

**ATTITUDES OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN TOWARD MAINTAINING THEIR
HERITAGE LANGUAGE**

by

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CERTIFICATION OF THESIS/CAPSTONE PROJECT WORK

We, the undersigned, certify that this project entitled ATTITUDES OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN TOWARD MAINTAINING THEIR HERITAGE LANGUAGE by ASHLEY LAROTONDA, Candidate for the Degree of Master of Science in Education, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), is acceptable in form and content and demonstrates a satisfactory knowledge of the field covered by this project.



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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of refugee parents and children in terms of maintaining the heritage language (HL) in an environment that is ethnically dominant in a different culture. A qualitative research design consisting of interviews was used to examine how refugee parents and children felt about keeping their HL, and also culture. The languages in this research include Nepali, Burmese, Karen, and Chin. The researcher interviewed parents and children about HL maintenance. The parents that were interviewed were newcomers (living in the United States for less than four years), and not newcomers (living in the United States for more than four years). The purpose of this research was to understand why refugee parents and children have negative or positive attitudes on the topic of maintaining HL. The researcher used Fishman's (1990, 1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale for Threatened Languages as a framework to describe how likely it is that populations can maintain their language. Results of this research state that HL maintenance was an occurrence in both newcomer and not newcomer families. All children and parents that were interviewed in this research had positive attitudes toward maintaining their HL. This research concludes with recommendations on how schools can maintain HL. The researcher recommended having a culturally relevant classroom, and using translanguaging as an instructional strategy. Another recommendation included how cities, such as Buffalo, can maintain HLs. A recommendation is to create a widespread message of acceptance toward HLs in public schools.

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Introduction

Problem

The problem addressed in this research was whether families maintain the heritage language (HL), and why they chose to pass the language and culture down to their children.

HL refers to an indigenous, immigrant, or ancestral language that a person aspires to connect or reconnect with (Wiley, 2005). Fishman (2006a) addressed one reason why parents may not be passing down the HL. He explained it is because the language might be associated with factors the parents deem as unfavorable in society, such as poverty or lack of education. Parents may feel that they do not want to subject their children to identity problems that they went through themselves. However, some children expressed sadness that they were not taught the language, causing them to not feel like a legitimate member of the ethnic group (Lee, 2009). On the other hand, there are explanations why a parent chooses to pass down the HL. One of these reasons includes family communication with grandparents (Hashimoto & Lee, 2011). HL is a crucial part of identity, and can be an important characteristic of keeping the culture (Brown, 2011). There are many factors when considering this problem, such as identity and family relations. Conducting research on this topic will help the researcher better understand attitudes toward HL maintenance, whether they are positive or negative, and why they occur.

Purpose

The purpose of this research study was to understand why refugee parents and children have negative or positive attitudes on the topic of maintaining HL. This study allowed the researcher to learn more about how HL speakers sustain their language, or pass it down in a dominant English-speaking environment of Buffalo, New York. Interview questions were

specifically designed for parents and children to elicit responses on how they felt about maintaining their HL. Additionally, this research was executed to give suggestions on how HLs can be maintained, as well as how to keep culture and language strong in the community.

Significance

HLs serve many purposes in the world. Crystal (2002) stated reasons for why HLs are important. First, we need diversity. In terms of an ecosystem, we need diversity, or different HLs for a species, humans, to survive. Ecosystems are strongest when they have diversity. Second, HLs are important because languages express identity. Everybody is concerned about his or her identity. Languages are a way to preserve stories, and also words, therefore affecting a person's identity. It is the foremost symbol of a person's identity. Third, languages are repositories of history. Languages show the history of nations. A language, including the grammar and lexicon of texts, contains the history of the person who speaks it. Fourth, languages contribute to the sum of human knowledge. Learning a new language is beneficial in terms of knowledge and enjoyment. Not only is language learning an advantage to knowledge growth of a human, but it is also an enjoyable way to understand other cultures. Finally, languages are interesting in themselves. Languages are unique from each other and have different structures from other languages. They can be used in different ways and to express ideas that might not be available in other languages (Crystal, 2002). Fishman (2000) also agreed that HLs are important to maintain because they often are the only way to express culture-specific religious beliefs, literature, and interpersonal interactions. Without these activities in the HL, they lose their meaning.

This research in particular is significant because it helps understand what services can be implemented within a specific refugee resettlement city to foster cultural and language

maintenance. By investigating the attitudes of HL kept by parents and children about language maintenance and success, it also gives researchers a glimpse into how speakers of HLs feel about living in a society that is not dominant in their culture or language.

As a society, it is beneficial to keep HLs alive. It is of benefit to learn how families of these various cultures feel about their HL because they are in control of the spread of their own language and culture when they come to a new country. By understanding more about attitudes on passing down languages, the research might be able to learn how to better serve the needs of people who desire to sustain their HL.

Literature Review

Why Do We Maintain Heritage Languages?

Maintaining a Heritage Language (HL) is a way that people are able to keep in touch with their ethnic identity. Maintaining a HL is also a way for immigrants to sustain the culture from their home country while living within the United States. By speaking this language, sometimes it can link the family together and aid in passing the culture down. Families sometimes feel that their HL is whom they are, and it can help to define their identities. Speaking this language within the family sometimes is a bond that holds the family together. Families often associate HL with maintaining culture (Brown, 2011). Since HLs are closely tied with ethnic culture, speaking the HL might allow a person to better understand their identity as well as where their family came from. Frequently, people feel as though knowing their HL will make them feel more validated in their HL community. There are also instances where people showed sadness for not being able to deeply connect with their parents or relatives who speak the HL (Shin, 2010). Since there are many ways to describe additional languages, the following section highlights some more common terms and helps to clarify these terms before the literature is reviewed.

Ways to Describe Languages Other Than English (in the United States)

Table 1

Ways to Describe Languages Other Than English (in the United States)

Term	Definition	Citation
Heritage	“The heritage language label is used to refer to immigrant, refugee, and Indigenous languages, as well as former colonial languages; nevertheless, there is no consensus that it can be used as a one-size-fits-all brand” (p. 595).	Wiley, 2005

Table 1 Continued

	<p>A HL can be described as a language other than English that is spoken or understood to a degree at home.</p> <p>The author chooses to refer to the term “heritage language” (HL) and will do so throughout the research.</p>	<p>Wright, 2010</p>
Indigenous	<p>The word Indigenous is used to refer to the ancestry of the original inhabitants of land that is now owned by either the United States or Canada. These people can be traced back to the land through their traditions.</p> <p>There are two categories of HL learners within this community. The first one includes children who will learn the dominant language at school as a second language because they are already monolingual in the Indigenous language from home. The second, and most common include children who are monolingual in the dominant language, or bilingual in the dominant language and the Indigenous language. However, monolingualism in the Indigenous language has decreased tremendously. This last group is responsible for choosing the option of having a language revitalization program, with the decision from the school and community.</p>	<p>McCarty & Nicolas, 2014</p> <p>Francis & Reyhner, 2002</p>
Community	<p>A community language is a HL, however this term is mostly used in Australia and some European countries.</p>	<p>Wright, 2010</p>
Native	<p>A child’s first language that is naturally learnt without any training. Learning this language is a natural process and it can be used to learn a second language.</p> <p>The Native language is spoken during early childhood. Alternative words include first language (L1), mother tongue and primary language. These terms have slight differences; however, due to the nature of this research, they will be used interchangeably.</p>	<p>Patel & Jain, 2008</p> <p>Saville-Troike, 2012</p>
Foreign	<p>A foreign language is a language that is utilized by people in another society or country.</p>	<p>Patel & Jain, 2008</p>

Social Opinions on Language Survival

Language survival, or whether or not a language can be sustained, can hold different viewpoints by people. Williams (1991) described three different viewpoints that people have on

language survival. First, an evolutionist would agree that languages always adapt to their surroundings. This idea focuses on the complex processes that languages go through, rather than the strongest language surviving, or survival of the fittest. Conservationists, on the other hand, believe that languages should be kept safe, and the speakers should be recognized regardless of the power that the language has. However, a language that is less utilized should be given particular attention. Conservationists place special value on the importance of living in a multilingual society, rather than allowing languages to be replaced. Believers of this view find strong importance in the strategy of language planning, so non-dominant languages can still have a position in society. A person who is trying to maintain a HL might agree with this view because they often see the necessity to know the dominant language, but also find great importance in keeping and passing down the HL. Lastly, preservationists are resistant to social change. People who believe in this view feel that any social change is detrimental to their culture's survival. Preservationists face conflict within their ethnic group because while these people believe that any social change is very damaging, non-preservationists believe that preservationists are refusing to adapt to the present day (Williams, 1991). While people have these viewpoints, sometimes language shift can still occur unless something is done.

What is Language Shift?

Language shift refers to when languages are negatively carried through family generations. These languages are threatened, and become this way because the number of speakers of the language is getting increasingly smaller (Fishman, 1991). In the beginning, both the dominant and HLs may be spoken in a generation. However, the use of the HL begins to decline. Eventually, the HL has been lost, and native speakers of the dominant language are created (Schumann, 2013). It is a general consensus that as a second-generation immigrant

student goes through school, their HL use decreases (Cho, Shin, & Krashen, 2004). Language shift is significant to the HLs of families because often through situations such as immigration, lack of resources, or lack of contact with family, the language is not being passed down, creating less and less speakers.

Example: Sudanese Australian youth. The Sudanese Australian youth speakers of Dinka have shown a language shift. Hatoss & Sheely (2009) discovered that Dinka speakers have plans of reversing this language shift. Nonetheless, they are facing language shift due to lack of proficiency in the language. Lack of proficiency that may have caused the language shift could be due to the decrease in language skills from the Sudanese's refugee transition years (Hatoss & Sheely, 2009). The Sudanese Australian youth shows an example of the absence of maintaining a language. Since Dinka speakers are slowly stopping the language of Dinka, they may not be able to pass it down as a HL in future generations if they do not reverse the language shift.

Pressure to speak the dominant language. Pressure to conform to the dominant society and language is upon speakers of a HL once they enter a new environment different from their home country. This pressure includes HL speakers who are surrounded by a dominant language. At times, this leads to bilingualism because the person initially speaks their HL, but is also learning the dominant language. However, this bilingualism is brief, and the HL starts to quickly decline as the younger generation chooses the dominant language over the HL. Parents of this younger generation struggle to find others to speak to in their HL as their children do not show interest in learning it. This shift among generations could ultimately lead to monolingualism to the dominant language (Crystal, 2002).

Reasons for Language Shift

The use of a language can shift throughout time for a various amount of reasons. These reasons can be purposeful or not purposeful. The following explains reasons why this can happen.

Physical and demographic dislocation. A physical dislocation can describe a population moving to a different location, or voluntary/involuntary migration. These reasons are often caused by famines, natural catastrophes, disease, or human intervention. Natural catastrophes can include events such as floods, volcanoes, earthquakes, or droughts (Fishman, 1991). For example, thirty years ago, Ethiopia was affected by a famine, which resulted in many dying, and also the force of people to migrate to Sudan as refugees. When these people were allowed back to their homes, they lost the rights to their original villages, forcing them to settle elsewhere (Hammond, 2005). This migration can cause detriment to language spread because their own languages are weakened because they are not surrounded with the cultural and language influence that they had in their home community (Fishman, 1991). This migration can sometimes cause the future generations to not pass down the HL. These environments may not have the resources to sustain the language, or aid in passing it down.

Social dislocation. Social dislocation can occur in populations that are in minority ethnolinguistic groups. They can sometimes, but not all of the time, be considered socially disadvantaged. Socially disadvantaged can refer to having a lesser economic or educational situation in comparison to the dominant group. These disadvantages can make the minority group powerless. This group can depend on the dominant group for social benefits such as increased mobility in the social structure. In this situation, minority groups can be faced with two decisions. They can continue their cultural traditions and practices within the dominant

culture. Therefore, they would stay socially disadvantaged. Or they can relinquish their cultural practices and traditions in order to provide a “better life” for themselves and their children through being more socially advantaged (Fishman, 1991). People who either decide or do not decide to pass down the HL could be influenced by social dislocation. For example, if a person settles in a dominant environment and are a minority in that environment, they may choose to either keep their culture and language, or abandon it for more preferable social options.

Cultural dislocation. Cultural dislocation can occur through repressive means. This can include events such as genocide, or forbidding a language (Fishman, 1991). An example from history of forbidding language was the creation of boarding schools in 1879 for Native Americans with English-only instruction. The goals of these schools were to culturally assimilate Native Americans to white culture, thus removing their Indigenous languages and replacing them with English (Reyhner & Education Week Staff, n.d.). However, before the abolishment of Indigenous languages, the Indian Removal Act of 1830 forcibly removed 46,000 Native Americans off of their land (Public Broadcasting Service, n.d.). This removal is an example of cultural dislocation because the Native American populations were distributed into locations that could not support the continuation of their culture or traditions. This can happen with people who speak HLs and do not have the resources to pass them on successfully (Fishman, 1991). Since some HL speakers do not have resources to pass on the HL, they may participate in reversing language shift.

Reversing Language Shift Theory

Reversing language shift (RLS), or reversing the lack of language spreading, can be helpful when a family wants to maintain the HL, but is having a difficult time due to various factors such as a lack of HL resources or other speakers in the community. To reverse language

shift, there can be careful planning through the use of RLS theory. Fishman (1990) explained a theory that can help to reverse language shift by intergenerational transmission of language, culture, society and identification. This planning is not a definite way to reverse language shift, however, it helps to prepare for the difficulties that might be faced when trying to reverse language shift in different types of communities.

Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale. Fishman (1990) used the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale, which explains his theory of RLS in terms of stages. These stages range from weak to strong, and describe the contexts of how to reverse language shift. Stages 8 to 5 are considered weak stages, or stages that can be achieved with minimal costs and in most political and economic climates. Stages 8 to 5 are most typically useful for languages that are small in number and politically weak. Essentially, these stages are to be used in an environment that is economically disadvantaged, that consists of languages that do not have enough speakers to spread the language to create more speakers. Stages 4 to 1 on the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale for Threatened Languages are considered to be strong. These stages can be used in more economically advantaged contexts that can provide learning resources. These stages tend to be more successful for RLS in communities that are motivated to reverse language shift. While HL schools can teach students the language, schooling is sometimes unsuccessful due to a variety of reasons. Some of these reasons include low quality education, and unreliably offered programs, so one should not assume that this is a successful model for reversing language shift in all environments (Fishman, 1990). This scale is merely a guideline on how threatened languages can be revitalized in certain communities. The table below gives a clear look on the description of each stage.

