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TEACHING ADULT MIGRANTS: A FOCUS ON THE LANGUAGES THEY SPEAK

Abstract:
As language practitioners shift away from the view that migrants must privilege the majority language over their home language(s) for purposes of integration into their new country, we join them and argue for including research on bilingualism / multilingualism in training and professional development for teachers of adult migrants with little or no formal schooling or literacy in their home language. Our focus is on this population, who often lack the social capital and institutional access to organize formal bilingual programs and language maintenance initiatives that are common in middle-class communities. In the following article, we review current research on bilingualism / multilingualism and suggest approaches that will support and develop adult migrants' home languages, as well as their learning of the majority language of the new country.

Keywords:
migrants ◆ heritage language ◆ language maintenance ◆ low literacy ◆ professional development

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Introduction

Historically, practitioners working with adult migrants have focused on learners' immediate need to acquire linguistic competence and develop reading and writing skills in the majority language of the country in which they have resettled[1], often at the expense of these migrants' home language or other languages that they speak (see discussion in Bigelow 2009; Cummins 2001a, 2001b, 2005; Duff 2001).[2] Adult migrants are expected to integrate into the life and work of their new country as quickly as possible. This usually entails focusing entirely on learning the majority language themselves and supporting their children in mastering it, rather than expanding their own and their children's home language skills, which they may be implicitly or explicitly discouraged from maintaining (Cummins 2001a, 2001b; Cummins & Danesi 1990; Polinsky & Kagan 2007; Ruiz 1984; Shin 2013).

In this article, we consider a subset of adult migrants, who at the time of their resettlement in highly literate societies have little if any basic proficiency in reading and writing in their home language or any other language they speak upon immigration.[3] Our focus is on valuing and promoting bilingualism (and multilingualism) as it relates to the training and professional development (henceforth T&PD) of practitioners who teach or tutor adults in basic oral language and literacy skills in their new language. As these adult learners and their children seek to learn the majority language of the communities in which they live, enlightened

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[2] 'Linguistic competence' is used here rather than 'oral proficiency' to refer to the subconscious underlying knowledge of language that underpins oral and written skills.

[3] Lack of or interruption of formal schooling is not due to lack of agency on the part of the individual but due to economic or political disruption, or to family- or community-level decisions. In addition to 'low-educated', other terms are used depending on the country: 'adults with limited or interrupted literacy education', 'adults with limited or interrupted formal schooling', 'literacy learners', 'pre-entry learners' and 'A0' (in the Common European Framework of Reference for languages, a level below its six A1–C2 levels).

practitioners can, in various ways, support them in maintaining their languages within their families and communities.

We begin with a description of this migrant population, turn then to a widely discussed issue in the context of the resettlement of migrants—integration—and then, finally, to the T&PD of practitioners who work with migrant adults with limited literacy skills.[4] We consider these issues in the context of a project that offers six recently designed online specialist modules (courses) for the T&PD of teachers and tutors of these adult migrants. The project in which these modules were developed, 'EU-Speak' (see footnote 1), emerged from the network of researchers and practitioners involved in the Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults organization (LESLLA, www.leslla.org), which was formed in 2005 for the purpose of sharing research findings and best practices relevant to these adult learners. With respect to the module on bilingualism / multilingualism, we argue for the importance of raising practitioners' awareness of current research on the value of knowing more than one language from childhood, including findings that dispel persistent myths surrounding childhood bilingualism. We also point out why T&PD should equip teachers and tutors with ample knowledge about bilingualism to better understand and support the adult learners with whom they work and these learners' families and communities. We include here some of the content of this online module, given the potential for research findings on bilingualism to make an important contribution to the reimagining of integration. Bilingualism ties in to the movement for maintaining one's home or 'heritage' language (the language of parents' or children's country of origin, which is not the user's majority language; Rothman 2009; Valdés 2001). Migrant adults with limited literacy have been largely neglected by this movement. Including bilingualism in T&PD is a means of redressing this imbalance. The paper ends with a new international initiative which emerged between 2016 and 2018, during two deliveries of the online bilingualism module.

