TEACHING AMERICAN SPEECH

CENTERING HERITAGE SPEAKER PERSPECTIVES
IN UNDERGRADUATE LINGUISTICS EDUCATION

JESSICA KANTAROVICH, *Ohio State University*
TRAN TRUONG, *Pennsylvania State University*

In fall 2022, Truong taught about 50 students in Introduction to Linguistics, of whom ONE had prior exposure to the field and over HALF spoke a language other than English. This is not an atypical dynamic at public flagship institutions, where linguistics courses at the introductory level often fulfill numerous general education requirements, thereby attracting a wide variety of students as a result of an intrinsic interest in "language" broadly construed. More concretely, students are drawn to linguistics as a field of study because of their own personal experiences with language learning and use: they speak a language other than English (or a marked variety of English) at home, or they have studied a world language in school. Increasingly, many college students have heard of linguistics and demonstrate a greater awareness of the goals of the field and have read the growing volume of pop-linguistics literature and even foundational work (for example, while teaching a general education course on language in society, Kantarovich encountered students who had already read works by Noam Chomsky and J. L. Austin). This scenario is a far cry from the mythos that has surrounded Introduction to Linguistics: that incoming students are predominantly monolingual English speakers who are mainly interested in learning languages but must immediately learn that their innate assumptions about language, especially language use in society, are inaccurate or misguided.

We have found that the contemporary linguistics student is considerably more aware of the social life of language and, indeed, considerably likelier to speak a language other than (standard) English, compared to students of decades past. We speculate that there are a number of reasons for this change in the profile of the average incoming student in an Introduction to Linguistics course. One major factor is that the field has been growing steadily and has carved out a more prominent place in public life. For better or worse, we have far more visible public intellectuals, who address public audiences interested in cognitive science (John McWhorter, Steven Pinker), language on the internet (Gretchen McCulloch), language and AI (Emily Bender), language and evolution (Derek Bickerton), language and the law (John Rickford and Sharese King), and linguistic diversity in society (Anne

H. Charity Hudley, Nicole Holliday, Dan Jurafsky, Arika Okrent, and many others). It is also difficult to ignore the growing discourse around the power of language in our society, largely taking place online. Social media has encouraged greater scrutiny of language use and the potential for language (especially language rooted in a troubled history) to cause harm. Ultimately, the notion that language is a discrete entity that can be analyzed is already presumed by students from a variety of backgrounds. In this article, we wish to call attention to a particular group of students who are overrepresented in linguistics classrooms due to their unique experiences with language: heritage speakers of languages other than English. Heritage speakers (much like speakers of African American English and disparaged regional varieties of American English) need not be told that monolingual standard English speech is an unattainable ideal—this is their linguistic reality, and they have likely grown up with an awareness that their speech (and choice of language) is evaluated differently in different contexts.

It is therefore crucial that instructors make the introductory classroom an inviting space for protolinguists from these backgrounds to activate their prior knowledge, make new discoveries, and see themselves in the field. This can be achieved through small, incremental changes (without overhauling the entire introductory curriculum) and will enrich not only the experience of heritage speaker students and other bilinguals but also that of their monolingual classmates, who can gain a greater awareness of the linguistic and dialectal diversity that already exists around them. In recent years, it has been acknowledged that the traditional introductory classroom can be a site of FORMALOCENTRISM (i.e., the over-privileging of formal perspectives on linguistic structure at the expense of other ways of knowing; Itamar Francez, pers. comm., June 22, 2021), gatekeeping (Arnold 2024), and an especial alienation of racially minoritized students (Charity Hudley, Mallinson, and Bucholtz 2020). There has been laudable emphasis on how to design courses that better serve populations marginalized in linguistics and higher education more broadly, including African American (Calhoun et al. 2021), Indigenous (Gerdts 2017), and first-generation students (Mantenuto 2021).

Our work seeks to bring attention to heritage speakers in the introductory linguistics classroom as an additional group whose experiences and perspectives have been underappreciated. The term HERITAGE SPEAKER has been variably defined in the scholarly literature on heritage speech. We respectfully acknowledge the diverse ideologies and definitions of this term (see Benmamoun, Montrul, and Polinsky 2013a, 2013b; Meisel 2013; Muysken 2013, among others articles in the special issue of *Theoretical Linguistics* [Gärtner 2013] for a discussion of different attempts); however, for the purposes of this study, we take a maximally inclusive approach: we understand a heritage

speaker to be any speaker whose home language differs (or differed at some point) from the language of the wider community (with respect to our institutional contexts, English). Thus, we do not draw a distinction on the basis of birthplace, age of immigration, whether the home language is a majority language elsewhere in the world, or proficiency in the home language: we believe that our recommendations hold across these considerations.