Table 2

As Shown in Baker (2011): *Fishman's (1990, 1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale for Threatened Languages*

Stage 8	Social isolation of the few remaining speakers of the minority language. Need to record the language for later possible reconstruction.
Stage 7	Minority language used by older and not younger generation. Need to multiply the language in the younger generation.
Stage 5	Literacy in the minority language. Need to support literacy movements in the minority language, particularly when there is no government support.
Stage 4	Formal compulsory education available in the minority language. May need to be financially supported by the minority language community.
Stage 3	Use of the minority language in less specialized work areas involving interaction with majority language speakers.
Stage 2	Lower government services and mass media available in the minority language.
Stage 1	Some use of minority language available in higher education, central government and national media.

Note. Directly from Baker, C. (2011). Endangered languages: Planning and revitalization. In N. H. Hornberger & C. Baker (Eds.), *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (5th ed.) (pp. 41-64). Tonawanda, NY: Multilingual Matters.

RLS with minority languages. RLS is not always successful. Due to characteristics of the populations, such as lack of power or prestige, or lack of materials, it is something that can be difficult to accomplish (Fishman, 2000). The act of RLS is usually something that only a minority population partakes in. For example, RLS efforts have been used in the Basque Autonomous Community with the language of Basque. This occurred through the use of mandatory 3-5 hour Indigenous language instruction per week during elementary and secondary education. When people leave their home country and settle in a new one, sometimes their HL is

seen as a minority language. With this being said, because of their minority status, and therefore often a powerless position, spreading a language sometimes is a hard task to accomplish, even through families. According to some scientists, language shift is even thought to be a natural process in social change. Minority populations, which can include people who leave their home country to settle in another, or HL speakers in the United States, can struggle for a lot in their lives. Sometimes they feel as though their opinion on this manner is unpopular, so nothing is done about language shift. In addition, it is difficult for minority populations to reverse language shift because they are often just focusing on survival in a new society (Fishman, 1991).

Timing of RLS. In a society, people claim that it is too late to try to reverse language shift. Parents may feel as though they cannot spread their HL because they do not have the resources. Although it can be true, and culture cannot return back to how it once was, it is not true that nothing can be done for a language. It is important to not have exceptionally high expectations in this endeavor because it will most likely be unsuccessful. The important questions when addressing the problem of whether or not a language shift should be reversed should be who, what, where, when and how to do it (Fishman, 1991). Families interested in reversing the slow decline of a language through generations have their own obstacles, however they also may have their own benefits for spreading the language such as motivation or strong family ties. Even though things such as language revitalization or language maintenance can be done for a language, sometimes languages die. Language death is discussed in the following section.

Frequency of Language Death

Languages are connected to people, and due to certain circumstances, natural or unnatural, they can die out as well. As Crystal (2002) described, there is a very wide range of

the number of languages that are spoken today. In fact, the number of languages falls anywhere from 3,000 to 10,000 languages spoken. Many people describe languages as being alive or dead and when the last person who fluently speaks a language dies, it is thought that the language dies with them. Languages are lost at approximately the rate of one language per three months. This is an astounding 4.3 languages per year (Campbell, Heaton, Lee, Okura, Simpson, Ueki & Van Way, 2013). To help evaluate the status of a language, languages are typically recognized as safe, endangered, or extinct. According to Hirsch (2013), it is now common that elders are not passing on their cultural knowledge to younger generations. Hirsch explains that since language is a large component of culture, both the culture and language will die when the last native speaker dies.

The issue of language death is very real and occurring regularly. In 2010, the last speaker of one of the world's oldest languages, Bo, has died. The investigator of this case, Professor Abbi, felt that the loss of Bo equates to a loss of Indian heritage that cannot be replaced. Boa Senior was a woman who lived in the Andaman Islands and was lonely because there were no other Bo speakers to communicate with; therefore she had to learn a different language to communicate with people. When she passed away, the language did as well. This language is said to be one that might have been spoken by our early ancestors. The culture attached to this language is a part of our history, and for various reasons, languages are dying fast. In fact, in just over three months, two languages in the Andaman Islands have died out (Lawson, 2010). Languages die out fast, and sometimes they can never return to their initial state, so it is crucial to maintain the HL.

Importance of Maintaining the HL

Speakers of languages that are close to extinction, or people who want to maintain the language, have reasons for trying to sustain the language so it stays alive. HLs serve many purposes in the world. Crystal (2002) stated reasons for why HLs are important and beneficial to maintain. First, we need diversity. In terms of an ecosystem, we need diversity, or different HLs for a species, humans, to survive. Ecosystems are strongest when they have diversity. Second, HLs are important because languages express identity. Everybody is concerned about their identity. Languages are a way to preserve stories, and also words, therefore affecting a person's identity. It is the foremost symbol of a person's identity. Third, languages are repositories of history. Languages show the history of nations. A language, including the grammar and lexicon of texts, contains the history of the person who speaks it. Fourth, languages contribute to the sum of human knowledge. Learning a new language is beneficial in terms of knowledge and enjoyment. Not only is language learning an advantage to knowledge growth of a human, but an enjoyable way to understand other cultures. Finally, languages are interesting in themselves. Languages are unique from each other and have different structures from other languages. They can be used in different ways and to express ideas that might not be available in other languages (Crystal, 2002).

Fishman (2000) also agreed that HLs are important to maintain because they often are the only way to express specific religious beliefs, literature, and interpersonal interactions. If one were to translate the language associated with these activities, the meanings would be inaccurate because each language has its own personal and unique meaning. Language is commonly seen as something that supports the ethnic group. Some even have the belief that if

you do not use the language, you are refusing your culture and heritage, therefore if you want the culture to sustain; it is your responsibility to pass on the language.

As a society, it is beneficial to keep HLs alive. It is of benefit to learn how families of these various cultures feel about their HL because they are in control of the spread of their own language and culture when they come to a new country. Languages are a way to pass on culture, and without these languages, the unique facets of each culture could be lost. Wiley (2005) also agreed, by stating that since we have such a variety of languages spoken in the United States, we should take advantage of it, rather than waste it.

There are a variety of program models available designed to teach HLs. Hirsh (2013) lists the following as educational program models available to teach HLs. These programs include total-immersion, bilingual, second language learning in school, community, master-apprentice, or language reclamation for languages that are not used anymore. The author chooses to describe two popular HL program models. The two program models chosen are HL schools and home methods of teaching the HL. The researcher chose to use these models because much of the research has shown a strong opinion in either of these models, both favorable and non-favorable.

Heritage Language Schools

HL schools can be implemented in a few different ways. These ways include weekend or after school classes taught by a person who is a member of the HL community, afterschool or during the school day taught by someone hired by the school to teach the language, or the HL being taught as a school subject. When members of the community teach the HL, this is usually only after students have acquired the dominant language of the community. Also, teaching the minority language in a HL school setting is usually only present in ethnic groups that are very

determined about maintaining the language (Fishman, 2006a). According to Fishman (1990), the HL school that children attend to maintain the HL must be an essential part of the family and neighborhood. The reasoning for this is so that children can be socialized in the language, which will contribute to their formation of identity. Teachers must also have close relationships with parents and students for this model to work well. Open communication between all subjects aid in the success of maintaining the language. In addition, HL schools are most ideal when the student learns their HL at home before they start school in this language. However, students must be given a reason to be motivated and able to use the language in authentic situations, as well as reasons to use the language after they are out of school or they might have to relearn it. Using the HL in authentic situations can help to motivate the student to maintain the language, thus creating more success in HL schools. Giving the student authentic situations to use the language will demonstrate that knowing the HL is an important asset to have. Also, motivation is a crucial factor, because if the student is motivated, then they will look for reasons to improve their skills and excel (Fishman, 1990). HL schools are a method in which students can learn or maintain the HL within an environment that values these skills while also giving them opportunities to practice.

Ineffective. HL schools are sometimes deemed to be less successful than other methods of maintaining the HL. According to Valdés (2006a), HL schools cannot provide authentic experiences and native-like language maintenance. Brown (2010) and Jeon (2008) examined participants who had attended HL schools. Research by Brown (2010) revealed that parents utilized these schools because their children were refusing the language at home. This resulted in parents feeling as though they failed at teaching their children the language by themselves. All of the students in Brown's study mentioned that HL schools did not help them to maintain

their HL. Jeon (2008) indicated a similar situation in his study in which college-age students agreed that Korean HL schools were ineffective in teaching the HL. Instead, they learned the HL through other means, such as learning the language in college. In this study, students began to discontinue their attendance in these schools for reasons as a lack of motivation, dissatisfaction with teaching style, and higher importance in scheduling for extracurricular activities. These students may have considered HL schools to be ineffective because they did not attend them. Zhang (2013) interviewed parents who felt that HL schools were not as useful as they had hoped for. Parents felt that Chinese-language schools, which are teacher-centered, were not matched to United States public schools, which are student-centered. Parents thought that since students had more experience with student-centered schools, it would be difficult for students to learn in a teacher-centered classroom. In addition, parents also did not agree with the strategy of rote memorization in class, and also disliked the lack of individual attention given to students from teachers. Oriyama (2010) found that Japanese students who were not closely tied to the Japanese community disliked HL school. These students mentioned that they thought learning Japanese was boring and difficult. They also felt that they could not find any relevancy for Japanese in their everyday (childhood) lives. Oriyama felt that since these students were not tied to the Japanese community, they did not have social networks, which in turn led students to have a lack in motivation, attitudes and HL maintenance. Despite several examples of ineffective HL schools in the literature, there are many examples of effective HL schools.

Effective. HL schools can provide students an opportunity to learn or maintain the HL in a school setting, with other valuable resources including HL speaking teachers and peers. Pacini-Ketchabaw, Bernhard and Freire (2001) found that HL schools were effective in teaching children their HL. In this study, Mrs. Martinez, a Spanish-speaking parent, appreciated the HL

schools because she could now help her children with homework because they were learning Spanish. However, parents in this study explained that had to pay a fee to send their children to these schools. Likewise, a study by Schwartz (2008) indicated that Russian-Jewish immigrants had very positive effects in maintaining the HL of Russian with the use of Russian HL schools in Israel. It was noted that parents felt that it was too difficult to teach the language at home because of the demands of their new immigrant life. Since parents were unable to teach their children the HL, they used the HL schools as a replacement for teaching it at home.

Oriyama (2010) examined students who lived in Japanese communities and attended HL school for learning and maintaining Japanese. The students who enjoyed the HL schools explained that they enjoyed going because of their friendships and good rapport they had with their teacher. Many of the friendships made were friendships based upon shared Japanese hobbies, such as reading comic books or talking about Japanese celebrities. HL schools can provide students resources to sustain the language, such as opportunities to communicate with others while using the language. While HL schools can provide the structured support of a teacher, teaching the language at home is an alternate method that has been found effective and also ineffective for some learners.

Home Methods of Teaching the Heritage Language

If parents do not have the means to send their children to a HL school, they often find ways to teach it at home. These ways have proven to be both ineffective and effective.

Ineffective. Families often teach the HL at home when they do not have access to other HL program models. In this model, families can maintain the HL through communication with family members, or parental teaching through workbooks. Guardado (2008) discovered one family that did not experience success with passing down the HL after learning it though

experiences with speaking the language in the HL country. Silvia and Joel had three children who moved back and forth between Guatemala and Canada. Their children had spent three years in Guatemala and were able to communicate in Spanish. However, since then, they lost most of their Spanish and are now English speakers. Silvia and Joel expressed disappointment that even though they spent much time living in Guatemala, their children spoke Spanish poorly. They felt that the lack of Latin Americans in Vancouver contributed to this loss of Spanish. Parents often have the belief that their children cannot maintain a HL because of the lack of resources in the language in the community. While Silvia and Joel experienced failure in teaching their children the HL, there are successful situations in which children can learn or maintain it.

Effective. Strategies to teach the HL at home can offer potential success in maintaining the HL. Teaching literacy in the HL through engaging ways will interest children in relevant ways to learn the language (Hashimoto & Lee , 2011, DeCapua & Wintergerst, 2009, and Fishman, 2000). When children are taught the HL and they find interesting ways to use it, their motivation will increase and can help them to practice the language more. Hashimoto & Lee (2011) discovered that parents tried many ways to teach their children the language. One of these ways included using Japanese workbooks and print materials from Japan. Although children quickly became uninterested, the parents did not give up. They wanted to create a setting in which their children would find it useful and interesting to learn Japanese literacy through their interests. This led one particular family to increasing their child, Taro's proficiency in Japanese through Manga, or Japanese comic books. Taro used the visuals in Manga to assist in learning new vocabulary. Another family similarly chose to use a type of leisure activity to engage their child in learning Japanese through Japanese games and Japanese game guides. Children found that they needed proficiency in Japanese to do these activities, and

therefore had a reason to learn it. Similar to Hashimoto & Lee (2011), Li (1999) and DeCapua & Wintergerst (2009) supported the idea that when children have the authentic need to use the language daily, they will acquire the language more successfully. In a study conducted by Li (1999), the participant's daughter often used the HL of Chinese daily for family talk while during her chores. This family talk consisted of questions about how to translate certain phrases from English into Chinese. DeCapua & Wintergerst (2009) concluded that regardless of anything else that can convince a child to maintain the HL, the greatest factor in this is whether or not the child has a purpose to use both of their languages regularly. Using the HL for personal leisure is a way in which the child will grow to sustain the language.

Each family has their own personal successes with HL maintenance. Carmen, a participant in a study by Guardado (2008), explained that even though she had minimal resources in Vancouver to teach her daughter their HL of Spanish, she had succeeded. Carmen believed her daughter's success in learning Spanish was due to regular visits to countries that shared her culture and language, and also the attachment her daughter had to the rest of her Spanish speaking family. However, Carmen insisted that the biggest aid in her daughter's Spanish maintenance were moments they had together when her daughter was younger. Carmen and her daughter sang songs in Spanish as well as listened to stories in Spanish. Similar to Guardado (2008), DeCapua & Wintergerst (2009) found a few strategies to effectively teach a HL in an English dominant environment. These included a father exclusively speaking the HL of German to his children, the mother exclusively speaking English, exposure to the German language and culture, and keeping German text in the home where the children would be able to always see it. Not only was this used as a way to maintain German; it was a way to maintain the children's positive attitudes toward the language.

Some factors can contribute to successful HL maintenance. Some of the factors include being able to visit and interact with the culture and language often, parents using the language with their children, using the language to tell stories or sing songs, and family bonding through the language (Guardado, 2008). Though some families find these ways to effectively maintain the HL with home methods, at times these methods may not work in other situations. Regardless of whether or not the learning of a HL is successful, some children are given opportunities to successfully learn it later in life.

