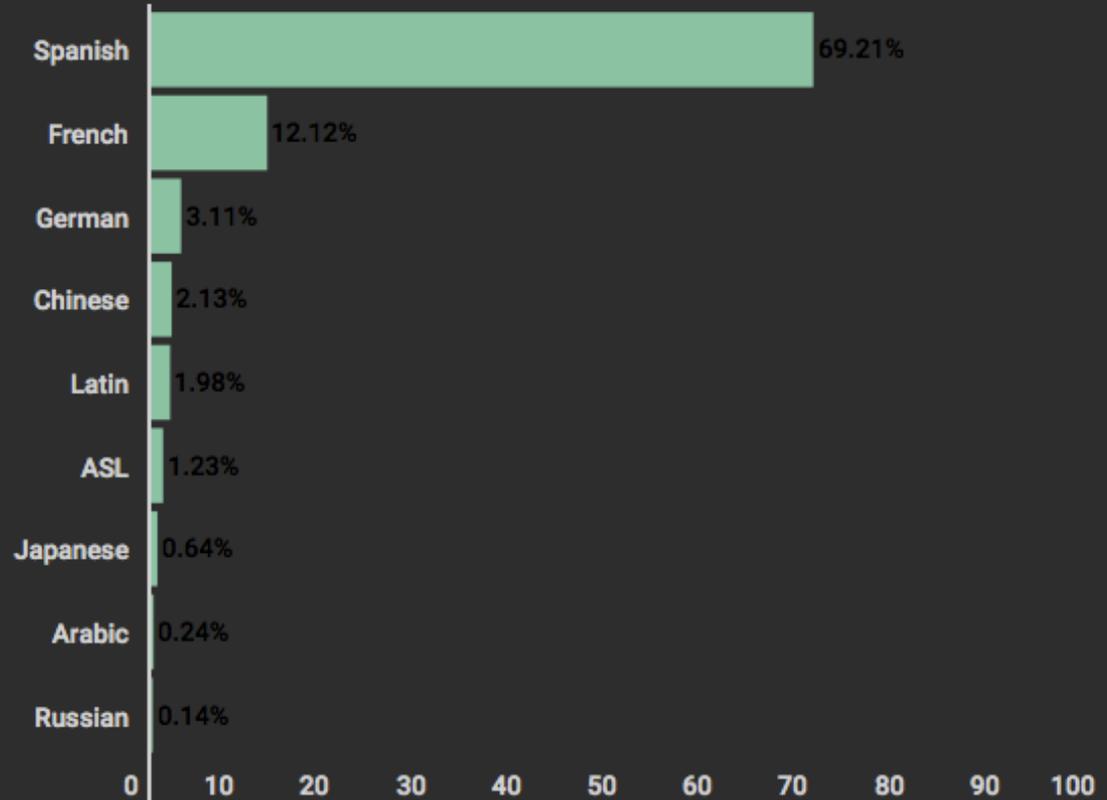


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	% students
Spanish	69.21
French	12.12
German	3.18
Chinese	2.13
Latin	1.98
ASL	1.23
Japanese	0.6
Arabic	0.24
Russian	0.14

Only **1 in 5 Students** was enrolled in a foreign language course in 2014-15.

### WHICH FOREIGN LANGUAGES ARE STUDENTS LEARNING?



Source: The National K-12 Foreign Language Enrollment Survey Report



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- Project-based curricula in a wide variety of languages for K-16 can be developed and be made available for use by community schools, parents, afterschool programs, course sharing in high schools and colleges, etc.;

## To conclude

- The first 20 years of the field HL:

- Accomplishments:

- Foundations of the field and significant implementation of HL courses

- Change in the field

- But issues of continuation, allocation of resources, acceptance, etc. loom large

# The Next 20 years

- Change to the field:

Leading the way in the kind of paradigm shift envisioned in Kramsch (2014) and Canagarajah (2007, 2017) and this conference;

Project-based language learning offers a promising way forward.

In memoriam



Olga Kagan

December 25, 1946 – April 6, 2018

Director and Founder of the National Heritage  
Language Resource Center, UCLA



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