It is crucial to emphasize that we do not mean to imply that the global population of heritage speakers is a monolith: heritage speakers can and do differ in terms of their acquisition, ideology, and goals with respect to their heritage language as well as the circumstances underlying the marginalization of the language. As a field, heritage linguistics has at times lumped together all young speakers of minoritized varieties in obfuscating ways: as two reviewers of this piece helpfully noted, there are significant linguistic and sociohistorical differences between heritage speakers of endangered Indigenous languages (who often do not have access to resources for learning the language or a wider community in which to use the language) and heritage speakers of languages that are majority languages elsewhere in the world. The stakes involved in using and learning a language in, for instance, a diaspora community that has voluntarily emigrated compared to an Indigenous community with a long history of linguistic repression can produce very different valuations of the language and different patterns of language maintenance. Differences in a speaker's relative proficiency in the heritage language versus English, as well as the typological distance between the speaker's languages, also have cognitive implications for how easy it is for a heritage speaker student to apply linguistic concepts to their two languages. As a result of the enormous variation among heritage speakers and their backgrounds, they enter a language or linguistics classroom with individual needs that may require evaluation on a case-by-case basis. The interventions we suggest below are intended to make the linguistics classroom a more welcoming environment for the sharing of students' intuitions about their heritage languages, with the ultimate goal of bolstering the appreciation of these varieties by heritage speakers and their communities (both at home and on campus).

This latter point—the enfranchisement of heritage speakers and their varieties—is our ultimate goal in writing this article. As linguists, we are uniquely qualified to assert that heritage speakers are not "bad speakers" who are simply speaking a "degraded" variety of their language or making mistakes. It is crucial to emphasize that heritage speakers make use of a variety that is different from the standard language or the language of their parents but that they do not produce utterances that violate linguistic universals. We demonstrate this to our students when we use the same linguistic concepts,

and even the same formal tools, to model phenomena in heritage languages. We consider this pedagogical practice to be particularly empowering for heritage speakers (in diaspora communities and Indigenous communities alike) who come from backgrounds where their linguistic ability (in the heritage language and in English) has been denigrated both by members of their own community and outsiders.

Many heritage speakers also feel a sense of alienation from their ethnic community as a result of real or perceived gaps in linguistic knowledge. Odango (2015) argues that the emotional ramifications of a lack of access to one's heritage (through language) are the same whether we are dealing with an endangered language or an immigrant language: "the mere fact that a heritage language of an immigrant diaspora such as Tagalog remains 'safe' because it is spoken by millions of other people does not lessen the impacts of language shift occurring in the generations of children in immigrant communities around the world, which include the corresponding effects on linguistic identity and self-esteem" (41). That is, even when the language does have a large speaker community somewhere in the world or extensive resources, such as textbooks and other media, it is not always practical for immigrant children to access these resources, and in many cases, they are actively discouraged from doing so. Heritage speakers who are supported in their language maintenance in the formal education system often face additional layers of pedagogical alienation if courses and resources are intended for a variety that is not spoken by the parents: immigrants from Vietnam and China typically speak Southern Vietnamese and non-Mandarin varieties, respectively, but many course materials are often specific to Northern Vietnamese and Mandarin. Two discourses that Kantarovich has encountered in conversations with both heritage speakers of majority languages (Russian and Lithuanian) and endangered Indigenous languages (Chukchi) are that young people are somehow responsible for "ruining" the language by introducing mistakes but that, by the same token, they should not bother learning their heritage language and should prioritize the learning of the dominant language or other global languages, which will be more useful in education or in the labor market. Both discourses serve to drive speakers away from their heritage language and make them highly self-conscious about how and when they choose to use it.

We feel compelled to write this article for several reasons. First, we ourselves are heritage speakers (of Russian and Vietnamese), and we believe that our non-normative experiences of language socialization piqued our interest in the structure and ecology of natural language and promoted the development of a unique sensitivity to the social implications of using different linguistic variants (and different languages) in different contexts. Heritage

speakers are bilinguals, and it has long been known that bilinguals have an advantage in the development of metalinguistic awareness when measured in terms of noticing, correcting, and explaining ungrammatical sentences (Galambos and Goldin-Meadow 1990). That heritage speakers exhibit special advantages in the language learning classroom is also well known, especially with respect to phonological maintenance (Brinton, Kagan, and Bauckus 2017; Randolph 2017; Chang et al. 2011). These observations that heritage speakers are skilled language learners with elevated metalinguistic awareness has not translated into an overt appreciation for their potential contributions in the linguistics classroom but has, curiously, garnered interest in their abilities from the federal government, feeding a troubling dynamic in which the maintenance by heritage speakers of so-called "critical need" languages is framed as a national security interest (Brecht and Rivers 2000).

Although there has been ample scholarly (and nonscholarly) interest in the language-learning capacities of heritage speakers, there has been far less interest in the LINGUISTICS-learning capacities of heritage speakers and less still in whether traditional, formalocentric approaches may be ill-suited for this population. We notice that, semester after semester, students who have a heritage language experience are disproportionately represented in the introductory linguistics classroom. This observation has held across a variety of institutional contexts: the authors initially taught linguistics at the University of Chicago, a private R1 in a major city, and are both presently at large R1 land-grant institutions with a greater proportion of in-state students (i.e., Ohio State University, located in a mid-sized city, and Pennsylvania State University, located in a more rural setting).[1] That is, we have found that even when we are teaching a class of mostly linguistics-unexposed students, we are STILL teaching a class of mostly language-reflective students. Furthermore, whereas outreach to racially minoritized students often involves explicitly making a case that linguistics can and should be a field that is welcoming and attractive to them, we find that heritage speakers, as a result of their unique experiences of language socialization, are often already predisposed to finding the themes and methodologies of linguistics to be inviting. Our focus in this article is therefore not on how to make the introductory classroom more attractive to heritage speakers but rather on how the introductory classroom can make use of their gifts and activate their prior knowledge in a way that benefits all students. Note that we take an intersectional perspective (Crenshaw 1991) on these identities: many students will have experiences of both racial minoritization AND heritage language socialization, and we see this work as complementing prior efforts to attend to broader issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the linguistics classroom.