Language Ideologies Are Not Static

Language ideologies can be found in people who are trying to maintain or learn a HL. These can be found through all of the different ways a person learns the HL, whether this is at home, or in a HL school. Language ideology encapsulates all social aspects of a language including religious rituals, gender relations, child socialization and schooling to name a few (Woolard, 1998). According to Fishman (2006a), the transition from high school to college is an opportune time to have parents and students involved with HL. However, students who are interested in their HL during this time have extra difficulties because not only do they have the typical anxieties of students during this time, but they are also undertaking a part of their identity that they had not initiated before. This is an example of language ideologies in action. Students are discovering their identities, and with that, might be interested in the HL and how it will socially affect them. Jeon (2008), Oriyama (2010) and Shin (2010) shared similar research findings about how language ideologies change due to life's circumstances. Jeon (2008) investigated the importance of learning Korean for Korean Americans. When his participants were younger, they were not motivated and too busy to learn Korean and even dropped out of HL school until they started to understand the importance in college. One participant in this

study finally discovered the importance that Korean had to his identity once he reached college, and that was the point in which he began to re-establish the language. Similar to Jeon's research, Lee (2009) spoke with a Navajo female who expressed that she felt that she needed to reconnect with her culture on a more serious level after college. This student always knew that her culture and language were important to her, however she became more consumed in it after college when she realized the level of importance her Navajo culture had to her identity. Oriyama (2010) interviewed a Japanese-Australian student who explained that it took him until junior high school to think of himself as Japanese. Before he started to think of himself as Japanese, he struggled because he was often asked which race he was because others told him that he did not look Asian or Australian. However, he did not see himself as different than any of his friends. The students who waited until college to learn the HL could have been dealing with their own language ideologies. When they were younger, they felt that it was unimportant to learn the language, but over time, their social opinions had changed, thus motivating them and changing their ideologies. Despite the position of a person is in their life when they decide to start to maintain the HL, there will be factors to consider.

Important Characteristics of Heritage Language Learning

In the home. Parents who use home methods to teach or maintain the HL have found ways to make this a successful process. Shin (2010) and Brown (2011) both supported the idea that parents should avoid speaking English with their children. Instead, they should use the HL so their children can acquire it. Guardado (2008) interviewed a couple that had children who lost their Spanish abilities. Although the parents were disappointed in the lack of HL maintenance, they explained that they feel as though parents should always speak the HL to their children, no matter what. Brown (2011) discovered that even though parents believe in speaking to their

children in this language, it did not happen in these homes. Instead, English was the language that was spoken regularly. Also, first-born children reported that they received some input in Korean, in comparison to their younger siblings who did not receive nearly as much. It is thought that this happens because the parent is not yet fluent enough in English to speak to their first born in this language, therefore, they use the HL until they can communicate in English (Brown, 2011).

How a parent grows up can mirror the way their children grow up. Shin (2010) found that children's HL experiences depended on how much parental support they received from their own parents. If parents supported the HL, they felt more positively about passing it on to their own children. Participants who were exposed to the HL from an early age explained that they plan to teach it to their future children. Much like Shin (2010), the research by Hashimoto & Lee (2011) reported that both parents must be involved in learning of the HL in order to support maintenance of the language, even if one parent does not speak the language. In all of the families that Hashimoto and Lee studied, children spoke to their parents in only Japanese, with the exception of parents who did not speak it. Most of these children were able to speak fluent Japanese, which supports the idea that parents should avoid speaking English with their children if they want to maintain the HL. Li (1999) found that parental support is crucial to maintaining the HL. This research showed that children mold to what is around them.

Additional support for the success of maintaining the HL includes the use of family talk. A family from a study by Li (1999), talked to each other in Chinese about many different topics, and they also participated in interactive activities using Chinese. This allowed the family members to attach more meaning and appreciation for using the language. Similarly, Kouritzin (2000) expressed that once the family shifts the language spoken at home to English, HL loss can

happen. Parents have a tendency to switch to English in the home when the child starts to speak it. No child will learn a HL the same, however, the literature gives an idea of what some parents do at home to sustain, or teach the HL.

Identity. Identity makes us who we are, and a large part of who we are is our culture and therefore, language. Brown (2011), Jeon (2008), Guardado (2008), Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2001), Li (1999), Hatoss & Sheely (2010) and Shin (2010) all agreed that the HL is a critical aspect in a child's identity. Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2001) examined Latin American participants and learned that these people believe they must speak Spanish because they are Latin American and language is part of their identity. Furthermore, a participant stated that she speaks Spanish because she is proud of her culture and where she came from. Likewise, Guardado (2008) interviewed a father living in Vancouver who explained why he wants his son to learn their HL of Spanish. Without it, he believed his son would suffer great losses including emotional, cultural, moral, and familial. He felt that without speaking Spanish, the family identity would disappear. In choosing whether or not to continue passing down the HL, Shin (2010) explained that the participants who experienced identity issues, were the ones who decided to teach their future children the language so their children would not feel like they had felt. Brown (2011) found that parents believed knowing the HL was a way to link the language to their culture. Learning the language was a way for children to keep in touch with their cultural heritage. Since language is a characteristic of identity, many people feel as though their language is who they are.

The refugee Sudanese community in Toowoomba, Australia is an example of strong identity through a language. Hatoss & Sheely (2009) found that the community of Toowoomba was highly Dinka language-centered, in which many people shared this strong identity and

common language. As well as their HL, English also holds an important role in this refugee population. The participants felt that English was important due to its increased prestige, as well as a common language between others that did not share an African language. These refugees reported a strong connection between the language of Dinka and their culture. They felt that if they did not have the language, then they could not have the culture. Dinka speakers feel the responsibility to maintain the language so they can speak with elders who speak the language.

Parents have an immense impact on how children will view their ethnic identity. Immigrant parents felt that teaching their child the HL as well as English would help them to form their ethnic identity (Jeon, 2008). Research provided by Brown (2011), Jeon (2008) and Shin (2010) supported the idea that parental attitudes toward learning the HL, whether they are positive or negative, will impact the child's identity throughout their life. As stated by Lee (2009), Native Americans feel if they do not know their language, they do not feel like a true Native person. These students have difficulties shaping their identities because they come from a background where it is not very easy to maintain the language due to past oppression, the dominant culture taking over, and indirect expression of lack in encouragement of their language. Though it may be a strenuous task, some Native Americans are motivated and inspired by the language loss in their communities to maintain the language, and therefore, the culture.

The Saraguros from the Southern Ecuadorian Andes is an example of an ethnic group that desired language revitalization of the language Quichua. They were conscious of how knowing the language would affect their identities, specifically how the language can connect them to their culture. Members of the Saraguros were well informed about the importance of Quichua in their culture. They view Quichua to be important for reasons such as the contributions that the

earlier generations had made to the culture, using the language for specific situations, and how the language is representative of the culture in itself (King, 2010).

The child's decision upon maintaining their HL when they are in a dominant culture is dependent upon the parent's attitudes about the language as well as maintaining it (Li, 1999). In this study, a participant told her daughter not to speak her HL of Chinese in a Hawaiian supermarket. When she spoke to her daughter in Chinese at school, her daughter felt embarrassed and conflicted as to why it is acceptable to speak Chinese in one setting and not in another. This event led the participant to reevaluate the importance of positively modeling her value in the language and culture, so her daughter would do the same. Li (1999) expressed that when children have a different language when they are living in a dominant culture, they feel a range of emotions, including feeling confused because they are living a different life within a new culture and language. Children frequently feel conflicted about which culture they belong to since they now have experience with two different ones. Children can feel pressures from school or the environment to abandon the HL culture and this can possibly dictate whether or not the child decides to maintain the HL.

Discouragement of heritage languages from teachers. Parents feel affected by the pressure to assimilate to the dominant culture. Findings from a study by Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2001) revealed that one Latin American parent tried to push the use of Spanish at home, but came to find out that her child's teacher did not value the child's bilingualism. The teacher commented that they needed to stop speaking Spanish at home because it was affecting the student's English pronunciation. Another parent had a similar experience in which her child's teacher also requested that she stop speaking Spanish at home with her child because it would slow down her English learning. Yet one more parent who participated in this study, stated that

even though she was not directly told that she should stop speaking Spanish at home, she still felt the underlying message that this was the case. This parent's son was referred to a special program because he was seen as having speech and language problems. The school personnel mentioned that this could be due to the use of Spanish at home. This mother started to blame herself for her child falling behind in school because she was using Spanish at home. According to DeCapua & Wintergerst (2009), it is difficult to foster bilingualism in an environment that has monolingual pressures and pressures to assimilate to the dominant language. These teachers felt that the children's use of Spanish and their bilingualism was a deficit. Even though these families faced discouragement from teachers, they could find resourceful motivators for their child's HL maintenance from the community.

Community support. Through various research studies, it is clear that there is a high demand for community support of HLs. Shin (2010) and Zhang (2010) recommended that HL schools be treated as part of regular schooling. Community support would be given by the recognition that these schools should be an equal part of the curriculum. Kennedy & Romo (2013) shared a similar notion that public schooling has an opportunity to play a vital role in encouraging and valuing HLs and cultures. By supporting multiculturalism and multilingualism, public schooling can help students to create deeper relationships with their HL speaking family members, upon other bilingual benefits. Zhang (2010) explained that public schools recognizing credit from HL schools would be a good incentive to keep students motivated to learn the language, as well as decrease the dropout rates. Brown (2011), Oriyama (2010) Kennedy & Romo (2013), Fishman (1990) and DeCapua & Wintergerst (2009) indicated that community support is needed as well. Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2001) found that parents were concerned with their child's Spanish proficiency, but sometimes they could not teach the language on their

own. One parent was a single mother, who had children that spoke to her in English all of the time. She felt as though she needed more support to get her children to speak Spanish. She also did not have many relatives locally to help her with this. It is evident that she needed the support of the community to aid her with the HL at home. Oriyama (2010) discovered that if students do not have community support for the HL, it is important that they are able to learn it as a school subject. In addition, Oriyama found that when people live in a multicultural community that is positive toward Japanese, it allows the Japanese HL speakers to feel like they fit in, and therefore express their ethnicity and identity. The participants in her study had positive attitudes from not only their friends, but also the Japanese community. This helped the participants to form a healthy identity and positive attitude toward their culture.

Native Americans can sometimes experience difficulties in a way that is different from other HL learners. Lee (2009) explained that for Native Americans, messages are often mixed for young children. Schools and the communities do not always recognize other cultures outside of the dominant one. Often it is difficult for a Native American student to exist in this type of society that favors a language and culture over another. Awareness through the community about maintaining the language as well as the consequences that could happen if it is not maintained is something that can change the future of Indigenous languages such as Pueblo and Navajo.

Teachers could provide a large support for a child's maintenance of their HL. Encouragement for the HL at school from teachers would be a useful asset to maintaining the language. Likewise, Hashimoto & Lee (2011) and Zhang (2013) emphasized that teachers need to support HLs. Other peers as well need to understand the significance of maintaining HLs. If a child's language were more recognized and valued, they would have more confidence and

motivation to learn and use it (Hashimoto & Lee, 2011). Zhang (2013) supported this idea and explained that teachers need to be aware of parental desires for HL maintenance so they can properly motivate the student on this issue.

Professional aids can be advantageous for parents who do not have help to maintain the HL. Fishman (1990) recommended that communities should have programs to provide social support for families. Home visits from social workers that are involved with RLS can also help. Brown (2011) suggested that the HL community should have workshops for parents who are struggling with maintaining the language at home. Parents may not have the resources to maintain the language by themselves, so they need support from the community. Help for family is essential because families are where language transition occurs, and consequently, family is the foundation of this learning.

Although many families are concerned about their child learning or not learning the HL, there are some HL speakers who do not find importance in the HL or continuing it. Gladwin (2004) stated that speakers of Mayan languages among the Guatemalan-Mayan people of southeast Florida do not have devotion to the language. While it is often the situation that parents and children need community support to pass on a HL, these Mayan speakers do not feel as though the language is important, therefore they do not give any community support. There are numerous reasons why a speaker would choose not to pass on the HL.

Reasons Why Parents Do Not Pass-Down Heritage Language

Some parents consciously choose not to pass down the HL if they are insecure about their identity. These parents often feel as though their language has disadvantages and is not worth passing down. If someone speaks a HL that identifies with disadvantages such as poverty, or lack of education, then they may not be able to move up in society. These ideas could cause a

parent to not want their child to speak the HL. Parents often choose not to expose their child to the HL because they faced many difficulties being a speaker when they were growing up. They do not want to pass these difficulties on to their child. The act of “opting out” in regards to HL acquisition is a big hurdle in passing down the language (Fishman, 2006a). Although there are reasons for not passing down the language, the actual act of not passing on the language creates an enormous problem for people who want the language to spread.

While some parents take a conscious effort to not pass down language to their children, there are parents who do not deliberately plan for this to happen. Parents from the study by Kennedy & Romo (2013) explained that teaching culture and language to their children is something they needed to make a conscious effort to do in order for their child to maintain the HL. They were not used to having to teach these things because they came naturally when this family lived in Columbia. They were never taught language and culture; therefore they were unaware that they had to teach these things. Teaching a child a new culture can be a foreign idea for some people, so they may not even realize that this is something that might need to happen if they want to keep the HL or culture alive. Parents who voluntarily decide to maintain the HL will have their own attitudes that are specific to themselves.

Parental Attitudes of Learning the Heritage Language

Parents typically have some type of opinion toward the HL, whether they are positive or negative. Parents have grown up with the language and therefore have formed an attitude about it. Jeon (2008) interviewed Korean parents and found that parents did not enforce teaching of the HL during the child’s schooling because they feared that the child would fall behind in school. This was due to the misconception that it was too difficult to learn two languages at the same time. Shin (2010) discovered that parents need to support the child in learning the HL

during childhood in order for the child to learn it. It is common that parents believe learning two languages at once will confuse the child. While parents would like to best serve their children, they can only do so much.

There is a common misconception that learning two languages at once will confuse, or slow down the learning of the target language. An example of this is again from the Saraguro people of the Southern Ecuadorian Andes. King (2010) discovered that Quichua is not spoken regularly. These people tend to use the dominant language of Spanish instead. Similar to Jeon (2008), parents in the Saraguro community believe that teaching their children Quichua would inhibit their children's acquisition of Spanish, the language they thought was more important. Despite parent's infrequent and non-preferential use of Quichua, they still had wishes that their children will learn the language when they are older.