Migrant adults with little or no literacy

In 2016, according to the UN Refugee Agency's (2017) annual global trends study, 65.6 million people were displaced worldwide, and in the United States, the State Department's Worldwide Refugee Admissions Processing System (2016) reported that 84,994 refugees were admitted

[4] We use 'literacy' in this paper in its traditional sense, to refer to decoding, comprehending and producing written text; e.g., as used by the OECD (2000) in its surveys of literacy: "the ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities, at home, at work and in the community."

during that year. In 2015 in Europe, 4.7 million refugees migrated to one of the 28 European Union Member States. Eight of the top ten countries of origin are countries with low rates of literacy, whose inhabitants are included in the roughly 758 million non-literate 15- to 65-year-olds worldwide (Afghanistan, Bhutan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Myanmar, and Somalia). A high proportion of this population is female. Migrants with limited experience with formal education and little or no literacy move to highly literate societies for a range of reasons, which can include forced displacement due to economic or political instability, as well as marriage (e.g., some women from Bangladesh and Pakistan in the UK) and work (see Drinkwater et al. 2009; Palmer 2016).

Migrants are expected to become part of social, economic, and community life in their host country. For adults with limited or no formal education and limited or no literacy, this presents a greater challenge than for educated adults, as documented in large-scale studies by Condelli et al. (2003) on the United States and Kurvers et al. (2010) on the Netherlands (see also Schellekens 2011 on the UK). If these adult migrants are learning to read for the first time in their lives, they will usually be doing so in a new language that they did not speak upon arrival (Tarone et al. 2009), such as English. Despite the status of English as a world language (Crystal 1997) and widespread instruction in English as a foreign language in secondary and even in primary school, if migrants are not from Anglophone Africa or have not participated in any formal schooling, they may have had no exposure to English. Conditions upon immigration that affect amount of exposure to the new language vary across countries and affect migrants' progress in gaining oral language and literacy skills in their new language. In the European Union (and neighboring countries such as Turkey), those fleeing harsh conditions who come from non-EU countries typically enter a country without legal status and then apply for asylum. Though access to employment, education, and social services varies by country and city, most migrants will not have the same legal access as residents have before they are granted asylum. In the United States, government programs exist that enable migrants categorized as refugees to enter the country legally with legal access to education, employment, and social services, while migrants without this categorization do not have access to these resources.

If migrants are not print literate, their initial exposure to their new language will be limited to what they can listen to. Environmental print, newspapers, and books to which educated, literate adults have access when learning a new language are not initially accessible to those with limited or no literacy, and this can considerably reduce the overall amount of input in the language available to them. All learners of a new language benefit from contact with more proficient non-native and native speakers of the language (see, e.g., Norton Peirce 1995 on

migrants), and one might assume that the workplace provides many opportunities to interact in the target language. However, studies show that those working in jobs that do not require high levels of literacy (e.g. housekeeping) may work in isolation and experience little interaction with target language speakers (see Sandwall 2013 on migrants in Sweden; Strömmer 2017 on migrants in Finland). Exposure to the new language is also limited by migrants' age. Unlike their younger counterparts, adult migrants past the age of compulsory schooling are neither required to attend classes nor guaranteed the years of daily instruction to which their younger counterparts have access. Many of these adult learners have family and work commitments that prevent them from devoting as much time as school children have to gaining basic and more advanced language and literacy skills. Moreover, mixed-ability classes are the norm; teaching can take place in a class comprising beginning-level learners without home language literacy or formal schooling, alongside others with home language literacy and schooling, sometimes at the university level. Learners' ages range from late teens to past retirement, and if they are not already parents or grandparents, many have younger family members in school.

Integration into the new country

Adult second language and literacy education programs typically focus on the country's majority language and on social and cultural integration into the life of the country, often to the detriment of the heritage language (Bigelow 2009; Cummins, 2001a, 2001b, 2005; Duff 2001). Programs specify preparation of learners for employment, for dealing with the myriad demands of daily life, and for integration into society. In most curricula, no matter how high the commitment to innovative and inclusive approaches that recognize the need to go beyond functional, survival literacy (see the many papers at the previously cited LESLLA website), attention is rarely paid to the home languages that these adults and their younger family members speak. We support the position taken by Arvanitis (2018), who has recently advocated the remodelling of the training of teachers to support learners in fully developing all of the languages they know or are exposed to, with the aim of becoming interculturally competent citizens (see also Galante 2018).

A reconsideration is overdue of the role of learners' home languages in the T&PD of those who work with the migrant adult learner population with limited education and literacy. This is evident in three recent trends. First is a shift in perceptions of language use, sparked often by politically charged debates about integration. This shift stems in part from the observation that patterns of global migration over the last four decades, involving the interaction of multiple variables, is best understood as 'super-diversity' (Vertovec 2007; see also Blommaert 2015).