We caution the reader that we need not transform Introduction to Linguistics into Introduction to Heritage Languages and Linguistics, which we

believe ought to stand on its own as an upper-level undergraduate elective or a graduate-level seminar. Rather, we propose two sets of interventions: one on the level of course content and assessment and one on the level of reframing one's views of the goals of introductory linguistics. Specifically, we propose that instructors reserve some time, perhaps one or two weeks, to discuss bi- and multilingualism in a manner that explicitly includes heritage speaker perspectives. For many instructors, bi- and multilingualism is already a core topic that is given equal prominence to the "traditional" (perhaps from a formalocentric standpoint) six subfields—phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. But for many others, it is something that gets left by the wayside or is taught in such a way that excludes the heritage speaker experience. We note that many introductory textbooks (e.g., Finegan 2014; Dawson, Hernandez, and Shain 2022; Yule 2023) typically treat bi- and multilingualism as a subunit of either language acquisition or language contact and address themselves to a White listening subject (Nelson and Flores 2015) who is imagined to hold skeptical or stigmatizing ideologies of bi- and multilingualism. Although this myth-busting stance is admirable in intention and effective in many instructional contexts, it does not meet the needs of heritage speakers, who are rarely impressed by LING 100-tier factlets such as "Most of the world is bilingual" and "Bilinguals may exhibit transfer effects between their two languages." Based on our teaching and learning experiences in a diverse variety of institutional contexts, we know that heritage speakers have been exposed to different myths, and we argue that direct discussion of issues that concern this population comes with huge gains for the entire classroom.

The structure of this article is as follows. We begin with a brief quantitative overview of the demographics of heritage speakers in the United States, showing that the presence of heritage speakers in the university classroom is indeed on the rise. Then we introduce the asset-based pedagogies that undergird our approach to educating heritage speakers. On the basis of these theoretical approaches, we then provide concrete interventions: first, with respect to structuring course content and developing models of assessment, and second, with respect to adjusting the general mode of instruction by problematizing the ultimate attainment of the monolingual, literate, and linguistically stable speaker.

HERITAGE SPEAKERS IN THE UNITED STATES. Although the U.S. Census Bureau does not track statistics on heritage speakers as such, it has estimated the home language of the entire population 5 years and older every 10 years starting in 1890. From 2005 onward, this metric has been estimated yearly using the American Community Survey (ACS). In 2022, 21.7% of respondents reported speaking a language other than English at home, of whom

11.8 million were minors (5–17 years old). This can be taken as a rough estimate of the youth heritage speaker population among ACS respondents. Figure 1 demonstrates that although the youth numbers fluctuate somewhat from year to year, the number of heritage speakers surveyed in the United States increases over time.

The number of individuals between 5–17 years of age who were reported to speak a language other than English at home in 2022 represented, at that time, 21.7% of the total population in that age range surveyed by the U.S. Census. This number has not fluctuated much over the past decade despite regular changes to immigration policy under different administrations, and we have no reason to assume the number will drop in the coming years.

The U.S. Census data further demonstrate that individuals who reported a home language other than or in addition to English are roughly equally likely to attain advanced degrees, despite their early nonnormative language experience. In 2022, of monolinguals aged 25 and older, an estimated 35.2% reported having a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with an estimated 31.3% of those reporting a home language other than English (U.S. Census Bureau 2010–22, table S1603). In terms of raw numbers, this corresponds to 62.5 million monolingual English speakers over 25 with advanced degrees versus 15.3 million bi- or multilingual speakers—or, to put this in perspective, roughly one in four students in a four-year college or university are heritage speakers or recent immigrants.

FIGURE 1
Heritage Speaker Population in the United States
(based on 5-year ACS estimates from U.S. Census Bureau 2010–22)

NOTE: Percentages indicate the proportion of the total population in that age group.
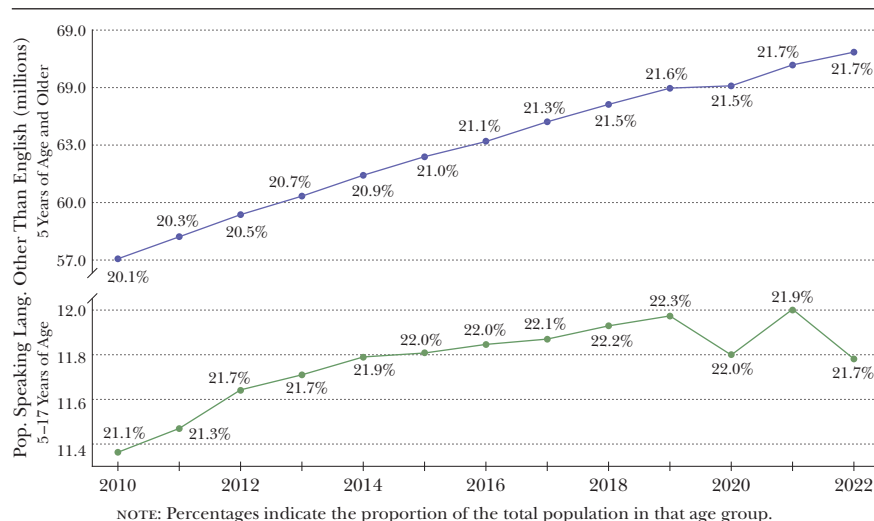
The ACS estimates the languages spoken by heritage speakers only at a limited level of granularity: for instance, in 2022, an estimated 41.4 million respondents reported speaking Spanish at home; 11.7 million speaking "other Indo-European languages"; 11.0 million speaking "Asian and Pacific Island languages"; and 3.7 million speaking "other languages" (U.S. Census Bureau 2022). For a low-resolution picture of the diversity of the languages spoken by heritage speakers, it is possible to use data on English learners in the public school system, provided in table 1. Note that these figures massively undercount the number of heritage speakers, as they exclude those heritage speakers who are judged as not needing access to English language assistance programs as well as those who are outside of the public school system.