At times, maintaining a HL proves to be an arduous process. Hashimoto & Lee (2011) discussed that the children in their study who went to Japan regularly, used the language to speak with their family. Most of the children were able to speak Japanese fluently. While the children were doing well with orally communicating, parents discovered a problem with teaching literacy. Parents went through great efforts to teach their children literacy in Japanese, but their efforts were simply not enough. The children started to increasingly dislike learning Japanese due to their lack of interest in using Japanese workbooks, causing them to avoid any use of the language. These parents were persistent and did not give up on finding alternative ways to pursue their child's literacy in the HL. However, in this study, one set of parents felt a sense of ineffectiveness because although their children knew Japanese, they were not at an advanced literacy level and they blamed themselves for not being able to provide better teaching. The parents created a goal in which their children would achieve advanced literacy skills in Japanese

so they would be able to attend a Japanese college in the future. While Hashimoto & Lee (2011) discussed the strategy of using the HL in the home to gain proficiency and maintenance, Zhang (2013) indicated that this is not always an easy feat. A mother in his study tried to ban English from being spoken at home, but this turned out to be increasingly difficult for a few reasons. This mother had closer relationships with Americans, so banning English seemed impossible. Also, since her children knew she was proficient in English, they would speak to her in this language, while refusing to speak in the HL of Chinese. This family found it tough to avoid speaking English due to the wide relevance of the language in their lives.

Although many parents wish to pass down the family's HL, that is not always the case. Gladwin (2004) interviewed Mayan language speakers and approximately half of this sample felt negatively about passing Mayan languages down to their children. Instead, there was a large focus on Spanish and English. The parents who were interested in teaching their children a Mayan language were for reasons such as family and identity. Some responses from parents who did not want their children to learn a Mayan language included that it is not important, the language is too hard to learn, and that they live in Florida now, and therefore do not need it.

Parents are often so motivated for their children to keep the HL, that they will make sacrifices of their own. Kourtizin (2000) discussed a study regarding her daughter's HL acquisition of Japanese. The goal of this study was to delay her daughter's exposure to English for as long as she could, in order for her to be bilingual in English and Japanese in the future. The sacrifice to her daughter's future bilingualism led to feelings of guilt as well as a lack of closeness in her relationship with her daughter. She felt as though her daughter might not look at her as a role model because she could not speak her daughter's language well. Also, she felt guilty that her daughter could not find any other children to play with because they did not have

a common language, and therefore did not want to play with a child they did not understand. She explained that she did not know whether or not her efforts would be successful in her daughter's bilingualism, and also mentioned that she was unsure if she was using the best strategy to accomplish this. While many parents work very hard to maintain the HL, their efforts simply are not enough to do so (DeCapua & Wintergerst, 2009, Hasimoto & Lee, 2011, Brown, 2011). Many times the HL learning depends on factors such as child motivation and identity awareness of the HL.

Children's Attitudes of Learning the Heritage Language

Sometimes children feel powerless when it comes to learning or maintaining the HL. For example, according to Lee (2009), regardless of whether a student could speak their HL of Pueblo or Navajo, students communicated how much they valued their culture and language. Some of these students emphasized that it is very crucial to learn the language so you can speak with elders and therefore not disrespect them. A student explained that she wished she had been taught the HL so she could talk to elders. Students were aware that their language was being lost, but many of them showed interest and importance in learning the language. Students expressed how they felt humiliation for not knowing the language of their culture and wished their school would do something about it (Lee, 2009).

Children frequently feel proud that they are bilingual. DeCapua & Wintergerst (2009) interviewed three children who explained their pride in being bilingual. These children stated that they really enjoy being able to talk with family members, and being able to communicate in more ways than just one. One child indicated that she felt she had advantages over others because she spoke German. She mentioned a time when she visited Austria and felt excited to be able to converse with German-speaking tourists and read German written texts in museums.

Another child recalled how much he enjoys Germany and German people. He looks forward to visiting Germany when his family goes once every other year, which shows his positive attitude for the language and culture. Since not every person holds the same attitudes, it is important to explore why these attitudes are held and what can be done to help those interested in HL maintenance.

Research Question

The literature review discussed complexities of maintaining a HL. The information gathered is helpful to understand why HL speakers or learners have the attitudes or opinions that they do. It also explains why, as a society, we need HL maintenance. The researcher chose to research the following questions. **What are parent and child attitudes toward maintaining the HL? How do parent and child attitudes toward maintaining the HL differ and how are they similar? How do newcomer parent attitudes of approximately four years differ from attitudes of parents who have had longer United States residency? The responses to these research questions will help the researcher to uncover attitude toward HL maintenance and reasons for their negative or positive attitude on maintaining HL.**

Methodology

Step One- Find Research Topic

The researcher started research through her interest in adult language learners. She began to narrow her topic to heritage language (HL) learners due to her interest in the continuation of HLs through families. This interest was created through reading various articles in her Types of Adult English Language Learners class taught at SUNY Fredonia. While exploring topics within the area of HL, the researcher began to become interested in the attitudes that parents and children felt about the HL. She also found interest in the ways parents tried to implement language maintenance in the family, whether they were successful or unsuccessful. Since her hometown of Buffalo, New York has a large population of refugees, she decided to complete her research in Buffalo with this population. At first, she decided to get involved via volunteering with the International Institute of Buffalo, a refugee resettlement institute, and then carry out her research with the participants she planned on working with. Due to changes in the research and an unexpected opportunity, she chose to invite students from a Karen HL class at Public School (PS) #45 International School in Buffalo, and also their parents to an interview that would explain parent and children attitudes toward maintaining the HL. In addition, she had access to newly arrived refugee parents with children too young to be in the Buffalo Public Schools, so she interviewed these parents as well. Buffalo, New York is a designated refugee resettlement city; the researcher chose this population because she had access to a wide variety of this population.

Step Two- Conduct Literature Review

The researcher used many articles from research journals. ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) database was used to find many empirical studies through the search terms of attitudes, maintenance, adults, low-incidence, minority, language, and refugee. The researcher

made sure to use high quality articles that were peer-reviewed. Through reading these empirical studies, the researcher decided to focus her research on attitudes of learning and teaching HL. It was found that participants in these studies had various techniques and opinions in regards to teaching and/or learning the HL.

Other resources used for the literature review include eBooks from www.ebrary.com and also books borrowed from SUNY (State University of New York) Fredonia's Interlibrary Loan, which gave the researcher access to books from other universities. Books helped the researcher to give the reader background factual information on the topic so they would better understand the concepts within the literature review and research.

The researcher began her literature review by defining the different types of languages. She then began to write about the different factors a HL learner might experience, as well as how people either learned the language or did not learn the language. She focused on how HL maintenance affects identity. Toward the end of her literature review, she began to narrow the topic down into parent attitudes and children attitudes.

Step Three- Buffalo Programs for Newcomer Families

Buffalo is host to programs that benefit newcomer refugee families. The researcher was in contact with a variety of these programs for her research. Each program served to help newcomer refugees to adapt to the United States while respecting their native culture and language. The International Institute of Buffalo helps to resettle newly arrived refugees. The researcher originally planned to volunteer at the Institute and conduct interviews afterwards. While this was the original plan, the researcher's Master's Capstone Advisor, Dr. Mahoney was in contact with a teacher at PS #45 International School who explained that she was writing her dissertation on HL maintenance. In addition, this teacher, Ms. Nichter, had been in charge of a

volunteer summer program that works with refugees, and also taught HL maintenance of Karen to a class of students who were Karen. Dr. Mahoney advised the researcher to do her research at this site.

Karen Class

The researcher was fortunate to have been able to observe Karen class at International School #45 on June 17th, 2015. The teacher, Ms. Nichter, is a third grade ENL (English as a New Language) teacher who teaches Karen in this class to students who are of this language background. Many of these students had parents who only spoke in Karen, and the spoken language was their only form of communication. These students did not know how to read or write in Karen before taking this HL class. Karen class taught the students the customs of the Karen State in Burma, as well as the alphabet, number system and short phrases in the language. When the researcher observed this class, she explained that she would be conducting interviews during the next month with a few students and their parents. During the following month, July, the researcher started to volunteer through GRASP. The volunteer program, GRASP, or Great Results Always Start with Parents, is a program held at International School #45 for parents of children in Jumpstart.

Jumpstart

Jumpstart is a program for recently arrived students to the United States. This program focused on learning English and content. This program was held every day during the month of July of 2015. It helped children to learn English background before they started the school year. Parents typically drop off their child in the morning and pick them up in the afternoon. The volunteer program, GRASP, was originally designed for these parents as a way of improving English skills for parents while their children were occupied in class each day. Unfortunately,

when GRASP started on July 7th, parents from Jumpstart did not attend. However, parents from Buffalo Beginnings came to the class.

Buffalo Beginnings

Buffalo Beginnings is a program designed for newly arrived refugees who have children not yet old enough to be students in the Buffalo Public Schools. Throughout the month of July, parents from Buffalo Beginnings dropped their children off at International School #45 in the morning and picked them up in the late afternoon. This served as a place for children to learn some English skills before they started school in the Buffalo Public Schools. Since parents were already at International School #45, they saw signs around the school for GRASP, and they started to come to class.

GRASP

GRASP was a free summer program at International School #45. Originally it began on July 7th from 8:00am to 12:00pm, but due to the hours of class for the children in Buffalo Beginnings, it was changed to 10:00am to 12:00pm for convenience of parents picking their children up. This class had more parent attendance each day until July 13th, in which the same parents attended mostly every day.

In 2015, Ms. Nichter was the instructor of GRASP, accompanied by the researcher as the assistant instructor. The theme for GRASP in 2015 was gardening. A garden was donated to GRASP on 325 Massachusetts Avenue in Buffalo New York. Volunteers had previously planted this garden for the program. GRASP had planned to use this garden for hands-on teaching. Both Ms. Nichter and the researcher collaborated to create a gardening curriculum to assist parents in learning English as well as create enjoyment and learn useful skills in their everyday lives. Gardening was something that these parents were very familiar with, as they all gardened in their

native country. Ms. Nichter and the researcher created a curriculum that included parts of a plant, fruits and vegetables. Many hands-on activities were used to teach the parents. Examples from this curriculum included a memory game with the English word and picture, go-fish, fill-in-the-blank on the white board, pop!, and vegetable and fruit BINGO. The curriculum was designed to be one that catered to adults so they can use the information in their everyday lives such as when cooking a meal. In addition to learning the curriculum, the instructor and researcher took weekly trips to the community-donated garden. By taking trips to the garden, parents were able to use what they learned in class in an authentic setting. Through trips to the garden, parents were also shown local shops and eateries in which they could walk to on their own. A culminating activity to GRASP was creating bilingual garden labels. Since parents learned how to say the name of the vegetables and fruits in the garden in English, they were asked to label the plant in both English and their native language. This was accomplished by writing on small stones with acrylic paint. Parents learned how to use bilingual dictionaries in order to help them write in their native language because most were not literate. On the final day of GRASP, parents took these stones and appropriately placed them in the garden. This was used as a way to help parents learn fruit and vegetable vocabulary and recognition as well as a way to include other members of the community by valuing other languages. Parents were also asked to decorate stepping stones to go in the garden with “welcome” or other similar greetings in their native language.

Step Four- Submit HSR Application to Dr. Mahoney

The researcher completed the application for Human Subjects Review. The purpose of this study was to understand why people have negative or positive attitudes on the topic of maintaining HL and culture through the use of interviews. After completing the application for

Human Subjects Review, the researcher decided to change the setting of her research to be at the Buffalo Public Schools. She then had to update her application for Human Subjects Review. The researcher then received an e-mail with a letter stating that the research was accepted on June 12th, 2015. This letter can be found in Appendix A.

Step Five- Identify Participants

The researcher visited a third grade classroom at International School #45 that consisted of Karen students who do not read or write in the language. Karen State is a state in Burma in which locals speak the language of Karen. These students are mostly children to parents who only speak Karen. She chose 3 students and their parents to interview at random. One female and two males were chosen. While interviewing one of these students, an older sister was present, so the sibling was interviewed as well. One interview included both parents, while the other two interviews were just the children's mothers.

In addition to Karen students and their parents, the researcher had access to adult newcomer refugees from various countries through the volunteer program GRASP. She interviewed a speaker of Burmese, two speakers of Chin, and two Nepali speakers from GRASP. All of these participants were female. She had access to a Burmese/Karen/Chin and Nepali interpreter and translator, so she interviewed random parents in this program who spoke these languages. These participants were found to be important assets to this research due to their newly arrived status, very young children and differing attitudes in the maintenance of their language in the United States in comparison to parents and students who are not classified as newly arrived. See Appendices D, E, and F for more detail about participants.

Step Six- Select Framework

The researcher focused on Reversing Language Shift (RLS) theory, presented by Fishman (1990). To reverse language shift, there can be careful planning through the use of RLS theory. RLS can be attempted through intergenerational transmission of language, culture, society and identification. This planning is not a definite way to reverse language shift, however, it helps to prepare for the difficulties that might be faced when trying to reverse language shift in different types of communities.

Fishman (1990) used the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale and it explains his theory of RLS in terms of stages. These stages range from weak to strong, and describe the contexts of how to reverse language shift. Stages 8 to 5 are considered weak stages, or stages that can be achieved with minimal costs and in most political and economic climates. Stages 8 to 5 are most typically useful for languages that are small in number and politically weak. Essentially, these stages are to be used in an environment that is economically disadvantaged, that consists of languages that do not have enough speakers to spread the language to create more speakers. Stages 4 to 1 on the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale for Threatened Languages are considered to be strong. These stages can be used in more economically advantaged contexts that can provide learning resources. These stages tend to be more successful for RLS in communities that are motivated to reverse language shift. While HL schools can teach students the language, schooling is sometimes unsuccessful due to a variety of reasons. Some of these reasons include low quality education, and unreliably offered programs, so one should not assume that this is a successful model for reversing language shift in all environments (Fishman, 1990). This scale is merely a guideline on how threatened languages

can be revitalized in certain communities. The table below gives a clear look on the description of each stage.

Table 3

As Shown in Baker (2011): *Fishman's (1990, 1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale for Threatened Languages*

Stage 8	Social isolation of the few remaining speakers of the minority language. Need to record the language for later possible reconstruction.
Stage 7	Minority language used by older and not younger generation. Need to multiply the language in the younger generation.
Stage 6	Minority language is passed on from generation to generation and used in the community. Need to support the family in intergenerational continuity (e.g. provision of minority language nursery schools).
Stage 5	Literacy in the minority language. Need to support literacy movements in the minority language, particularly when there is no government support.
Stage 4	Formal compulsory education available in the minority language. May need to be financially supported by the minority language community.
Stage 3	Use of the minority language in less specialized work areas involving interaction with majority language speakers.
Stage 2	Lower government services and mass media available in the minority language.
Stage 1	Some use of minority language available in higher education, central government and national media.

Note. Directly from Baker, C. (2011). Endangered languages: Planning and revitalization. In N. H. Hornberger & C. Baker (Eds.), *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (5th ed.) (pp. 41-64). Tonawanda, NY: Multilingual Matters.