Vertovec advocates building awareness of super-diversity in the various sectors affected by global migration, including among educators. Simpson (2017) and Simpson and Whiteside (2015) take this up by rejecting the typical view of migrant integration as horizontal and one-way, arguing instead that integration is multi-level, multi-directional, and multilingual. One piece of evidence for this is the observation that migrants not only acquire the majority language, but may also acquire the languages of other migrants when communication involves these languages (Pennycook & Otsuji 2015).

The second trend is the growing consensus in the literature on this learner population that instruction be "part of a larger vision in which learners' lives, oral culture, and other skills and knowledge are all part of the curriculum and classroom," which also includes their home language (Bigelow & Schwarz 2010: 14; see also work dating back to Gaul 1982; Williams and Chapman 2008; and most recently, Galante 2018). However, this consensus is not yet widely reflected in programs and classrooms, particularly with respect to migrants' home languages and the roles that they might play. There are important social benefits of home language oral proficiency and literacy in learners' own language communities and in the wider community, which include reduced marginalization and increased empowerment and standing within the family and community (see Bigelow 2009; Burtoff 1985; García et al. 2013; Gillespie 1994; Ingersoll 2001; Lukes 2011; Minuz 2017; Peyton 2012; Peyton et al. 2001; Robson 1983). Most obvious, however, is the role that literacy in one's home language plays for both school children and adults. If one first develops literacy skills in a language one knows well, these skills can serve as a bridge to literacy in the new language (Carlo & Skilton-Sylvester 1996; Thomas & Collier 1997; Wagner & Venezky 1999). As shown by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey results from Finland, for example, first- and second-generation secondary school students with proficiency in their home languages demonstrated higher academic achievement in Finnish (Harju-Luukkainen et al. 2014).

These positive results have inspired and guided the heritage language movement. Although interest in developing heritage languages is not new (see Fishman's 2001 discussion of over 300 years of support for migrants' home languages in the United States), the movement in its current form represents the culmination of a trend starting in the 1950s in secondary and higher education to replace or supplement classical Latin and Greek with modern European languages. In 1998, the Center for Applied Linguistics and the National Foreign Language Center collaborated on a Heritage Languages Initiative to "build an education system that is responsive to national language needs and the heritage language communities in this country" (Peyton et al. 2001: 14). In terms of heritage language maintenance and development, some speakers of

the language might have limited oral proficiency and little or no literacy in the language. However, they have been exposed to the language from birth in the family and community. The aim of the heritage language movement has been to foster a sense of identity and language and cultural strength, as well as social cohesion and integration with the majority language. There is a range of unresolved and complex issues related to language policy and the support for these languages in classroom settings (see discussions in Kagan et al. 2017; Peyton et al. 2001; Seals and Peyton 2017; Wiley et al. 2014). Fishman (2004: 417) pointed out that lack of support for immigrant languages "is just as scandalous and injurious as it is to waste air, water, mineral, animal, and various non-linguistic human sources."

Third, there has long been a commitment by linguists to rescue endangered languages from death (for a review of work up until then, see Hale et al. 1992; also see the Vitality and Endangerment Framework under UNESCO). Languages spoken by some migrants with limited formal schooling fit into the endangered category, where intergenerational transmission and representation of the language in written form (Hornberger 1997) are seen to be crucial to the survival of the language (Fishman 2004). Transmission is interrupted by the dominance of the majority language as a result of migration (see, e.g., Gallo & Hornberger 2017; McCarty 2012; Ostler & Rudes 2000). The internet, with its expanding options, represents one tool for linguistic communities in the diaspora to preserve their languages across space. We return to this topic below.

Online teacher training and professional development to address wider language issues

In light of the research and initiatives described above, which represent a shift from a focus on a learn-the-majority-language mode of one-way integration to appreciation and development of diverse backgrounds, languages, and cultures (see e.g. Bigelow & Vinogradov 2011), training and professional development for teachers who work with this learner population are needed. The Council of Europe's Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants program recognizes migrants' unique plurilingual and pluricultural identities and stresses that those working with adult migrants with limited literacy value their languages of origin and encourage adults to transmit them to their children "in view of their importance as markers of identity and an asset for the whole of society" (Council of Europe 2017).