Regrettably, no regular survey exists to track the home languages of the college-going population nor the linguistics-studying population, but we can extrapolate from the above estimates that heritage speakers represent a stable demographic, making up roughly 22% of the college-going population, not counting individuals who enter a 4-year institution but fail to graduate. Of course, the proportion of heritage speaker students to monolingual students will vary from institution to institution (with more bilingualism in urban areas and major flagship institutions); we understand that some readers may teach at institutions where heritage speakers are NOT overrepresented in their introductory linguistics classrooms. Nevertheless, to the extent that reckon-

TABLE 1

Number of English Learner Students in Public Schools, Fall 2020
(National Center for Education Statistics 2022)

Home Language	Number of English Learners in Public Schools
Spanish, Castilian	3,745,460
Arabic (all varieties)	128,641
Chinese (all varieties)	93,339
Vietnamese	73,075
Portuguese	43,426
Russian	37,159
Haitian, Haitian Creole	30,063
Hmong	28,719
Urdu	25,192
Korean	22,816
French	22,383
Swahili	21,054
Somali	20,547
Tagalog	20,231
TOTAL	4,963,388

ing with linguistic and cultural diversity is a learning goal of the introductory linguistics classroom, we argue that heritage speaker–centered content is relevant for ALL protolinguists. Although heritage speakers are not universally considered to be a special class of bilinguals displaying unique cognitive or linguistic characteristics that set them apart from any other speaker (see again the debate in the 2013 special issue of *Theoretical Linguistics* [Gärtner 2013]), the discussion surrounding heritage speakers and heritage linguistics lies at the intersection of several interesting themes that are not necessarily prioritized in an introductory linguistics classroom. These themes include multilingual language use, language policy and ideology, and indexicality (Silverstein 2003), all of which will serve to promote introspection even by the idealized, nonracialized monolingual speaker, who also embodies competing identities that are expressed and negotiated through language.

DEFICIT VERSUS ASSET-BASED PEDAGOGIES. For many linguists, the introductory course is seen as a site to dispel "commonly held, yet basically wrong-headed, views about language" (Spring et al. 2000, 110). Behrens (2012) has argued that every professor should "enroll in a crash course in Linguistics 101," so that they are able to rethink any negative ideologies that they might hold about language variation and change and to challenge their own conceptions of "good English." We are by and large sympathetic to this mission, given linguists' uphill battle to be taken by the wider public as authorities on language in a sociopolitical context in which laypeople's negative language ideologies aggravate the maldistribution of life chances (Baugh 2016). At the same time, we caution that certain attempts to carry out this mission may unintentionally enact a deficit-based pedagogy (Green and Haines 2015) that centers the instructor's expectations of what students lack.

We find deficit-based approaches to be ill-suited for a heritage speaker–inclusive introductory linguistics classroom for multiple reasons. First, we begin by acknowledging the diversity internal to the category of HERITAGE SPEAKER: heritage speakers can have variable strengths in different domains. A necessarily partial typology appears below. With respect to the heritage language, a heritage speaker may be one or several of the following:

1. highly proficient and literate
2. highly proficient with limited or no literacy
3. highly proficient in circumscribed domains of use (e.g., family, church, music, ceremonial contexts)
4. highly proficient in colloquial and familiar registers but not in formal and academic registers
5. highly proficient in comprehension and limited in production (receptive bilingualism)

6. a user of a nonmainstream variety
7. a user of an endangered variety
8. invested in maintaining and improving their skills
9. not invested in maintaining and improving their skills
10. sustaining regular and positive ties to the heritage community
11. sustaining limited and/or fraught ties to the heritage community
12. racialized as a member of a dominant group
13. racialized as a member of a marginalized group

We expect—and have observed—heritage speakers to join the introductory linguistics classroom with lived experience, not always positive, of binaries and tensions typically raised in early weeks: descriptivism versus prescriptivism, speech versus writing, competence versus performance, grammaticality versus ungrammaticality, and so on. More importantly, heritage speakers often have unique perspectives on themes that can go underdiscussed in an introductory class: language and racialization, language shift and endangerment, language and education, and language and culture. Even when we are encouraged by the institutional context to prepare formalocentric syllabi, we find that our heritage speaker students push us to consider language as an embodied phenomenon imbricated in a communal context in such a way that the entire class benefits. Our heritage speaker students are not surprised by multilingualism or linguistic prejudice and discrimination. Many of them have been targeted by negative ideologies from parents, teachers, or peers, as in the following narrative from a Turkish heritage speaker describing their experience in an American classroom:

I was foreign, and no one knew Turkish, so I would go to school, and I remember I would call certain things like maybe water "su" like the language you know, the other word for it, and people would be like 'what are you speaking?'. They would make fun of me for being different, and being from Turkey, guble-guble. [Kelly, a 19-year-old woman interviewed for Yilmaz (2016, 194)]

Flores and Rosa (2015) argue that heritage speakers, along with long-term English learners and Standard English learners, are positioned as raciolinguistic "others" from the perspective of the White listening subject, an elaboration of the White and oppositional gazes (hooks 2003), themselves elaborations of the male gaze (Mulvey 1975). Although Flores and Rosa focus on the manner in which the White listening subject produces hierarchies of linguistic moral value in the secondary school context, Arnold (2024) addresses how the perspective of the White listening subject is hegemonized in undergraduate linguistics education, leading instructors to place undue classroom emphasis on misconceptions; we argue that heritage speakers, particularly racially minoritized ones, are unlikely to hold these misconceptions.

For a concrete example, consider that Truong always devotes at least two weeks of a 15-week Introduction to Linguistics course to the study of signed languages. In the past, he has begun this unit in the exact same way that it was taught to him, by dispelling common misconceptions about signed language—where "common" is evaluated from the perspective of the audiocentric subject. Students are taught that "Signed languages are full-fledged languages, not pantomime," "There is not a single sign language," and "American Sign Language has its own grammar, and its signs are not intended to be equivalents to or translations of English words." Hearteningly, with each passing year, fewer and fewer students report even having heard of these misconceptions, let alone subscribing to them. Crucially, this framing is incredibly patronizing to Deaf students, hearing students who have studied ASL, and, most importantly, students who are children of a Deaf adult (CODAs). Although they are not often positioned as such in the literature, as people who use a different language in the home from what is used in the wider community, English-dominant CODAs are indeed heritage speakers (Chen, Lillo-Martin, and Palmer 2018)! We were therefore led to ask, what would an ASSET-BASED PEDAGOGY that prioritizes the perspectives of CODAs and other signed-exposed students OVER an imagined audiocentric subject look like?

Asset-based pedagogy is an umbrella term that describes a number of distinct teaching practices and philosophies that are united in viewing students' diverse positionalities with respect to gender, sexuality, race, class, culture, immigration status, religion, and other valences as resources to nurture and not incidentals to ignore or problems to overcome. Theories under this umbrella include Funds of Knowledge (Moll et al. 1992) and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP; Paris and Alim 2017). Sociocultural linguists have long applied asset-based approaches to the teaching of linguistics, often in community-based contexts (e.g., Bucholtz, Casillas, and Lee 2017; Rosa and Flores 2017). CSP interventions are not merely intended to facilitate content delivery but also to promote sociolinguistic justice and empower students to challenge hegemonic language ideologies and institutional structures. The themes and emphases of CSP also empower us as early-career scholars to problematize how introductory linguistics has been taught and how heritage speakers have been decentered in formalocentric approaches.

We stress that we do not wish to argue that formalocentric approaches should be done away with entirely or that heritage speakers and their presence in our classrooms pose an inherent problem for formalist concepts. We also do not advocate for eliminating the teaching of linguistic structure, which we believe to be necessary for pursuing sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic questions that may be of more immediate interest to heritage speakers. We

both regularly teach formalocentric courses on linguistic theory and introduce formal concepts in their Introduction to Linguistics classes. Rather, our proposal is to adjust the EMPHASIS that is placed on formal approaches as representative of the study of linguistics as a whole. We also do not wish to insinuate that speakers of heritage languages or minoritized varieties lack the ability to engage with formalist frameworks or other kinds of linguistic theory—on the contrary, their greater metalinguistic awareness may actually facilitate easier identification of linguistic structure and patterns across data from different languages.

Another of our goals is to problematize the emphasis many formalist (and experimental) studies place on certain linguistic varieties and certain kinds of speakers. Study designs often call for monolingual speakers of a language unless they are explicitly investigating bilingualism; many formalist approaches also avoid dealing with linguistic variation in ways that can feel exclusionary to speakers who do not fit this mold and unintentionally leave them with the impression that they are deficient speakers of their language(s). Instead, we propose that the praxis of asset-based pedagogy be integrated with formalocentric material wherever possible: instructors can bring attention to the fact that heritage speakers' varieties are highly systematic and subject to the same constraints that we are trying to model in monolingual varieties. Heritage languages and the kinds of linguistic behaviors associated with heritage speakers and other bilinguals—such as code-switching—can be felicitously introduced while teaching formal concepts. Some resources on formal models of code-switching include Sankoff and Poplack (1981), Woolford (1983), Di Sciullo, Muysken, and Singh (1986), Belazi, Rubin, and Toribio (1994), MacSwan (1999, 2005, 2014), Jake, Myers-Scotton, and Gross (2002), Liceras, Spradlin, and Fernández Fuertes (2005), and López (2020), to name just a few. There is also a growing appreciation in the field of the ways that heritage speakers' systems can contribute to our understanding of universals in language structure, including within generativist frameworks (see Bousquette and Brown 2018 and the articles contained; Polinsky and Putnam, forthcoming).[2]

Nevertheless, it has been our experience that heritage speaker students are more interested in questions of cognition and language use in bilingual communities; thus, they tend to gravitate more toward sociolinguistics, bilingualism and language contact, acquisition, and psycholinguistics as preferred areas of study. Introducing these subfields as core research areas in linguistics—on a par with formal or functionalist approaches to phonology, syntax, semantics, and so on—can go a long way toward welcoming heritage speaker students into the field.