Step Seven- Select Interview Questions

Interview questions were carefully chosen to best answer the research questions and in alignment with the framework discussed [above]. The researcher chose differing questions for each population she interviewed. The non-GRASP adults and GRASP adults were asked similar

questions in order for the researcher to compare responses. In addition to questions asking about HL and the child's schooling, non-GRASP parents were asked specific questions relating to their child's Karen class to gauge the success of the class. Below is a table showing these questions.

Table 4

Non-GRASP Parents

Interview Question	Citation
How long have you been in the United States?	Wharry, 1993
Do you feel like you are keeping your Karen culture with your kids? How?	
How do you help your child keep their language?	
Do you teach your child Karen? How?	
How does the Karen class make you feel?	
Have you noticed your child's Karen getting better? How?	
Do you think it is good to practice your culture? Why?	
How would you feel if your child forgot Karen?	
Do you think it is good for your children to be able to read and write in Karen? Why or why not?	
Should school teach the Karen class? Why or why not?	

The child interview differed from the adult interviews because it focused more on school. The researcher was interested in how they felt about their HL in relation to being in the school setting. In addition, the questions were kept at a child's level of language in order for them to be better understood and therefore, more accurately responded to. The following table shows the questions the researcher used to interview children.

Table 5

Child Interview

Interview Question	Citation
What makes you Karen?	Withers, 2004
Is it important to you to keep your Karen language? Why?	
Do you see yourself as being different or the same as the other students in your class? Why? How?	
How do you think the school can keep the Karen culture alive and strong?	
Should school teach you and others how to read and write in Karen? Why?	
How does your Karen class make you feel?	
What did you learn in your Karen class?	
Did you like this class? Why or why not?	
How can the class be better?	

GRASP parents were given similar questions to non-GRASP parents. However, GRASP parents did not have children in the Buffalo Public Schools yet, so they could not give their opinion on any HL class. Overall, the interview questions for GRASP parents were very close to non-GRASP parents, for ease of comparison. Below is a table showing these interview questions.

Table 6

GRASP Parent Interview Questions

Interview Question	Citation
How long have you been in the United States?	Wharry, 1993
Do you feel like you are keeping your Burmese/Nepali culture with your kids? How?	
How do you help your child keep their language?	
Do you teach your child Burmese/Nepali? How?	

Table 6 Continued

Do you think it is good to practice your culture? Why?

How would you feel if your child forgot Burmese/Nepali?

Do you think it is good for your children to be able to read and write in

Burmese/Nepali? Why or why not?

Should school teach your child Burmese/Nepali? Why or why not?

Step Eight- Find Interpreters

The researcher needed to find interpreters who spoke the same language as the parents she interviewed. These languages ranged from Karen, Burmese, Chin and Nepali. She contacted Journey's End interpreting services in Buffalo, New York for an estimate. The researcher was told that it would be difficult to find an interpreter for the needed languages in her research time frame. It was recommended that she find interpreters through the school in which she was doing her research at.

The researcher found interpreters through International School #45 to use for interviews. She prepared for these interviews by reading articles about proper protocols for interviewing with an interpreter. Two interpreters were used for the 4 languages.

Translators were deemed unnecessary due to majority of a lack of literacy in any language of the parents. Students were able to read, write, speak and listen in English, therefore they did not need an interpreter or translator.

Step Nine- Interview Protocol

Confidentiality and audio recording. The researcher conducted one-on-one interviews with a refugee parent, refugee parent's child or GRASP refugee parent through the use of an

interpreter provided by International School #45. These interviews were audio recorded in order to transcribe the interviews accurately. Participants were informed of the audio recording. Since most parents could not read the consent forms, interpreters read them out loud to the participants to make sure they were aware of confidentiality. The recording device was an RCA brand handheld audio recorder. The researcher did not find videotaping to be necessary to the study.

Time and location. The researcher chose to conduct interviews at the homes of the families for the non-GRASP child/parent interviews. These interviews took place at a convenient time for the participants. The interviews were estimated to take anywhere between 45 to 60 minutes, however they lasted between 20 and 25 minutes. Parents were called on the telephone before the researcher and Ms. Nichter came to their homes for the interview. Parents and children were briefed about the interview on the telephone.

The GRASP parent interviews took place after the researcher completed instructing an English lesson through GRASP. These interviews were estimated to take anywhere between 45 to 60 minutes, but only lasted between 8 and 15 minutes. Parents were asked to volunteer, however, it was explained that participation was optional. These interviews were conducted in a hallway outside of the classroom.

Step Ten- Modification of Interview Questions

Interview questions were originally designed for interviews at the International Institute of Buffalo. This planned research was for interviews with mothers and their child. The following table shows the questions that the researcher created in June that she was planning on using for the mothers.

Table 7

Interview Questions for Mothers at International Institute of Buffalo

Interview Question	Citation
How long have you been in the United States?	Wharry, 1993
What makes you Sudanese/Burmese/Vietnamese/Ukrainian?	Withers, 2004
In your life, do you feel you are keeping your Sudanese/Burmese/Vietnamese/Ukrainian culture? If you do, what do you do to make sure that you (and your children) keep you Sudanese/Burmese/Vietnamese/Ukrainian culture? If you do not, why do you think you are not keeping your culture?	Withers, 2004
If you have children, would you teach them Arabic/Burmese/Karen/Vietnamese/Ukrainian? Why or why not?	Shin, 2010
What do you think would happen if a Sudanese/Burmese/Vietnamese/Ukrainian person did not learn how to speak Arabic/Burmese/Karen/Vietnamese/Ukrainian? What effect would that have on his/her life, as well as the lives of others in the Sudanese/Burmese/Vietnamese/Ukrainian community?	Withers, 2004
What do you think the Buffalo community can do to help keep the Sudanese/Burmese/Vietnamese/ Ukrainian culture and language alive and strong?	Withers, 2004

The researcher was planning on asking children in the interview similar questions to their mother. However, these questions differed in which they asked more about their culture and how others see them. The following interview questions show what the researcher was planning on asking the child of the mother in the interview.

Table 8

Interview Questions for Children at International Institute of Buffalo

Interview Question	Citation
What makes you Sudanese/Burmese/Vietnamese/Ukrainian?	Withers, 2004
How important is it to you to maintain your Sudanese/Burmese/Vietnamese/Ukrainian culture in America?	Withers, 2004

Table 8 Continued

How do strangers see you? Can people guess your ethnic/racial background? What kind of comments do people make about your physical appearance, language (speech), name, other?	Shin, 2010
What do you think the Buffalo community can do to help keep the Sudanese/Burmese/Vietnamese/ Ukrainian culture and language alive and strong?	Withers, 2004

Ms. Nichter helped the researcher to modify her research questions via e-mail and also in person after observing her Karen class. The following table shows the questions the researcher chose to ask non-GRASP parents after they were modified.

Table 9

Karen Class Parent Interview

Interview Question	Citation
How long have you been in the United States?	Wharry, 1993
Should the Buffalo community keep Karen culture live and strong?	
What do you think would happen if a Karen person did not learn how to speak Karen?	
What effect would that have on his/her life, as well as the lives of others in the Karen community?	
In your life, do you feel you are keeping your Karen culture? If you do, what do you do to make sure that you and your children keep your culture? If you do not, why do you think you are not keeping your culture?	
In your life, do you feel you are keeping your Karen language? If you do, what do you do to make sure that you and your children keep your language? If you do not, why do you think you are not keeping your language?	
Should school teach the Karen class? Why or why not?	
What can the Karen class do to improve your child's Karen education?	

Table 9 Continued

How does the Karen class make you feel?

Have there been any viewable results with your child’s Karen due to their attendance in this class?

The following questions include the modified questions the researcher planned to ask children of the non-GRASP parents. These questions were also created with Ms. Nichter after observing the Karen class.

Table 10

Karen Class Child Interview

Interview Question	Citation
From what you have learned in your Karen class, what makes you Karen?	Withers, 2004
How important is it to you to maintain your Karen culture?	
How important is it to you to maintain your Karen language?	
Do you see yourself as being different or the same as the other students in your class? Why? How?	
How do you think the school can keep the Karen culture alive and strong?	
Should school teach you and others how to read and write in Karen? Why?	
How does your Karen class make you feel?	
Did you learn anything in your Karen class?	
Why did you parents sign you up for this class?	
Did you like this class? Why or why not?	
How can this class be better?	

After the first interview with non-GRASP parents and children, the researcher, along with Ms. Nichter, collaborated to figure out another set of improved questions. After the initial interview, the researcher felt that some of her questions were too wordy and difficult to be interpreted and answered. Ms. Nichter and the researcher improved the questions to make them more clear and easier to be answered. The researcher felt that these questions would accurately answer her research questions.

While collaborating with Ms. Nichter, it was decided that because the researcher had access to GRASP parents, she could have improved data if she interviewed GRASP refugee parents as well as non-GRASP adults and children. The researcher felt that by comparing data to three different groups of participants, she would find a variety of themes to answer her research questions. The final interview questions for GRASP parents, non-GRASP parents and their children can be found in the appendix.

Step Eleven- Request Permission from Buffalo Public Schools and Participants

After volunteering for GRASP at International School #45 for about a week, the researcher started her first interview at a non-GRASP parent and child's home. After about two weeks, she started her GRASP parent interviews. After half of the interviews were given, it was brought to her attention that she needed to seek approval from the Buffalo Public Schools to start the research and interviews.

The researcher contacted the Shared Accountability Department for the Buffalo Public Schools and was informed that she was to complete an External Data Request form. She promptly filled out this form, in which it asked for information regarding the study, who would be involved and important relating documentation for the research including Human Subjects Review approval letter, interview questions, consent forms and a description of the research.

The researcher was informed that her documentation needed to include the signature of her chairperson. She immediately contacted Dr. Kate Mahoney, who in return, promptly faxed her signature and a summary of the research to the Shared Accountability Department for the Buffalo Public Schools. The researcher was approved for her research on July 23rd, 2015 via a letter through e-mail. A copy of this letter can be found in Appendix B. Since the researcher had already completed a portion of her interviews, she asked the Shared Accountability Department for her approval to be retroactive. She was notified that this was allowed if she sent copies of the completed consent forms for her file with Shared Accountability, in which the researcher did immediately. She then finished the interviews for her research.

Students and their non-GRASP parents from the Karen class allowed the researcher to come to their home to conduct the interviews. After arrival, the parents were given a consent form for themselves as well as consent forms for a minor to participate in the interview. Students were also given their own consent forms. The consent forms were given to parents in English due to the lack of Karen literacy of parents. The interpreter explained the content of the consent forms to the parents so they were aware of the specifics of the interview. Students were not able to read in Karen, therefore they were given consent forms in English.

Step Twelve-Conduct Interviews

The researcher began her first non-GRASP parent and child interview during the second week of July. Ms. Nichter accompanied the researcher to the interview. Ms. Nichter brought student work to the interview to show parents what the student had been working on all year in their Karen class. This interview was held at the family's home in Buffalo, New York and lasted twenty minutes. Many of the family members were present during the interview. An extended family member served as the interpreter for the parents.

GRASP parent interviews were held during the last week of July. Burmese and Chin speakers were interviewed on the same day, and Nepali speakers were interviewed the following day due to scheduling with the interpreters. Interviews were held in the hallway outside of the classroom while Ms. Nichter was teaching the remaining students. The researcher set up a desk with 3 chairs, one for the participant, one for the interpreter and one for herself. Each interview lasted between 7 and 15 minutes.

The last two non-GRASP parent and child interviews took place on the same day during the last week of July, 2015. Both interviews were given at the family homes in Buffalo, New York. Once again, Ms. Nichter brought classwork from the students to show the parents what they had been working on in relation to the Karen language all year. In the first interview for this day, the mother, child, sibling and the child's friend was present. The mother was interviewed first, with interpretation, while the child was interviewed second, without any interpretation. Since the child's older sibling was present, and also a student at International School #45, she was asked to participate as well. She accepted and completed a consent form. Her mother had to fill out an additional consent form for this child because she was less than 18 years old. During the second interview, the mother, child, and many of the child's friends were present. The mother was first interviewed in a separate location in the home. When the mother's interview was completed, she called her child into the room for his interview.

Throughout the interviews, Ms. Nichter and the researcher added some relevant questions, in which they were recorded in the data. Often, given responses from participants prompted follow up questions for either clarity or elaboration.

Step Thirteen- Organize Results

The researcher transcribed the responses of the participants from her audio device of the refugee parents by carefully listening and writing down the responses. She also included additional questions and responses that she felt necessary to ask during the interviews. These were marked in italics. She took this raw data and organized the questions and responses into three easy to read tables. One table was made for the non-GRASP parent interviews, another was for the child interviews, and the last was for the GRASP parents. Within the tables, pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the participants.

Step Fourteen- Analyze Results

After the researcher carefully transcribed the interviews and put them into tables, she started the first stage of analysis. Analysis of qualitative data began by finding themes in the raw data (Hoepfl, 1997). The researcher used her tables by looking for important holistic themes in the interview responses. To do this, she took each question and compared responses across participants. She examined the themes between attitudes of both children and adults in maintaining the HL and looked to see how they differed or remained the same. In addition, she looked to find themes between how attitudes in relation to maintaining the HL differed or remained the same between parents who have recently arrived in the United States and parents who have lived in the United States for longer than 4 years.

According to Hoepfl (1997), the next stage of analysis was to reexamine the categories that were identified from the raw data in order to determine how exactly they are linked. This step was necessary in order for the researcher to be sure her themes were in fact from similar responses in the interviews. She then made sure that the research was transformed into something that could be easily read and followed by others (Hoepfl, 1997). The researcher

accomplished this by using the themes, similar phrases and words to accurately answer her research questions.

Themes

Through interview responses and a review of the literature, the raw data showed holistic themes across participants in the interviews. These themes include ideas of teaching their child the language at home, language and culture relating to identity, resources to maintaining the HL, the high importance of maintaining a HL, the possibility of teaching the language at school, and how the language is being maintained at home.

The researcher expected to find certain themes in the research due to what she had discovered from the literature. She expected to see themes of parents struggling to maintain the language, as well as parents struggling to keep culture at home in an English and American dominant society. Lastly, the researcher expected to discover suggestions on how Buffalo can keep various languages and cultures alive in the community.

Step Fifteen- Identify Limitations

While the researcher was able to interview refugees in some of the top refugee ethnic groups in Buffalo, this sample was not large enough to generalize a newcomer refugee, not newcomer refugee and child attitude on maintaining HLs. The researcher also had the opportunity to interview a refugee from Rwanda; however, due to lack of interpreters in this person's language, the interview was unable to be conducted. If the researcher was able to interview more refugee ethnic groups, the data could perhaps have shown more themes and results.