What we discuss in the remainder of this article offers an option for acting on a growing consensus, pointed out by Bigelow and Schwarz (2010: 14), that instruction reflect a vision "in which learners' lives, oral culture, and other skills and knowledge are all part of the curriculum

and classroom." This entails raising teachers' and tutors' awareness of issues in bilingualism / multilingualism at the level of the individual, family, and community.

EU-Speak online professional development modules

The three-phase EU-Speak project (see footnote 1) began in 2010, by exploring how to address the relatively slower progress (noted above) of adult migrants with limited home language literacy. Research on adult migrants' acquisition of linguistic competence has shown that they can attain high levels in a new language regardless of age, education, and type of exposure, as summarized by Hawkins (2001). Research on beginning reading by adult migrants with little or no home language literacy reveals that they follow a path of reading development similar to young children just starting to read, indicating that the same cognitive mechanisms are still available across the lifespan to enable these adults to reach high levels in reading (Kurvers et al. 2010; Young-Scholten and Strom 2006; Young-Scholten and Naeb 2010). In its second of two phases, the EU-Speak project began to consider how to address the strong link documented in Condelli et al. (2010) for the more rapid progress that migrant adults with little or no formal education or home language literacy make when they are taught by qualified teachers. EU-Speak project researchers then confirmed, through international surveys and expert consultation, the need for specific training and professional development for those who work with these learners, and the worldwide lack of such T&PD for practitioners. In its final phase, the project designed and then delivered twice the six online modules (courses) shown below with the project partner who was responsible for its design. The curriculum involves these modules in the five project languages: English, Finnish, German, Spanish, and Turkish. Modules last six weeks and are non-credit bearing and free to participants. Information about the ongoing availability of these modules can be accessed via the LESLLA website from autumn 2018.

The sole requirement for participating in a module is working in some capacity with this learner population. Nearly 1,000 practitioners from 44 countries around the world have registered for these six modules, each developed and facilitated by a university partner on the project:

1. Working with LESLLA Learners: Characteristics, Strengths, and Challenges (Virginia Commonwealth University, USA)
2. Bilingualism and Multilingualism (Boğaziçi University, Turkey)
3. Language and Literacy in their Social Contexts (University of Jyväskylä, Finland)

4. Reading Development from a Psycholinguistic Perspective (University of Granada, Spain)
5. Vocabulary Acquisition (University of Cologne, Germany)
6. Acquisition and Assessment of Morphosyntax (Newcastle and Northumbria Universities, United Kingdom)

The countries in which EU-Speak module participants work are shown in Figure 1, along with the partner countries (in shaded rectangles):