INTERVENTIONS AND RESULTS. Thus far, we have shown that heritage speakers are present in significant numbers in our country and our introductory linguistics courses. We have suggested that an asset-based perspective that is skeptical of formalocentrism is the best way to nurture these students' gifts. In this section, we will share a selection of interventions and anti-interventions that we have carried out in order to decenter the monolingual, literate, and linguistically stable subject. Where possible, we will include student comments or our own reflections on the effectiveness of the intervention.

Intake Surveys. Many linguistics instructors begin class by surveying the language backgrounds of the students enrolled and resolving to create course content and assignments that include those languages. Other questions that are asked in these surveys include "Why did you take this class?" and "What are you hoping to get out of this class?" Intake surveys present an opportunity to identify the diverse social and ethnic backgrounds of our students and tailor course content to their interests. Indeed, it was through such surveys that we realized that heritage speakers were overrepresented in our courses, and survey questions can be framed in ways that target the presence of heritage speakers (and their backgrounds and goals with respect to their language) directly. From the student's perspective, teaching linguistic phenomena in the context of languages that are well known (or personally important) to the student promotes synthesis, retention, and student investment. From our perspective, we thought that we were just getting to know our students better. However, once we were able to share and discuss the results of our intake surveys semester after semester, we started to see patterns, which ultimately drove us to author this article. We were able to see firsthand how the solicitation and careful consideration of student input can directly feed the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Many instructors also ask, "What languages do you speak/what languages have you studied?" in an effort to gauge the students' experiences with language learning and exposure to languages other than English. Some instructors will (auspiciously, in our view) rely on students with knowledge of different languages as the resident "experts" in those languages throughout the term, soliciting their knowledge of linguistic facts and judgments about linguistic data and thereby creating an environment for active learning. At the same time, this may be another intervention that unintentionally centers the nonminoritized language learner, who is rewarded for studying a language other than English even when a heritage speaker of that same language is regarded as languageless (Rosa 2016, 2019).

Thus, we want to add a note of caution for those who expect that a student who reveals herself to be a heritage speaker of Spanish should be able

to produce Spanish data and judgments on the fly in class. Many heritage speakers, including highly proficient ones, have survived a lifetime of deficit-based ideologies about their language use before arriving in your classroom. Even students who are able to produce the desired forms and judgments are often doing so tentatively and anxiously. It is imperative that the results of the intake survey not be used to put the student in anxiogenic situations. Heritage speakers ARE native speakers, but we are native speakers with unconventional acquisition backgrounds (Polinsky 2018) whose knowledge is not necessarily best probed by rapid-fire production or judgment tasks. Kantarovich, who now uses Russian professionally on a regular basis, has found that she still requires a period of acclimation to a majority Russian-speaking context, such as her field sites, before she is able to speak fluidly—the so-called "switch" between codes is far from automatic. Growing up, Truong was very nervous to speak in Vietnamese to native speakers because his parents spoke different dialects of the language, and the variety that he acquired was an intermediate form that had further diverged and thus was often an object of censure and correction by others. In linguistics classrooms, there was nothing he dreaded more than being asked to generate sentences or provide judgments in Viet-namese OR English. In an undergraduate syntax class, when he accepted a topicalized sentence that no one else in the class did, he was dismissively told that it must be transfer from his heritage language. In this case, we see an instance of the ideology of languagelessness—the notion that bilinguals, especially those in the U.S. institutional context, lack native proficiency in any language—flourishing in an undergraduate linguistic classroom despite the fact that the linguistics education of everyone in the room likely opened with the assertion that linguists do not practice prescriptivism.

Heritage speakers are often framed as being unskilled or clumsy in the heritage language, often by older family members or even language instruc-tors when they attempt to maintain their language in the education system. Depending on their experiences of racialization and language socialization, they may not be viewed as legitimate speakers of the language of wider com-munication (or legitimate arbiters of its usage). The introductory linguistics classroom may be one of the very few contexts in which they can be exposed to counter-hegemonic perspectives that challenge the manner in which heritage speakers are positioned as deficient and languageless. Nonheritage speakers do not sit by idly as this happens: rather, they are invited to unpack why mainstream upper-middle-class society valorizes bilingualism while devaluing the knowledge of heritage speakers. The ambivalence toward multilingualism is well known to linguists but often goes underdiscussed in a formalocentric introductory class: although in a vacuum, a trilingual person would be assumed by a layperson to be educated, intelligent, and urbane,

Rickford and King (2016) describe in great detail how Rachel Jeantel, trilingual in English, Spanish, and Haitian, is devalued and disrespected at every turn and accused of not even being able to speak English at all: "RJ can not even speak English […] she speaks Haitian hood rat" (edteach, comment on social media; quoted in Subtirelu 2013).