An extended family member interpreted the first family interview that was conducted. Results from the interview did not seem to be influenced by the interpreter being a relative,

however this cannot be known for sure. This family member only interpreted for the parents because they spoke Karen. The child from the Karen class spoke mostly English, so she did not need an interpreter. After this experience, the researcher decided that a non-family member would be best to finish the remaining interviews.

So the families that were interviewed would feel comfortable, Ms. Nichter accompanied the researcher to the non-GRASP parent and child interviews. Before each parent interview, she explained a little more about the Karen class that their child was enrolled in and how they did during the school year. She brought classwork from the students to show the parents what they had been doing in class all year. Also, Ms. Nichter explained to the parents, through an interpreter, why their child should be bilingual and the various benefits of bilingualism. Since there was a conversation about these topics before the interview, the child interviews were heavily influenced by this conversation. At times, the children showed similar opinions on interview topics. Parents may have also been influenced by conversation prior to interviewing.

Being that the teacher of the non-GRASP parent's child was present for interviews, parents and children may have felt that they needed to answer a certain way. Reasons for this can include feeling that the teacher may treat students differently if they respond a certain way, or feeling like they needed to impress the teacher with a specific answer. Despite being explained that the responses in no way would affect the student and the interview was completely voluntary, the interview responses may have still been affected.

Results

The researcher interviewed a total of five GRASP newcomer refugees, non-GRASP mother and father together, two non-GRASP mothers, and 4 students. The five GRASP parents represent almost all of the parents that participated in the summer program, GRASP. The students and their non-GRASP parents only represent a small number of all the students who were in the Karen class at International School #45.

All interviews took place during the month of July in 2015. After all interviews were conducted, the researcher transcribed the interviews. She uploaded the recordings on to her computer and listened to them a few times before she could get an accurate understanding of their responses. She recorded these responses in three tables, which are located in Appendices D, E and F. These responses are accurate, however they are not word-for-word.

All participants in this study have been given pseudonyms. Although the researcher did not use any identifying information, she felt that removing each participant's name would allow the participants to feel more confident in their responses to the interview questions. In addition, since the researcher used most of the participants in GRASP, she felt that giving pseudonyms would help maintain confidentiality.

Question 1: How long have you been in the United States?

GRASP parents that were interviewed ranged from being in the United States from one month to four years. Non-GRASP parents ranged from being in the United States from four to seven years. This research considers the non-GRASP parents to not be newcomer refugees since they have lived in the United States for a little longer than the GRASP parents.

Table 11

How Long Have you Been in the United States?

Participant Category	Summary of Statement
GRASP Parent	
Sayama	1 month.
Lai Lai	4 years.
Maw Kawai	4 years.
Alhad	2 months.
Amiya	2 years.
Non GRASP Parent	
Paw Moo Dar Mor and Paw Moo Dar Par	7 years.
Law Eh Mor	7 years.
Maung Maung Mor	4 years.

Question 2: How are you keeping your culture with your kids?

All parents including GRASP and non-GRASP parents who were asked if they want to keep their culture with their children said yes, and they partake in activities that do this. While all of these parents expressed this aspiration, two GRASP parents, Sayama, and Alhad, explained that while they want to keep their culture, they also think it is important for their children to learn English. All parents who were asked, practice keeping their culture through different ways at home. Paw Moo Dar Mor and Paw Moo Dar Par were not asked this question due to interview question modification after their interview.

Table 12

Do you Feel Like you are Keeping your Culture With your Kids? How?

Participant Category	Summary of Statement
GRASP Parent	
Sayama	I want to keep the culture and language but at the same time, I want my kids to learn English. At home, I encourage my kids to speak our native language and I also encourage them to follow the household that I set up.

Table 12 Continued

Lai Lai	At home I always teach my kids about the situations from our home country. I pray with them.
Maw Kawai	I still keep the culture. We read speeches from history and celebrate.
Alhad	Since my children came to the United States, it is good to know English. When my kids are at home, they can learn Nepali sometimes through stories or historical stories in Nepali.
Amiya	I like to keep the Nepali culture with my children. I want them to learn Nepali. I will teach them the religion and historical and cultural stories.

Non GRASP Parent

Paw Moo Dar Mor and Paw Moo Dar Par	N/A**
Law Eh Mor	Yes
Maung Maung Mor	Whenever we have cultural events, we ask our children to participate.

Note. **Indicate parts of the interview that were changed and therefore not asked. Some questions were asked with follow up questions. The researcher wrote a summary of the participant's statements. A more detailed table with the follow-up questions can be found in Appendices D, E, and F.

Question 3: How do you help your child keep their language?

All parents help their children to keep their native language. This is done in a variety of ways. Even though most of the parents could not read or write in their language, they find ways to teach some aspect of the language. For example, Paw Moo Dar Mor and Paw Moo Dar Par explained that because they cannot teach their own children Karen, they find family friends to help their children with literacy. Other parents such as Lai Lai, Alhad, Law Eh Mor and Maung Maung Mor choose to use their native language at home so their children learn to speak it, just concentrating on the speaking domain of the language. However, Amiya is the only parent who can read and write in her native language, so she teaches her child to write in Nepali.

Table 13

How do you Help your Child Keep their Language?

Participant Category	Summary of Statement
GRASP Parent	
Sayama	I teach them and hope they learn.
Lai Lai	I teach them at home. We sing in language. I want them to be able to read and write in it.
Maw Kawai	At home I read the bible in my native language to my children and go to church in our native language.
Alhad	Sometimes I teach at home, so when they are learning English, I teach Nepali too. I do not know how to read, so I teach through stories. I did not go to school in Nepal, but I took ESL classes in the United States. I can write a little.
Amiya	I teach them how to cook cultural food and how to respect their parents in our culture. I teach my child to read and write in Nepali. My son knows how to read, and because he is small, I am teaching him to write.
Non GRASP Parent	
Paw Moo Dar Mor and Paw Moo Dar Par	We have to find other friends to teach our kids and us to learn the alphabet.
Law Eh Mor	I use Karen language at home.
Maung Maung Mor	We always use our native language at home when we speak to our kids.

Note. Some questions were asked with follow up questions. The researcher wrote a summary of the participant's statements. A more detailed table with the follow-up questions can be found in Appendices D, E, and F.

Question 4: Do you think it is good to practice your culture and why?

All GRASP parents feel that it is important to keep their culture, and want to keep it.

Maw Kawai explained that anyone who lost their culture and heritage would also lose their

identity. This was a reoccurring theme from the literature. These parents connected their language and culture to identity.

These responses are by the GRASP parents, who are newcomer refugees. The time they have been in the United States is significant to these answers, as they may have not experienced difficulties in trying to maintain their culture in an American dominant society. However, Lai Lai has been in the United States for 4 years, and she has experiences that show a degree of difficulty to maintain her culture. She explained that her family could not practice their cultural performances because there is not a large Chin population in Buffalo.

Alhad shared that she would like to practice her culture, however, she felt that it is also important that her children learn American culture. Alhad may possibly have these opinions because of the short amount of time her and her family have been in the United States for. While learning American culture can take some time to adapt to, it will happen for newcomers. It is a natural phenomenon when living in a society with Americans. Being that Alhad's family has only been in the United States for two months, it may be a concern that they will not adapt to American society because they are still learning the basics of American culture. While families are focusing on this, they may be putting less focus on maintaining their culture, and therefore are likely to lose aspects of it.

Table 13

Do you Think it is Good to Practice your Culture and Why?

GRASP Parent	Summary of Statement
Sayama	I want to keep the culture at home and want my kids to wear things that are appropriate for our culture.

Table 13 Continued

Lai Lai	Even within Buffalo there are so many different dialects and therefore my kids have a very small population to celebrate with. We participate in cultural dinners and performances. The majority of Chins celebrate performances. Currently we don't have the chance to practice our own performances because of the lack of Chin population. In my culture, some customs are not appropriate for my children to celebrate at home. I do not really want to pass some of it along. The customs I do not wish to pass along are customs from before we became Christians.
Maw Kawai	Culture and heritage is very important for our children to maintain. Anyone who lost their culture and heritage would also lose their ethnicity.
Alhad	It is good to keep it at home. But sometimes it's a problem because I want my kids to know the English culture. I go to church in my language, have some books in my language, we wear cultural clothing and celebrate cultural holidays.
Amiya	I want to practice the Nepali culture. They have a variety of celebrations, festivals and holidays. According to each holiday, there are different rituals, and I want to keep them. I also want to keep the religious holidays. Sometimes we keep costumes and holidays from Nepal.

Note. Some questions were asked with follow up questions. The researcher wrote a summary of the participant's statements. A more detailed table with the follow-up questions can be found in Appendices D, E, and F.

Question 5: How would you feel if your child forgot their language?

Three parents mentioned that if their child forgot their language, it would be difficult for them to communicate with relatives. Not being able to communicate with elders or relatives due to a language barrier was considered to be a theme found from the interviews.

Two parents felt strongly that their children will not forget their language. Parents explained that since they only speak their language to their child (because they do not know English), it would be essentially impossible for their child to forget their language. This was expected of this interview question because all participants have only been in the United States

for seven years or less. Parents have not yet experienced any sort of struggle for their child to keep their language. Their child may not struggle to keep their language, however in an English dominant society, this can sometimes be difficult to maintain. In addition, when parents begin to learn English, it is possible that they will start to speak to their children in English more often, giving their language less attention.

Law Eh Mor brought up her feelings of disappointment if her children forgot Karen. She finds high value in bilingualism. She feels that it would be beneficial to not only her and her family's life that their children can speak to her and her husband in Karen, but also in her children's lives for the future.

Table 14

How Would you Feel if Your Child Forgot their Language?

Participant Category	Summary of Statement
GRASP Parent	
Sayama	I would be sad but I will try my best to maintain the language at home. It would be difficult for them to communicate with their relatives.
Lai Lai	When my children speak to relatives, it would be very hard to communicate if they do not speak the native language.
Maw Kawai	I will always try to keep the language at home. I will still continue to take them to church in their native language. I will try to teach them so they do not forget. It is impossible. As long as I live, I will try my best not to let my children forget the language.
Alhad	If they speak it at home, they will not forget it. Since everyone in our family speaks Nepali they will not forget.
Amiya	They may forget some culture or celebrations but they will not forget how to speak the language

Table 14 Continued

	because their family speaks it. It would make me sad because most of the elders only speak Nepali, so they would not be able to have conversations with them.
Non GRASP Parents	
Paw Moo Dar Mor and Paw Moo Dar Par	It would be difficult.
Law Eh Mor	We don't speak English, so we have to use Karen to communicate with our children. I would be disappointed. I think it is important to be bilingual.
Muang Maung Mor	Sad if they forgot how to speak Karen. For them to succeed they need to learn both languages. So it is very important for them.

Note. Some questions were asked with follow up questions. The researcher wrote a summary of the participant's statements. A more detailed table with the follow-up questions can be found in Appendices D, E, and F.

Question 6: Do you think it is good for your children to be able to read and write in your language and why?

Parents all believe that is important for their children to read and write in the language, with the exception of Sayama. Sayama was unsure of the importance because her children are little and she has yet to have an opinion on this subject. It was interesting that Maw Kawai and Lai Lai connected literacy in their language with maintaining and passing it along. Alhad, Paw Moo Dar Mor and Paw Moo Dar Par explained how they did not have education in their native country, so they wanted their child to be educated in their native language because they were never given the opportunity. Similarly, Amiya wanted her children to be able to learn to read and write in their native language in case they decided to return home some day. She noted the importance of learning literacy in the language for her children's future success.

Table 15

Do you Think it is Good for your Children to be able to Read and Write in your Language and Why?

Participant Category	Summary of Statement
GRASP Parent	
Sayama	Right now they only write well so I am not sure.
Lai Lai	It is very important to keep the language including reading and writing, and pass it along. They should learn how to read and write so they can help the family.
Maw Kawai	Yes it is important. It is important in order to maintain the culture and language.
Alhad	The camps were so small, so we do not know how to read in write in Nepali. But it is good to learn to read and write in it. It is good to have good speaking and writing in English. My son does not know how to write in Nepali. It is good to know writing in Nepali.
Amiya	It is good to know how to read and write in Nepali in case they went to their home country.
Non GRASP Parent	
Paw Moo Dar Mor and Paw Moo Dar Par	We did not have education in Karen so it is good that she can learn more.
Law Eh Mor	Yes, it is important for them to know the language.
Maung Maung Mor	It is very important. They should read and write in their native language.

Note. Some questions were asked with follow up questions. The researcher wrote a summary of the participant's statements. A more detailed table with the follow-up questions can be found in Appendices D, E, and F.

Question 7: Should school teach your child your language?

All GRASP parents agreed that they think school should teach their child their language. However, some parents expressed hesitation at the idea because they did not think it would be possible. The Karen class is a new class, and has proven to be successful, so while parents feel that their child learning their native language in school might be impossible, this might not be

true. Maw Kawai explained that she tries to teach her children her language, but it is difficult, so it would really help her if her children were taught at school.

Table 16

Should School Teach your Child your Language?

GRASP Parent	Summary of Statement
Sayama	If it is possible I would be very appreciative.
Lai Lai	I would really like the school to teach Chin because my children will learn faster than just at home. My children forgot some words in Chin. If I ask them something, they do not really understand.
Maw Kawai	Yes I want school to teach my native language. At home I try my best to teach my kids their native language and if the schools do that, it would be better.
Alhad	It would make me happy if they taught Nepali in schools because we could not learn it in the camps.
Amiya	Yes, it would be good to have Nepali but I do not think it would be possible. If more teachers spoke Nepali and would teach it, I would sign my children up for it because other family members speak it.

Note. Some questions were asked with follow up questions. The researcher wrote a summary of the participant's statements. A more detailed table with the follow-up questions can be found in Appendices D, E, and F.

Question 8: How does the Karen class make you feel?

All children who were asked how their Karen class made them feel, responded positively. All students from this class felt that the Karen class offered something. For example, Maung Maung explained that Karen is important to not only the school's diversity, but to learning the English language. Law Eh said the Karen class makes him happy because he is Karen. He was linking his feelings about this class to how it helps him form his identity from learning about the culture in school.

Question 9: Have you noticed your child's Karen getting better and how?

When asked this interview question, all participants could agree that their children's Karen was improving. In fact, Law Eh and Maung Maung's mothers both explained that whenever their children come home from school, they read to them in Karen. Not only does this show that their children's Karen is improving, but it shows that they are excited and proud of their accomplishments from this class.

Question 10: Should school keep teaching the Karen class?

Non-GRASP parents with children in his class all agreed that the school should continue to teach this class. They responded that it is a place for their children to learn the language. As mentioned earlier in the interview, parents often have a difficult time teaching their children their native language, so the Karen class is a good place for them to learn it.