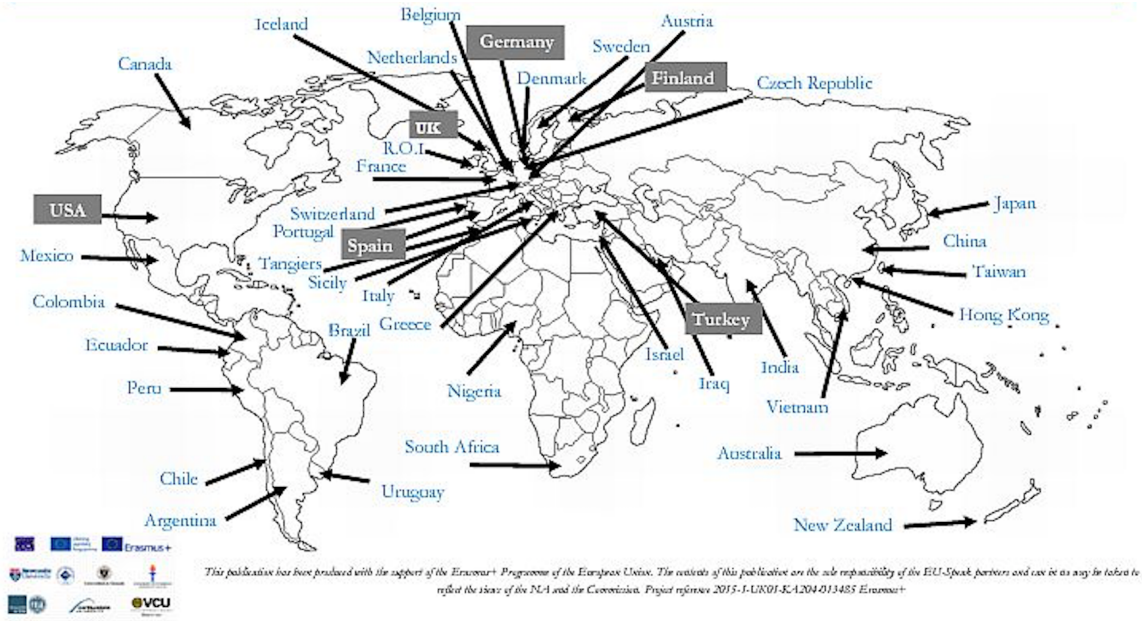

FIGURE 1: Location of EU-Speak partners and countries where EU-Speak teachers (module participants) live and work.

We now turn to key ideas included in the *Bilingualism and Multilingualism* module[5] to emphasize the importance of practitioners' understanding of the language issues relevant to the adult migrant learners with whom they work.

Children's bilingualism in focus

Five of the six EU-Speak modules introduce ideas and issues related to adult migrant learners' mastery of different aspects of their new language, but *Bilingualism and Multilingualism* uniquely focuses almost entirely on learners as members of their families and immediate

[5] Bilingualism henceforth refers to the acquisition of two or more languages.

communities. That is, the module revolves around adult learners as parents—as well as older siblings, aunts, uncles or grandparents. The aim of the module is to give practitioners the knowledge and skills to enable them to support adult learners in the decisions they will be making about their use of their home language outside the classroom, and the use of that language by younger members of their family and their community. The module, therefore, devotes four of its six weeks to presenting a review of the relevant research. One week is devoted to linguistic aspects of super-diversity, such as the work of Simpson (2016) and Simpson and Whiteside (2015), and to various aspects of language use by speakers of more than one language. The final week of the module is devoted to heritage language maintenance.

The module begins with an overview of research on bilingualism, with reference to types of bilingualism, including simultaneous / successive bilingualism, receptive / productive bilingualism, and societal / family bilingualism. Module participants are given various questions to answer during the first two weeks. These include

1. What languages are spoken by the learners with whom you work? What languages are spoken in the countries from which they come, and what status do these languages have? Consult http://wals.info/ to find out more and create a map showing these languages;
2. Find out about the writing systems used in the languages spoken by the learners with whom you work. Get examples of these and add them to your map;
3. Ask learners to help you make a list of the languages they speak themselves and that they hear in their household and immediate community;
4. Code-mixing / code-switching is a common phenomenon among those who use more than one language, and it demonstrates speakers' linguistic creativity. Find two or more bi- / multilinguals and observe their code-mixing / code-switching in conversations they engage in.

By the end of the module, participants are assumed to have gained the knowledge and skills they need to create a learning environment, with appropriate instruction and materials, where diverse languages are valued; learners' home languages are seen as a classroom resource; and where learners are actively involved in applying their knowledge of various languages, reflect on their knowledge of their own languages, and are encouraged to support their younger family members in maintaining and expanding their home language. These aspects of the module contribute to the T&PD of teachers in the sense of, on the one hand, identifying potential problem areas faced by adult migrants and younger family members and, on the other hand, viewing children's bilingualism as an individual and group resource.

Bilingualism from a linguistic and cognitive perspective

The most important feature of the module is its provision of detailed and up-to-date information from research on the benefits of bilingualism. Several weeks are devoted to linguistic, cognitive and neurolinguistic aspects of bilingualism (and biliteracy), addressing the following frequently-asked questions:

1. How does the acquisition of two languages in childhood differ from the acquisition of a single language?
2. How does the child's mental space accommodate more than one language?
3. Is bilingualism burdensome for children?
4. What impact does bilingualism have on cognitive development?

We include in this article a summary of prospective answers to the above four questions from the module content, because this research is extraordinarily important in raising practitioners' critical awareness of how we currently approach integration in our super-diverse world.

The answers to questions 1–3 come from studies of young children's acquisition of more than one language simultaneously or successively, which reveal that more than one language is easily accommodated, that it is not burdensome (not even for children with speech problems; see Paradis et al. 2011), and that it results in only minor differences with respect to rapidity of lexical access and vocabulary size in each of the speaker's languages (Gollan et al. 2002; Gollan et al. 2008; Pearson et al. 1997, 2010; Pelham & Abrams 2014). Studies of bilingual and biliterate children support Cummins' (1979) Interdependence Hypothesis, according to which global and specific literacy skills transfer from one language to another regardless of whether writing systems differ, although similarity of writing system results in a stronger transfer effect (Bialystok et al. 2005; Durgunoğlu & Öney 1999; Hussien 2014; Leikin et al. 2010; Reyes 2006; Wang et al. 2005).