Normalizing and Complicating Multilingualism. Although heritage speakers often do not need to be told that bi- and multilingualism are normal in a cross-cultural and transhistorical perspective, many of them do benefit from learning that bilinguals are not two monolinguals in one person. We recommend impressing upon students that heritage speakers are bilinguals and heritage speakers are native speakers. (We note that there may even be linguists who chafe at this formulation.) As we have stated above, bilingualism in an introductory classroom is usually discussed in the context of language acquisition or language contact. At the same time, sociolinguistics in an introductory classroom is usually discussed in terms of first-wave perspectives as applied to monolingual communities. We propose to feed two birds with one scone by encouraging students to use a raciolinguistic perspective to deconstruct the prevailing ideologies of differential bilingual worth: that is, a "real bilingual" must lack an accent that is positioned as foreign in both languages, must be able to freely translate between both languages, must command the prestige variety of both languages, must not code-switch, and so on.

Although your student body and institutional contexts may vary, we find that once a critical mass of heritage speakers is achieved, students often raise these topics on their own and are often much more animated engaging with these than with formalocentric tasks.

It is also important to note that heritage speakers' varieties are not merely conditioned by mistakes or failed attempts to approximate a feature used by "native" speakers: there is a growing body of research that shows that heritage speakers' language is systematic, and they can also use their language in innovative ways (Giancaspro and Sánchez 2021; Kantarovich 2022; Kupisch and Polinsky 2022; Fridman and Meir 2023) and in service of sociolinguistic goals such as identity construction (see, e.g., Stanford and Preston's 2009 edited volume on variation in Indigenous languages and Rodríguez-Ordóñez 2021 on how social meaning conditions variation among new speakers of Basque).

Engaging with multilingual grammars and code-mixed speech as "real" grammatical data that can be analyzed for the same kinds of phonological, morphosyntactic, and semantic patterns we find in monolingual systems is another important intervention that can normalize multilingualism in the linguistics classroom. We echo previous calls to diversify the kinds of linguistic data that are used to illustrate linguistic phenomena in lectures and problem

sets (Sanders, Umbal, and Konnelly 2020; Calhoun et al. 2021). Typically, multilingual data and data from contact varieties appear only in lectures on bilingualism or language contact, where they are presented as genealogical aberrations—as a result, the fact that creoles and mixed languages are full-fledged languages with complete expressive capacity (and that non-creole languages like English have also been immensely influenced by language contact) can be overlooked by students entirely. We encourage instructors to source at least some linguistic examples from these varieties and from code-mixed speech.[3] There is a newly available resource to facilitate the normalization of creoles in linguistics teaching: the MULTI Project, which includes pedagogical materials and other suggested interventions to teach about creoles beyond the "language contact unit." Burgess et al. (2024 [this issue]) discuss this resource and the impetus for its creation in greater depth.

Centering heritage speaker perspectives does not mean that we should never take heritage speakers out of their comfort zone. It also does not mean devaluing the input and perspectives of monolingual English speakers. There are two topics that we have found to be deeply engaging to both groups and that achieve our goal of presenting a more nuanced picture of bilingualism. The first was discussed above: presenting CODAs as heritage speakers. Signed languages, if they are discussed at all in an introductory class, are often taught as an appendix to the phonology unit ("Handshape, orientation, movement, location, nonmanual markers—now back to spoken languages for the rest of the semester!"). The second is Heritage English: many students do not know that Heritage English speakers exist, as the heritage language discourse in the United States typically centers speakers for whom English is dominant and the other language, usually Spanish, is attriting. Students have consistently responded positively to analytical, transcription, and comprehension exercises that use Heritage English.

Okay, everybody always thought like I grown up in States, but actually no … I was born in States, and when I four I moved back to Thailand with parents and I grown up in Thailand … So I definitely am Thai. Everything, the culture, everything Thai. But I also know also American culture also because part of my family's also in LA … So I learn language and, you know, how, maybe you can tell from my speak … But I think it's great to know both of culture and, you know, adjust in your life and bring all the good stuff on each culture to improve your life and make your life happy. So I think that's a very good to learn for both culture, yeah. [Tamarine Tamasugarn, YouTube interview, 2009; quoted in Polinsky 2018, 40]

Divergent over Convergent Assessment. We have argued that centering heritage speaker perspectives improves the learning environment for all students, not the least because it puts the instructor in a frame of mind that acknowledges and celebrates student difference. In this regard, we recommend against

assignments that center English, especially those that require esoteric knowl-
edge of English vocabulary or that otherwise presuppose a certain degree or
kind of English acquisition. We recognize that this contradicts other course
design philosophies within linguistics that argue that centering English can
be an inclusion-promoting practice, as deluging protolinguists with data
from less commonly taught, endangered, or genealogically distant languages
could alienate them from the field. One way of managing this tension would
be to provide students with as many choices as possible on assignments (i.e.,
students can choose to answer a problem about English or another language).
Although optionality means more preparatory work for the instructor, to the
extent that we are responsive to the prior knowledge reported in the intake
survey, our students will feel more heard.