Question 11: What makes you Karen?

Students were able to use their knowledge from their Karen class to answer this question. Students learned many things about what makes someone Karen versus what does not make someone Karen. Therefore, each child's answer is specific to what makes each child individually feel Karen. All children with the exception of Maung Maung focus on the aspects of culture and how theirs makes them different.

Question 12: Is it important for you to keep your Karen language?

It is of great importance to this research that all of these children, being at the young age of eight to nine years old, with the exception of Paw Hoo, who was in middle school, believe in the strong importance of their native language. These students are only in third grade and yet they already are aware that knowledge in their native language will bring them success. This awareness shows that these students are already motivated to learn their native language if given

the resources to do so, and motivation is a very large part of language maintenance. Paw Hoo's response to this question showed that she knows, even though she is only in middle school, that knowing her native language will give her more success as she gets older.

Table 17

Is it Important for you to Keep your Karen Language?

Child Participant	Summary of Statement
Paw Moo Dar	Yes because it is the first language I know. Without Karen, I would not know how to speak English. Karen is special because it was my first language.
Law Eh	Yes because I need to keep English and Karen balanced because you do not want Karen to be lower and English to be higher.
Paw Hoo	Yes because when we grow up, the more we learn, the more we succeed.
Maung Maung	Yes because it helps me know how to speak English. If you do not know how to speak Karen, you wont have your family to talk to you in Karen.

Note. Some questions were asked with follow up questions. The researcher wrote a summary of the participant's statements. A more detailed table with the follow-up questions can be found in Appendices D, E, and F.

Question 13: Do you see yourself as being the same or different as the other kids in your class?

Two participants, Paw Moo Dar and Maung Maung mentioned that they see themselves as being different from their classmates in their non-Karen classes because of language differences. In addition, Paw Moo Dar and Law Eh explained that they see themselves as being different because of the way they look. Paw Hoo, who is older than the other children in this research, expressed that she often feels the same as her classmates and often feels different. She feels the same when she is speaking the same language as other students, and feels different at home because at home she has friends who only speak Karen. This is significant because Paw Hoo and Maung Maung only expressed that they feel different because of their languages.

International School #45 has a large variety of cultures, and it is important to note that out of all of the cultural differences, they only mentioned language.

Question 14: How do you think the school can keep your Karen culture alive?

Participants explained how they think the school could keep their Karen culture alive. They all mentioned ideas that the school has already been doing. This includes continuing the Karen class, displaying work from this class, and continuing with the Karen board, which is a board displayed in the front of the school that gives information about the language. This informs the research in a way that suggests that the Karen class is successful, as well as success in keeping the language and culture alive in International School #45.

Table 18

How do you Think the School can Keep your Karen Culture Alive?

Child Participant	Summary of Statement
Paw Moo Dar	They could wear Karen clothing, keep the Karen class going and teach non-Karen speakers, Karen.
Law Eh	The Karen class.
Paw Hoo	We can continue with the Karen board in front of the school (it is a board with the Karen alphabet, numbers, and the Karen flag. Everything about Karen).
Maung Maung	Showing our work in Karen.

Note. Some questions were asked with follow up questions. The researcher wrote a summary of the participant's statements. A more detailed table with the follow-up questions can be found in Appendices D, E, and F.

Question 15: Should school teach you and others to read and write in Karen?

The Karen class teaches students to read and write in Karen. Students were asked if they think school should teach not only Karen students, but also others, to read and write in Karen. All students thought school should teach them and others to read and write in Karen. Paw Moo Dar shared that she thought it would be great to teach other people Karen and to also learn about

it. She wants students of other cultures to know more about her culture, which is notable because this response was not expected. The researcher expected children to not yet be aware of their differences. Paw Hoo explained that if Karen people can learn together, they can remember their culture. The Karen class is very helpful in the lives of these Karen students because many of them came to the United States when they were very young and may not remember a lot from their native country. Paw Hoo believes that this class could help her and other students to remember their life at home, including culture and traditions. Also, she shared that her other friends only know English. By allowing her other friends to take this class, she may feel like they would have a lot to gain by not knowing “only English.”

Paw Hoo is in middle school and therefore was not given the opportunity to learn to read and write in Karen. She can speak the language, however. Later in the interview, she was asked how she will use her Karen when she gets older, and she responded by saying that she plans on speaking in it to her patients when she is a doctor. Within the same answer, she explained that if she can find a teacher to teach her to write in Karen, she would learn to write in it. She was also asked how she would make sure she would not forget the language. She responded stating that if she was given the opportunity to take a Karen class, she would take it. It was interesting that Paw Hoo repeatedly brought up the idea of being able to take a Karen class in the future. This showed that she feels being able to formally learn Karen will give her more opportunities in her future.

Table 19

Should School Teach you and Others to Read and Write in Karen?

Child Participant	Summary of Statement
Paw Moo Dar	Yes because we can teach other people how to speak Karen and to learn about it.

Table 19 Continued

Law Eh	Yes, to keep my languages balanced.
Paw Hoo	Yes, if we learn together we can remember our culture. We can write better in our language. My other friends only know English.
Maung Maung	Yes because it helps you understand English and Karen.

Note. Some questions were asked with follow up questions. The researcher wrote a summary of the participant's statements. A more detailed table with the follow-up questions can be found in Appendices D, E, and F.

Question 16: How does your Karen class make you feel?

The children answered this question positively. The Karen class made Paw Moo Dar happy because they can wear cultural clothes to class. Law Eh felt that the class made him happy as well, because he is learning the language of his heritage. Maung Maung took a general approach and said that the class is nice because it is important to the school and English language learning. Maung Maung seemed to feel that Karen was beneficial to not only himself, but to others in his school.

Question 17: What did you learn in your Karen class?

Students learned a variety of language basics in their Karen class. Paw Moo Dar said she learned Karen numbers, the alphabet, and the time. Maung Maung had a similar response in which he said they completed venn diagrams comparing and contrasting English and Karen, as well as Karen numbers, letters and words. Law Eh took a cultural approach and explained that he had learned about Karen culture and traditions. The responses of this question show the research what each student felt was most significant from their Karen class.

Question 18: Did you like this class?

The responses were as expected for this question. All students liked this class. Two students, Law Eh and Maung Maung mentioned that this class was fun. Paw Moo Dar liked this class because it was special to her. This could be due to the fact that she is Karen and is one of the few children who were signed up for this class, based on their ethnicity.

Question 19: How can this class be better?

Suggestions on how to improve the Karen class mostly centered on keeping it going. Maung Maung wanted to learn more numbers, and Law Eh wanted to learn more in general, such as writing in long sentences. If the Karen class were to continue, they may be able to reach these goals. Paw Moo Dar suggested that more students should take this class. This suggestion was interesting, as it showed that she wants to share her culture with the rest of the school, and perhaps with other cultures and languages. It also shows that she would like to use the language with more students in the future.

Discussion

All parents want to maintain HL and culture

The attitudes of the non-GRASP parents were positive when asked about whether or not they wanted to keep their language and culture. They found great importance in their Karen heritage and their child's Karen heritage. Two parents felt that knowing both Karen and English were beneficial to their child's future as well.

GRASP parents were very confident about keeping their language and culture. It is important for newcomer refugees to keep and practice their culture in the United States. This was a theme found throughout the interviews of GRASP parents. Maw Kawai's response about how losing culture and heritage would mean a loss of ethnicity was seen throughout the literature. According to Brown (2011), Jeon (2008), Guardado (2008), Pacini-Ketchabaw et al. (2001), Li (1999), Hatoss & Sheely (2010), and Shin (2010), the HL is a critical aspect of a child's identity. It was clear that GRASP parents felt this way as well. However, some parents felt that it was of equal importance for their children to know English and the English (American) culture.

Children recognized the importance of maintaining language and culture

The children of the non-GRASP parents seemed to be even more motivated than the parents to maintain their Karen culture. The children ranged from elementary to middle school age. The theme from many of the child responses was the importance of keeping Karen. The review of the literature emphasized that many children are not motivated to learn their HL, and that they do not realize why it is important. In the study by Jeon (2008), students were asked why they felt HL schools were ineffective. They explained that they were ineffective because they did not attend due to lack of motivation, extra curricular activities and disagreement with

teaching style. Students in the research did not say anything similar to these responses. They were very motivated to learn their HL. Unlike some students who feel alienated from others for being different, these students felt special that they were able to be in a class that taught them about their HL and culture.

Will attitude change over time?

It is possible that with time spent as residents in the United States, attitude will change over time. Families currently live in neighborhoods that have many refugees containing many different cultures and languages. These families are immersed in such diversity everyday, which may have given way to their positive attitudes about keeping their language and culture. Throughout their residency in the United States, they may experience situations that cause their attitudes to change. International School #45 is a very accepting school, so it is a possibility that attitudes may change when students and parents are no longer associated with this school.

Children were younger than most participants in the literature

The literature showed results from studies by Jeon (2008), Oriyama (2010), and Shin (2010) that explained how language ideologies are not the same throughout a person's life. Jeon (2008) explained that when younger, his participants were not motivated to learn their HL of Korean, and started to learn about how important it was to them in college. In addition, Lee (2009) also studied a Navajo student who found the importance of her language in connection to her culture and identity after college. Fishman (2006a) felt that when students transition from high school to college, it is a good time to have students be involved with their family and their HL. These studies have shown that many students become more involved with their culture, heritage, and HL once they become older. However, Oriyama (2010) found that his Japanese-Australian participant took until junior high school to think of himself as Japanese. Paw Hoo is

in junior high school and she already is confident in her heritage and HL. The researcher was not aware if she had always been confident about her heritage, however, at the time of the interview, it was evident.

Contrary to the literature, students from this research were familiar with how important their heritage and HL were at the age of around eight to nine and thirteen to fourteen (Paw Hoo). When compared to the literature, it stated that this is more typical of older students, perhaps from high school or college. It is possible that students may have had these attitudes due to various reasons. These reasons by include their community and school being very racially diverse, or the environment of their Karen class and teacher.

Impact of Karen class and teacher

The Karen HL class was created by Ms. Nichter. Being an English as a New Language (ENL) teacher, she is aware and advocates for the benefits of bilingualism. During this class, she was sure to emphasize how being bilingual will benefit the students in their future. She explained how not only does she want her students to be bilingual, but she wants her students to be balanced bilinguals, equally fluent in English and Karen. It is possible that Ms. Nichter had great influence over her students, which led them to respond to the interviews in such a positive way. However, one participant, Paw Hoo, was not a student of Ms. Nichter's. She showed a lot of knowledge in the area of bilingual benefits, so students may have been impacted by additional sources in addition to the Karen class and teacher.

Parents did not believe the myth that learning two languages at once is confusing

While it is a myth that learning two languages at once can confuse a child, it can be difficult to convince someone otherwise. In the review of the literature, Jeon (2008) explained that Korean parent participants did not enforce the HL because they believed their child would

fall behind in school. Also, King (2010) found that Saraguro people from the Southern Ecuadorian Andes did not like to teach their children the language of Quichua because they believed their child would impede their learning of the more dominant language of Spanish. It was expected that parents in this research would believe learning the HL in school along with English would confuse their child. However, none of the parents in this research believed this. These refugee parents were very involved in their children's education. To be worried about learning another language along with English in school would be an understandable concern, even though there is no truth to being confused by learning two languages at once.

Further research

The researcher felt that this research would be highly beneficial if further research were done on this topic through a longitudinal study. This type of research would be able to follow the participants through different scenarios of their lives and determine their attitudes relating to culture and HL along the way. Since all participants were in the United States for less than seven years, attitudes may change over time. At the time of this study, parents did not know much English. However, when they start to acquire the language, they may begin to speak English more, and their HL less, resulting in a decline of usage in the language and consequently, altered attitudes. A longitudinal study would be able to tell whether or not the participants attitudes changed, and why or why not.

Recommendations

The results from this research study showed that refugees in Buffalo, New York were maintaining their culture and language. Not only were parents maintaining these things, but they had positive attitudes about how their language will help their children in the future. Children felt special to have been part of a class at school that not everyone was able to take. The

researcher felt that the Karen class was a class that students really enjoyed taking because it gave them pride in their culture and language.

Culturally relevant classroom

The Karen classroom was very culturally relevant to the students, which is yet another possibility of why students had positive attitudes toward their culture. This classroom had labels all over the classroom furniture in different languages, the alphabet in Karen and English, and maps around the room. Everything around the classroom was something that each student was able to relate to.

Not only was the physical set-up of the room culturally relevant, but the content was also culturally relevant. Students in the Karen class learned about the culture as well as the language. Since all students in the class were Karen, this information was very relatable to each student's life. They learned the history of their State, as well as some common customs and traditions. They were able to learn why some of these traditions are being practiced today. Since these students practice their customs at home, this class was a way for students to be able to understand why they practice what they practice at home.

Supporting and maintain HL at International School #45

International School #45 in Buffalo has a large number of languages spoken, and also a large number of different cultures. This school is very accepting of diversity. Even by stepping just one foot in this school, one would see the different flags and languages posted on the walls throughout the school, and know that they appreciate the diversity. The literature explained that public schools could play a role in maintaining HL (Kennedy & Romo, 2013). The researcher feels that this public school, in particular, did play a role in maintaining HL. By allowing the Karen class to be taught, students are being sent the message that their HL is important and they

should be proud to speak it. This was shown by the responses the students gave about why it is important for them to keep their language, and how they felt about this class. In addition, many of the teachers and interpreters were personally familiar with the families that did not speak English. This shows that the faculty really makes an effort to form a good rapport with their students and families.

Translanguaging as an instructional strategy

The Karen class, and many other classrooms at International School #45 use a practice called Translanguaging. According to Hornberger & Link (2012), The notion of translanguaging refers broadly to how bilingual students communicate and make meaning by drawing on and intermingling linguistic features from different languages. Ms. Nichter used this strategy in her classroom frequently. This is also a way for students to be aware that their native language is appreciated.

Recommendations for HL maintenance

The city of Buffalo, New York is a designated refugee resettlement city. It is likely that the parents and children in this study were able to maintain their language in an English speaking dominant American community due to the resources they had available. Since many refugees live in this area, International School # 45 took advantage of the opportunity to embrace the cultures and languages spoken.

Acceptance in public schools

Public schools can show acceptance for different languages and cultures by learning from International School #45. The researcher learned that in addition to hanging up flags, showing student work in different languages, and posting different languages on the walls, the announcements everyday will be said in a different language in addition to English. This school

makes many different additions and goes out of its way to be accepting to all students. Allowing students to be able to clearly view the message that their cultures and languages are respected, can really influence how they choose to maintain their culture or language.

Limitations

The researcher interviewed participants from Burma, Nepal, and the Karen State in Burma. Due to the large diversity of refugees in Buffalo, this only makes up a small number of the countries in which refugees from Buffalo come from. The researcher had the opportunity to interview a participant from Rwanda. Due to the lack of resources of an interpreter in her language of Kinyarwanda, she was unable to be interviewed. The researcher considers this to be a limitation because if she were able to receive responses from this participant, she would have data for one more culture and language.

All participants in this research were only residents of the United States for seven years or less. They were asked about their attitudes on their language and culture. The participants may have not been in the United States long enough to have had any experiences that negatively affected their attitudes. It would have been beneficial to the research to have a participant that had been in the United States for longer than seven years.

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Appendix A



12 June 2015

Ashley LaRotonda
c/o Kate Mahoney, Ph.D.
Language, Learning and Leadership
College of Education
The State University of New York at Fredonia

Re: Ashley LaRotonda—Attitude of Mothers and Children Toward Maintaining Their Heritage Language

Your research project using human subjects has been determined Category 1, Exempt, under the United States Department of Health and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Public Welfare, Part 46 Protection of Human Subjects, 46.101, Subpart A (b) (1) and/or (2). This document is your approval and your study titled “Attitude of Mothers and Children Toward Maintaining Their Heritage Language” may proceed as described. **Your approval is valid from July 1, 2015 through August 1, 2015.**

Thank you for keeping the high standards relating to research and the protection of human subjects under the auspices of the State University of New York at Fredonia.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Judith M. Horowitz'.

Judith M. Horowitz, Ph.D.
Associate Provost, Graduate Studies, Sponsored Programs
and Faculty Development
Human Subjects Administrator

Appendix B

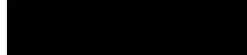


Darren J. Brown
Interim Superintendent

Dr. Genelle Morris
Assistant Superintendent/CIO

July 23, 2015

Miss Ashley Larotonda



Re: Request for Research Activity

Dear Miss Larotonda:

Congratulations! Your Research Request entitled "Attitudes of Parents and Children in Maintaining their Heritage Language" has been approved.

Please make arrangements to meet with administration at the school that you have been approved to work with before beginning your study. Remember that participation is optional.

All approved documents relating to your study may be requested from my office by administration if needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Genelle Morris".

Genelle Morris, Ed.D.

C: Lynn Piccirillo, Principal #45

Office of Shared Accountability

Room 808 City Hall Buffalo, New York 14202

Phone: 716.816.3035 • Fax: 716.851.3044 • Email gmorris@buffaloschools.org

Putting children and families first to ensure high academic achievement for all

Appendix C

Non GRASP Parents

- How long have you been in the United States?
- Do you feel like you are keeping your Karen culture with your kids? How?
- How do you help your child keep their language?
- Do you teach your child Karen? How?
- How does the Karen class make you feel?
- Have you noticed your child's Karen getting better? How?
- Do you think it is good to practice your culture? Why?
- How would you feel if your child forgot Karen?
- Do you think it is good for your children to be able to read and write in Karen? Why or why not?
- Should school teach the Karen class? Why or why not?

Child (Karen Class)

- What makes you Karen?
- Is it important to you to keep your Karen language? Why?
- Do you see yourself as being different or the same as the other students in your class? Why?
- How do you think the school can keep the Karen culture alive and strong?
- Should school teach you and others how to read and write in Karen? Why?
- How does your Karen class make you feel?
- What did you learn in your Karen class?
- Did you like this class? Why or why not?
- How can the class be better?

GRASP Parents

- How long have you been in the United States?
- Do you feel like you are keeping your Nepali/Burmese/Chin culture with your kids? How?
- How do you help your child keep their language?
- Do you teach your child Nepali/Burmese/Chin? How?
- Do you think it is good to practice your culture? Why?
- How would you feel if your child forgot Nepali/Burmese/Chin?
- Do you think it is good for your children to be able to read and write in Nepali/Burmese/Chin? Why or why not?
- Should school teach your child Nepali/Burmese/Chin? Why or why not?

Appendix D

Non GRASP Parent	Paw Moo Dar Mor and Paw Moo Dar Par (Family 1)	Law Eh Mor (Family 2)	Maung Maung Mor (Family 3)
How long have you been in the United States?	7 years.	7 years.	4 years.
Do you feel like you are keeping your Karen culture with your kids and how?	N/A**	Yes, we use the Karen language.	Yes, we practice the Karen culture.
Do you keep any customs or traditions?	Yes.	Yes.	Whenever we have cultural events, we ask our children to participate.
How do you help your child keep their language?	We have to find other friends to teach our kids and us to learn the alphabet.	I use Karen language at home.	We always use our native language at home when we speak to our kids.
Do you teach your child Karen and how?	N/A**	No, I do not read or write in Karen.	We do not have time to teach the kids Karen. We only speak to them in it.
How does the Karen class make you feel?	Happy. <i>How can the Karen class be improved?</i> They could learn more about the culture, people, and language. Everything Karen.	Great because they can learn their native language.	It makes me happy that the school teaches my child his native language.
Have you noticed your child's Karen getting better and how?	Yes	Yes, when he comes home he reads to me.	He comes home and reads to me about whatever he learned in school.
Do you think it's good to practice your own culture?	N/A**	Yes, I really want my children to preserve the culture. It is very important.	Yes, we wear Karen clothes to special events.
How would you feel if your child forgot Karen?	It would be difficult.	We don't speak English, so we have to use Karen to communicate with our children. <i>If your children got older and did not speak Karen would that make you sad?</i> I would be disappointed. I think it is important to be bilingual.	Sad if they forgot how to speak Karen. For them to succeed they need to learn both languages. So it is very important for them.
Do you think its good for your children to be able to read and write in Karen and why?	We did not have education in Karen so it is good that she can learn more.	Yes, it is important for them to know the language.	It is very important. They should read and write in their native language.
Should school keep teaching the Karen class and why?	Yes because it is somewhere for Karen children to learn Karen. <i>What do you think would happen if a Karen person did not know how to speak Karen?</i> It would be hard for the family. <i>How would it affect their life?</i> It would be difficult for their life in America and if they go back to Karen State it would be difficult.	Yes so the kids will be able to maintain the family culture and language.	Yes, the students will learn more.

Note. Italics indicate questions that were asked in addition to pre set interview questions. **Indicate parts of the interview that were changed and therefore not asked.

Appendix E

Non GRASP children	Paw Moo Dar (Family 1)	Law Eh (Family 2)	Paw Hoo (Family 2)	Maung Maung (Family 3)
What makes you Karen?	We lived in the Karen state. <i>Are there other things that make you Karen?</i> My clothing and what I eat.	My language and my traditions of Karen.	I celebrate different holidays, wear different clothes and I cook different food. We do not really live the same way as American people.	I know lots of Karen language.
Is it important for you to keep your Karen language?	Yes because it is the first language I know. <i>How important is it for you to keep your Karen culture?</i> Without Karen, I would not know how to speak English. Karen is special because it was my first language.	Yes because I need to keep English and Karen balanced because you do not want Karen to be lower and English to be higher.	Yes because when we grow up, the more we learn, the more we succeed.	Yes because it helps me know how to speak English. If you do not know how to speak Karen, you wont have your family to talk to you in Karen.
Do you see yourself as being the same or different as the other kids in your class?	I am different because some of them speak other languages and also how they dress and look.	Different because they look different from me. Their faces look different.	Sometimes I feel kind of different and some times I feel the same. When I speak the same language I feel the same as them, and when I am at home I feel different. <i>Why do you feel different at home?</i> I do not really get to see my friends at home. I only have friends that speak Karen. I have English speaking friends at school and Karen speaking friends at home. <i>Do you ever speak English at home? With who?</i> Yes. With my brother. <i>Do you ever try to teach your mom English?</i> Yes. She watches movies and sometimes I tell her what they are saying.	Different because some of my classmates speak other languages like Nepali and Bengali.
How do you think the school can keep your Karen culture alive?	They could wear Karen clothing, keep the Karen class going and teach non Karen speakers Karen.	The Karen class.	We can continue with the Karen board in front of the school. <i>What is the Karen board?</i> It is a board with the Karen alphabet, numbers, and the Karen flag. Everything about Karen.	Showing our work in Karen.
Should school teach you and others to read and write in Karen?	Yes because we can teach other people how to speak Karen and to learn about it. <i>Do you think its good to teach other people Karen?</i> Yes so we can talk to each	Yes, to keep my languages balanced.	Yes, if we learn together we can remember our culture. We can write better in our language. My other friends only know English.	Yes because it helps you understand English and Karen.

	other.			
How does your Karen class make you feel?	Happy because we have different clothes.	Happy because it teaches me Karen because I am Karen.	N/A*	Nice because Karen is important to the school and English.
What did you learn in your Karen class?	Numbers, the ABCs and the time. <i>Why do you think your parents signed you up for this class?</i> So I would learn more Karen because I started school only learning English.	Culture and traditions.	N/A*	Venn diagrams about Karen and English. Karen numbers, letters and words.
Did you like this class?	Yes because it is special.	Yes because it was fun. I like to write essays.	N/A*	Yes because it was nice and fun. We had cupcakes and watched movies.
How can the class be better?	If they get more students to speak Karen. <i>Why do you want there to be more students taking this class?</i> So they can learn more Karen. <i>How do you think your parents would feel if you did not learn Karen?</i> Sad because they love Karen.	If I learned more. I want to learn how to write in long sentences.	N/A* <i>When you get older do you think you will use your Karen and how?</i> Yes, I want to become a doctor so when Karen patients come, I could speak to them in Karen. If there's a teacher who can teach me how to write in Karen, then I can do that too. <i>How are you going to make sure you do not forget Karen?</i> If there's a Karen class at school, I can go there and teach myself Karen. I will practice and speak with other speakers.	Showing me more Karen numbers.

Note. Italics indicate questions that were asked in addition to pre set interview questions. *Indicate parts of the interview that were changed and therefore not asked.

Appendix F

GRASP Parents	How long have you been in the United States for?	How are you keeping your culture with your kids?	How do you help your child keep their language?	Do you think it is good to practice your culture and why?	How would you feel if your child forgot their language?	Do you think it is good for your children to be able to read and write in your language and why?	Should school teach your child your language?
Sayama	June 11 th , 2015 (one month).	I want to keep the culture and language but at the same time, I want my kids to learn English. At home I encourage my kids to speak our native language and I also encourage them to follow the household that I set up.	I teach them and hope they learn.	I want to keep the culture at home and want my kids to wear things that are appropriate for our culture.	I would be sad but I will try my best to maintain the language at home. <i>Why would you be sad if your child forgot how to speak Burmese?*</i> It would be difficult for them to communicate with their relatives.	Right now they only write well so I am not sure.	If it is possible I would be very appreciative.
Lai Lai#1	July 27 th , 2011 (4 years).	At home I always teach my kids about the situations from our home country. I pray with them.	I teach them at home. We sing in language. I want them to be able to read and write in it.	Even within Buffalo there are so many different dialects and therefore my kids have a very small population to celebrate with. We participate in cultural dinners and performances. The majority of Chins celebrate performances. Currently we don't have the chance to practice our own	When my children speak to relatives, it would be very hard to communicate if they do not speak the native language.	It is very important to keep the language including reading and writing, and pass it along. They should learn how to read and write so they can help the family.	I would really like the school to teach Chin because my children will learn faster than just at home. My children forgot some words in Chin. If I ask them something, they do not really understand.

				<p>performances because of the lack of Chin population. In my culture, some customs are not appropriate for my children to celebrate at home. I do not really want to pass some of it along.</p> <p><i>Why don't you want to pass some customs along?</i></p> <p>The customs were from before we became Christians.</p>			
Maw Kawai #2	4 years.	I still keep the culture. We read speeches from history and celebrate.	At home I read the bible in my native language to my children and go to church in our native language.	<p>Culture and heritage is very important for our children to maintain. Anyone who lost their culture and heritage would also lose their ethnicity.</p> <p><i>How would you feel if they couldn't speak chin?</i></p> <p>I will try to teach them so they do not forget. It is impossible. As long as I live, I will try my best not to let my children forget the language.</p>	I will always try to keep the language at home. I will still continue to take them to church in their native language.	Yes it is important. It is important in order to maintain the culture and language.	Yes I want school to teach my native language. At home I try my best to teach my kids their native language and if the schools do that, it would be better.

<p>Alhad</p>	<p>2 months.</p>	<p>Since my children came to the United States, it is good to know English. When my kids are at home, they can learn Nepali.</p> <p><i>How do you do that with your kids?</i> Sometimes through stories or historical stories in Nepali.</p>	<p>Sometimes I teach at home, so when they are learning English, I teach Nepali too.</p> <p><i>Do you read books in Nepali to your child? How do you teach it?</i> I do not know how to read, so through stories. I did not go to school in Nepal, but I took ESL classes in the United States. I can write a little.</p>	<p>It is good to keep it at home. But sometimes it's a problem because I want my kids to know the English culture. I go to church in my language, have some books in my language, we wear cultural clothing and celebrate cultural holidays.</p>	<p>If they speak it at home, they will not forget it.</p> <p><i>What if they forgot it when they were older and only spoke English?</i> Since everyone in our family speaks Nepali they will not forget.</p>	<p>The camps were so small, so we do not know how to read in Nepali. But it is good to learn to read and write in it. It is good to have good speaking and writing in English. My son does not know how to write in Nepali. It is good to know writing in Nepali.</p>	<p>It would make me happy if they taught Nepali in schools because we could not learn it in the camps.</p>
<p>Amiya</p>	<p>Since 2013 (2 years).</p>	<p>I like to keep the Nepali culture with my children. I want them to learn Nepali. I will teach them the religion and historical and cultural stories.</p>	<p>I teach them how to cook cultural food and how to respect their parents in our culture.</p> <p><i>Do you teach your child to read and write in Nepali?</i> Yes. My son knows how to read, and because he is small, I am teaching him to write.</p>	<p>I want to practice the Nepali culture. They have a variety of celebrations, festivals and holidays. According to each holiday, there are different rituals, and I want to keep them. I also want to keep the religious holidays.</p> <p><i>Do you practice any customs in the US from Nepal?</i> Yes, sometimes we keep costumes</p>	<p>They may forget some culture or celebrations but they will not forget how to speak the language because their family speaks it. It would make me sad because most of the elders only speak Nepali, so they would not be able to have conversations with them.</p>	<p>It is good to know how to read and write in Nepali in case they went to their home country.</p>	<p>Yes, it would be good to have Nepali but I do not think it would be possible. If more teachers spoke Nepali and would teach it, I would sign my children up for it because other family members speak it.</p>

				and holidays.			
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Note. Italics indicate questions that were asked in addition to pre set interview questions.