With respect to question 4, the answer goes beyond the acknowledged importance of bilingualism for its practical and economic advantages in the research, which for some time has shown that bilingualism enhances a range of cognitive skills. The module attempts to put to rest the view promoted by early researchers such as Volterra and Taeschner (1978) that young bilinguals are dangerously confused by input in two languages. Research has for a long time not supported this view (see, e.g., Genesee et al. 1995, on 2½-year-old English-French bilinguals in Canada; Genesee 2015). In fact, dealing concurrently with two active languages seems to heighten the functioning of the "executive control system" (Bialystok 2006; Grosjean

2008). This system is the mind's "set of general-purpose control mechanisms regulating the dynamics of human cognition and behaviors" and resolves any potential conflicts between separate linguistic systems (Miyake & Friedman 2012: 8–9). Executive function is central in subfields of psychological science, given its strong connection with self-control and self-regulation. Inhibition, updating, and shifting are major components of executive function relevant to daily activities, ranging from critical thoughts about something to fear on an airplane to deciding the most efficient way to return to the home country to visit family members (Munakata et al. 2011; see also Posner & Rothbart 2000).

We now know that the experience of growing up with several languages appears to alter the brain to influence cognition in general by organizing the executive control system in such a way that it functions more efficiently in bilinguals, from childhood throughout the lifespan, as shown in numerous studies on both verbal and non-verbal tasks, including measurement of attention, working memory, metalinguistic awareness, problem solving, abstract and symbolic reasoning, creative or divergent thinking, mathematical problem solving and delay of symptoms of dementia (see Adesope et al. 2010; Bialystok 2006; Bialystok et al. 2004; Gollan et al. 2011; Grundy & Timmer 2017; Leikin et al. 2010; Ricciardelli 1992).

These benefits are not contingent on socioeconomic status or whether the individual demonstrates a high level of proficiency in the languages they speak, nor do benefits depend on whether the languages have been learned simultaneously or successively. Rather, benefits are demonstrated when exposure is ample and the languages are regularly used (Bialystok & Barac 2012; Calvo & Bialystok 2014; Gollan et al. 2011). By taking learners' families into account, teachers and tutors who are equipped with the knowledge discussed here can better support migrant adults in making decisions about the schooling of younger family members. This may involve addressing practitioners' potential preconceptions that bilingualism is an additional burden for children's societal integration.

Participant responses to the module

It is possible that practitioners are solely interested in supporting the achievement of the learners they work with in the majority language and see promoting family and community bilingualism as beyond their job description. However, an examination of the module participant enrolment forms reveals that their reasons for participating in the *Bilingualism and Multilingualism* module parallel the objectives of the module: to explore teaching practices and approaches focused on the needs of bilingual / multilingual individuals and to learn more about the

bilingualism / multilingualism of the learners in their classes. Quotations from the enrolment forms show the ways that they approached the content of the module:

> "I have over ten years of experience helping low literacy adults who were Canadian born but have very little experience with individuals from other countries. I am hoping I can get a better understanding of these individuals and their needs. I want to do what is best for my students."

> "I think it will help me update my knowledge and learn new terminology in a range of concepts from emerging research relevant to bi- / multilingualism."

> "Most of my students have children so I am interested in the interaction between home language and English and how parents' language affects children's education and vice-versa."

Heritage language maintenance

We now turn to the part of the *Bilingualism and Multilingualism* module that focuses directly on the research on heritage language loss and maintenance and ways that practitioners can encourage or concretely support learners' home language maintenance in their work with adult migrants. As we will see below, this week of the module has resulted in a new initiative undertaken by the authors of this paper: establishing access to resources that provide heritage language support for these adult migrants, their families and their communities.