Guest Speakers. We understand that many of our readers are not heritage
speakers, do not have a scholarly interest in heritage languages, and may be in
an institutional context unlike ours and do not have many heritage speakers
in their courses. Course redesign, especially of a polished course, can seem
onerous amid the constant proliferation of recommendations from a variety
of stakeholders. It is perhaps for this reason that the small-teaching scale
(Lang 2016) has become popular: this approach acknowledges that most
instructors do not have the time to completely overhaul a course and instead
recommends incremental changes (changing a few assignments, adding a
lecture on a particular topic, adding one or two more inclusive readings) as
a more sustainable intervention (see Bjorndahl et al. 2024 [this issue]). Our
overall recommendation to increase the attention paid to heritage speakers
can also be introduced incrementally and without a major syllabus redesign.
One way to do this that we have found to be low-effort and high-reward is
by inviting guest speakers. In spring 2022, Truong invited Kantarovich to
give a Zoom talk to his mostly formalocentric offering of Introduction to
Linguistics about her experimental work with heritage speakers of circum-
polar languages. (Centering heritage speaker perspectives also turns out to
be an easy way to expose students to diverse experimental methodologies
that would otherwise rarely feature in introductory courses.) Sample student
evaluations follow:

> This talk really opened my eyes to cultures that I had never heard of before and
> really made me appreciate how much they celebrate their heritage through
> culture and language.

> I thought that this zoom was so interesting and was a great experience

> I was able to attend Dr. Kantarovich's lecture on November 17th. I found it very
> insightful and exciting. Learning about her work in the field and studying almost
> extinct languages seemed fascinating.

My mom spoke Hungarian to me, and although I understand it, I can't really speak it back to her. I never thought it was a big deal, but listening to Dr. Kantarovich's experiences with Arctic peoples helped me understand why language is so important.

CONCLUSION. Our goal in this article has been to demonstrate that heritage speakers represent a substantial population in the introductory linguistics classroom, a group whose potential has been underutilized and whose needs are not being met through the typical instruction mode that privileges the linguistically naive monolingual student. This archetype is no longer the norm in our classrooms: our students are often not monolingual, and even monolingual students are increasingly more metalinguistically aware and far more attendant to dialectal diversity. Our recommended interventions need not upend a typical Introduction to Linguistics syllabus, with its focus on the major linguistic subdivisions of phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Our skepticism of formalocentrism is not a condemnation of instruction in formal approaches to natural language or notions of grammatical acceptability and structure. Rather, we hope that instructors will challenge their own assumptions about who is in their classroom and what their preconceived notions about language are and that they will draw on heritage linguistics as a way to introduce all students to linguistic diversity, issues of language and identity, and the inherent messiness of language in the real world.

NOTES

1. We acknowledge that some readers may be at institutions with a different population of students—perhaps only monolingual students from homogenous socioeconomic or regional backgrounds. As we argue below, it can still be productive to encourage these students to share their knowledge of features of their dialects or dialects to which they have been exposed, which may have also been disparaged in the name of education in standard English.

2. As another example: at the time of writing, the IKER Euskara eta euskal testuen ikerketa zentroa (Research Centre for Basque Language and Texts), a joint research unit administered by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), the Université Bordeaux Montaigne, and the Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour, is accepting abstracts for a workshop on "Formal Approaches to Minority, Minoritized or Less Studied Languages in Contact Situations," to be held June 5, 2024 (https://iker.cnrs.fr/famc/?lang=en).

3. We acknowledge that instructors may feel like they are performing a delicate balancing act in attempting to diversify their lectures and problem sets in response to the many calls prioritizing the interests of different groups. We also acknowledge that English is, by design, the common language of all students in

the classroom, and as such is extremely useful for illustrating core concepts. We suggest that instructors use the intake surveys to balance different considerations aimed at promoting diverse linguistic representation according to what will be of interest to the students in each iteration of their course.

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JESSICA KANTAROVICH is an assistant professor at the Ohio State University in the Department of Linguistics. She is a field-worker who specializes in language variation and change in situations of multilingualism, especially among minoritized speakers of Indigenous languages of the Arctic. She has also worked on nonstandard varieties of Russian (in Alaska and Ukraine) and Heritage Lithuanian. Email: kantarovich.3@osu.edu.

TRAN TRUONG is an assistant teaching professor at the Pennsylvania State University. He works on the morphosyntax of honorification in Japanese from a realizational perspective. He has taught introductory-level courses in linguistics, syntax, and historical linguistics and is deeply invested in the scholarship of teaching and learning in these subfields. Email: tpt5331@psu.edu.

THE MULTI PROJECT: RESOURCES FOR ENHANCING MULTIFACETED CREOLE LANGUAGE EXPERTISE IN THE LINGUISTICS CLASSROOM

DANIELLE BURGESS, *Independent Researcher*
JOY P. G. PELTIER, *University of South Carolina*
SOPHIA EAKINS, *University of Michigan*
WILKINSON DANIEL WONG GONZALES, *The Chinese University of Hong Kong*
ALICIA STEVERS, *San Diego State University*
ARIANA BANCU, *Independent Researcher*
FELICIA BISNATH, *University of Michigan*
MOIRA SALTZMAN, *University of Michigan*
MARLYSE BAPTISTA, *University of Pennsylvania*

How can linguists actively rectify the ways Creoles[1] are introduced, discussed, and represented in the linguistics classroom? Historically, linguistics teaching and research have separated Creoles from other language varieties. This can be found in the theoretical perspectives that are assumed and promoted, namely CREOLE EXCEPTIONALISM (DeGraff 2003, 2005), and in the curricular separation of Creoles from other languages. For instance, Creoles are often limited to singular units in linguistics courses and textbooks, such as sections on language contact (e.g., Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams 2013) or language acquisition under supposedly "unusual" circumstances (e.g., Jackendoff 1994). However, linguists increasingly see the need to reimagine their pedagogical approach to Creoles and other minoritized languages: