BEING “CRITICAL:” WHAT SHOULD CHINESE HERITAGE LANGUAGE SCHOOLS DO?

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ACTFL Convention
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# Chinese Language Education in the U.S.

(Wang 2012a; 2012b)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formal Education System (Top-down)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Language</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual Ed/English Language Learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Home/Community (Bottom-up)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home/Heritage Language</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Chinese Heritage Language Schools in the U.S. (Wang, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Type</th>
<th>Chinatown Chinese Schools</th>
<th>National Council of Associations of Chinese Language Schools (NCACLS)</th>
<th>The Chinese School Association in the United States (CSAUS)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When</td>
<td>19th Century</td>
<td>Early 1970s</td>
<td>Early 1990s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Origin</td>
<td>Southern China; After 1976, ethnic Chinese from Southeast Asia</td>
<td>Taiwan; After late 1990s, adoptive and interracial families</td>
<td>People’s Republic of China, Hong Kong, adoptive and interracial families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Variety Taught</td>
<td>Cantonese, Taishanese, Hakka</td>
<td>Mandarin, a few teach Taiwanese (a Min Dialect)</td>
<td>Mandarin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Mandarin
- Cantonese
- Taishanese
- Hakka
- Taiwanese
- Min Dialect
Post 2004:
Major Players in Chinese

U.S. Government:
  — Federal Government (NSLI)
  — State and Municipal Efforts

Chinese Government: Hanban
  — Confucius Institutes
  — Confucius Classrooms

NGOs:
  — College Board
  — Asia Society
  — National Foreign Language Center, University of Maryland

(Wang, 2012a)
# Enrollments in Higher Education Language Courses


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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chinese</strong></td>
<td>615</td>
<td>28,456</td>
<td>34,153</td>
<td>51,582</td>
<td>60,976</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# Chinese Language Enrollments in K-12 Schools

*(ACTFL, 2011, Table 6)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>*FL Enrollment</th>
<th>Percent **CI</th>
<th>Percent of Chinese Language Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>20,292</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>59,860</td>
<td>+/2.13%</td>
<td>0.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*FL=foreign language; **CI=confidence interval*
## Heritage Language Programs (2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of System</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Est. Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NCACLS (Taiwan)</td>
<td>800+</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSAUS (PRC)</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>80,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,200+</td>
<td>150,000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Han, 2012; Liu, 2012; Wang, 2012
An essential question asked by many Chinese heritage communities:

- Now that Chinese language has become a “critical language,” to be promoted in the formal education system in the United States, should we continue our efforts to sustain our heritage language schools (HLSs) or programs?

*Wang’s recommendation: Yes, both efforts—Chinese as a World Language and Chinese as a Heritage Language—can co-exist and benefit each other if we can leverage resources from both sides.*
Why should Chinese heritage schools continue to exist?

- A HLS is an oasis for the Heritage Discourse (HD) in the dominant society.

- No outsiders will transmit your heritage language and culture for you: Community members are architects and engineers for building the oasis.

- Children need role models in their own group: Adults are role models, empowering agents, and support systems for children to acquire the HD and the Dominant Discourse (DD).

- A HLS is a bonding agent: It is an enterprise that requires collective and long-term investment from the community, families, and individuals.

(Wang, 2014)
Create ethnic heritage “Hubs” in the dominant society

These hubs are special spaces for:

• Physical location
• Linguistic practice
• Social and cultural perspectives, products, and practices
• Time together for special purposes
• Bonding and sharing
What cannot be relegated to formal world language programs:

- Intergenerational transmission of “Heritage Discourse”: content, genres, perspectives, voices, and emotions are different from Chinese as a WL

- Children’s identity formation

- Development and conversion of human, cultural, and social capital in both the dominant and heritage Discourses

(Hornberger & Wang, 2012)
Rethink how to define and assess outcomes of heritage language development

• **Our current view:**
  
  • A monolingual and deficit model that focuses on what HL learners *cannot* do
  
  • Too Idealistic without giving sufficient consideration to children’s challenges in identifying their affiliations and gaining linguistic exposure to the heritage and dominant languages in the U. S. context

• Not differentiated and nuanced enough in defining learning outcomes in biliteracy in English and the heritage language
A proposed view

• Define learning outcomes and measure student learning in Chinese language and cultures.

• Help families define the core of realistic intergenerational transmission of “heritage.”

• Help children and other language speakers and learners find authentic identity in and engagement with both languages and cultures.
Conclusion:
(1) HL and WL fields collaborate by

• Granting students access via multiple points of entry and exit in HL and mainstream WL programs

• Creating “Seals of Biliteracy” or Credit by Proficiency that enable HL students to receive academic recognition or credits for their biliteracy, as in the states of California, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, and Washington

• Encouraging students to expand their HL capacity by enrolling in advanced courses in the mainstream system

• Developing engaging curriculum and pedagogy designed to bring students’ HL forward
Conclusion:
(2) Consider heritage languages and cultures as capital

• As cultural capital, they enable us to connect with the past and the future.

• As social capital, they enable us to engage with others.

• As human capital, they enable us to expand our worlds.

Planning Language Capacity for the United States: Top-down support and bottom-up efforts must be mobilized and coordinated.
Thank you

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References (1)


References (2)


A serious World Language Education Gap in the United States

http://www.startalk.umd.edu