This part of the module content notes that researchers who study language in its social context often observe a shift over three generations from the heritage language (the minority language) to the majority language (the language of the new country or region). The first generation is monolingual in their home language and may start to acquire the majority language. The second generation is bilingual and may or may not be biliterate, and the end state of their acquisition may differ from that of their monolingual peers in their country of origin (see, e.g., Montrul 2008, 2010; Polinsky 2007; Rothman 2009; Silva-Corvalán 1994). Reasons for an end state that is not comparable to that of monolinguals are debated and include exposure to different input than that received by monolinguals. In this often-observed pattern, by the third generation, individuals are monolingual in the majority language and, in fourth and later generations, the language ceases to be used within the family. Without continued migration into the community, the result is majority-language monolingualism. This is a common pattern, to which there are exceptions, such as multi-generational bilingualism of speakers of the Sylheti variety of Bengali in the UK, due to continued immigration from Bangladesh (Hamid 2011).

In the heritage language movement, heritage speakers are defined not only as first-generation migrants, but also as residents who are members of the second and later generations who are exposed to the home language but may or may not speak it; that is, they are receptive bilinguals. Many later-generation individuals around the world acquire their heritage language to some degree by hearing their grandparents or older members of the community speak it. In an attempt to compare bilingual versus monolingual speech, language acquisition researchers look at the type of input that bilinguals receive in each language. For example, use of the heritage language may be limited to the home, in interactions with parents and extended family members. If heritage language exposure takes place only informally at home, the child will usually not become literate in the language. Literacy is, of course, not possible if the language does not have a written form, as is the case for some of the languages spoken by adult migrants with no formal schooling. Second- and third-generation heritage language speakers may also be exposed in the community to a different variety of the heritage language than their parents or grandparents speak. Finally, researchers find that children in this situation have command of fewer registers, show less variety in their grammar, and might not acquire the more complex aspects of the language (see Pascual y Cabo & Rothman 2012).

It has been repeatedly shown that home / heritage language education provides the best start for the children of migrants (e.g. Baker 2006; Cummins 1979, 1992; Cummins & Swain 1986), with the possibility for full development of biliteracy (Kenner 2003; Leiken et al. 2010; Schwartz et al. 2007). In many contexts, bilingual education from the start of schooling is not possible for the children of migrant adults, despite the frequent observation that children from minority-language backgrounds are disadvantaged when submersed in mainstream, majority-language classes (Edelsky et al. 1983; Hornberger 2003). Given the advantages of bilingualism, the teachers and tutors of these migrant adults who are aware of situations in which bilingual education is not possible (as well as where it is available) can encourage and support families and communities in their continued use of the home language through extra-curricular heritage language maintenance.

As described above, there is a growing movement worldwide for heritage language maintenance. The aim of such steps has been to promote integration into the country and foster social cohesion through use of the heritage language alongside the majority language. It is important to note, however, that there is a range of complex issues relating to language policy and language of education, which are under continuous discussion in many countries.

Taking heritage language support further

Starks and Nicholas (2018: 227) point out that "engaging with language education in a heritage context is a complex endeavour that transcends space and time." When it comes to education in the home language in addition to the majority language, various issues arise (Baker & Wright 2017; Garcia 2009), and parents cannot always rely on the school system to support their children's heritage language. As a result, there are many examples worldwide of community-based heritage language schools that function outside of public, private, and charter school systems. What is needed now are systems and structures to support these extracurricular efforts.

Aberdeen (2016) notes that that unlike educated, literate, and middle-class parents, migrant adult parents with little or no formal education are grappling with their own education and their own and their family's survival in the new country. Particularly for these parents (and other older family members), support for heritage languages needs to go beyond simply paying lip service to use of the home language and move into developing ways to offer education in that language. This requires

1. safe spaces for classes;
2. safe transportation for students;
3. curriculum and instructional methods and materials;
4. recruitment and retention of well-trained teachers;
5. health and safety of students, teachers, and parents.

A program should address social, affective, and educational issues and include, if necessary, the creation of resources and preparation of courses and programs specifically designed for heritage language speakers (Bayram et al. 2018). However, according to Aberdeen, there is a worldwide dearth of appropriate materials in non-European languages for both younger and older individuals outside their home country. This includes languages widely spoken by immigrants, such as Arabic. While there are written Arabic materials used for worship, few materials are available to develop more general oral and literacy skills.

Research in bilingual education programs has shown that a key factor in enabling speakers to succeed in a second language is to develop or maintain literacy in the home language in a supportive sociocultural environment (Carder 2013; Collier & Thomas 2007). Collier and Thomas argue that it is important for bilinguals to maintain their home language, while they develop their second language to an academic level during their school life. Therefore, the initial step in providing heritage language support will be to focus on expanding oral proficiency

in the heritage language and then on developing literacy in that language alongside the majority language.

Aberdeen further underscores the necessity of using enlightened second language pedagogy for developing and expanding the home language. This would exclude dialogue memorization and include instead comprehension-, content-, collaboration-, and experiential-based approaches. On the assumption that heritage-speaker competence is usually different from that of monolingual speakers of the same language in terms of lexicon, morphosyntax, phonology, and other linguistic features, recent studies endorse the view that these differences from foreign language learners mean different instructional needs (Rothman et al. 2016). Moreover, the starting point of instruction in a typical heritage language classroom is not comparable to *foreign language learning*; rather, instruction needs to be specialized to reflect the diverse heritage language profiles of individuals in a given classroom. Bayram et al. (2018) describe how to make the link between formal approaches to heritage language study and heritage language pedagogy, where it is crucial to understand the mental reality of heritage speakers' linguistic systems. These issues are also relevant for the creation of teaching materials, assessment tools, and placement procedures. In addition to the research summarized in this article, initiatives underway in heritage language communities provide examples of approaches that can be taken (e.g., in the *Elm Magazine's* 2018 theme issue on Adult Education and Cultural Heritage).

Formation of a heritage language 'hub'

Experience with delivering the *Bilingualism and Multilingualism* module led to the idea of forming an international resource hub, which would provide support for and access to heritage language resources for the languages that adult migrants with limited education and literacy speak. In addition to the module activities listed above, another module activity involved answering this question: How does the wider community support your students' home languages? Try to find out from the learners with whom you work how proficient their children are in their home language. Participants also took part in a webinar with Trudie Aberdeen (Alberta) and Naeema Hahn (UK) on heritage language maintenance in these two countries. Participants who took the module the first time it was offered, in spring 2016, commented that the classroom activities listed above fostered interaction between them and the learners and gave the learners a sense of engagement and agency.

In light of the need for effective instruction and materials in the heritage languages of adults and children outlined above, there is a shortage of materials in those languages (Peyton et al. 2017; see also, e.g., Valdés et al. 2006). Via the LESLLA organization, the authors have planted the seeds for an international activist group that will address this shortage with an online resource repository of links to, and actual materials in, a range of media for individuals of all ages and for current and future educators. This initiative is expected to take considerable effort, and will start with development of an inventory of resources currently available around the world (e.g., the Global Book Alliance; the Bloom Book Library; All Children Reading; as well as the Digital Literacy Instructor and Simply Cracking Good Stories, both ongoing projects whose materials can be translated into migrants' languages). This also includes initiatives underway in which teachers in schools are developing interesting materials for children and their parents (see Yaffe 2017 for an initiative in Omaha, Nebraska, involving development of bilingual Karen-English and Nepali-English picture books). The resource hub will be accessible to migrants and their teachers around the world.

Migrants with limited literacy often enjoy widespread digital connections, starting with the use of mobile phones (Colucci et al. 2017; Nedelcu 2012). The internet represents a new opportunity to use heritage languages in the diaspora in complex ways across time and space, including accessing materials for discussion and participating in interactions with speakers of the languages in the countries where they are spoken. Teachers and tutors can play a pivotal role in developing and implementing effective uses of these resources and opportunities, but these practitioners need the training and professional development that will give them the knowledge, skills, and tools to play this role. Through this process, not only will adult migrants' home language skills be developed and expanded through their commitment to maintaining their heritage language, but they will also transfer literacy practices in their home language to their new one, the language of the new country.

Conclusion

We are seeing a clear shift in focus among those working with adult migrants with limited education and literacy from learning the majority language of the new country for integration into its culture, social structures, education systems, and workforce to a recognition of the value of the languages that migrant adults and their families speak. There are numerous challenges associated with this new way of thinking, which have far-reaching implications for adult education programs. These challenges include political and social realities (such as when the language is not recognized as important to the country or to the educational process generally,

or when it is considered a detriment to learning and integration). However, the next steps that we can take at the international level are clear and will involve preparing teachers and tutors to work with adult learners with this perspective in mind, as well as encouraging the development of a considerable amount of materials that teachers, tutors, learners, and their families can use in their languages. As we unite across organizations and countries in the ways described here and make progress in these arenas, not only the first generation of migrants but also subsequent generations will reap the many benefits of bilingualism.

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