Heritage languages at school: Implications of linguistic research on bilingualism for heritage language teaching

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Abstract: This paper discusses the implications of linguistic research on heritage bilingualism for heritage language teaching. It is argued that heritage speakers and second language learners have different instructional needs in the classroom because teaching of a heritage language is a case of native language instruction. Based on a number of comparative studies on heritage speakers and second language learners of European Portuguese, we show that heritage language acquisition is indeed different from L2 acquisition. The linguistic differences between the two groups of speakers can be accounted for by considering their age of onset of acquisition, the type of input they are exposed to, the type of knowledge they mainly rely on, the relative importance of cross-linguistic influence and the relevance of linguistic complexity and timing of acquisition. We argue that these findings have implications for heritage language teaching in the classroom, such as, for example, the necessity of appropriate diagnostic tools for determining the linguistic proficiency of heritage bilinguals, the provision of access to the standard variety by supplying adequate spoken as well as written input sources, the focus on properties of the language which are late acquired and only learned on the basis of formal instruction and the fostering of explicit linguistic knowledge.

1. Introduction

The present paper discusses potential implications of linguistic research on heritage language (HL) acquisition for language teaching. We will argue that heritage speakers (HSs) and second language learners (L2ers) represent fundamentally different learner types and, therefore, have different needs in the classroom. We discuss the particular linguistic demands of these groups of learners and provide suggestions on how to take them into account.

HSs are simultaneous or early bilingual speakers of a minority language who acquire their HL, i.e. their home language, in the context of a dominant environmental language (see Rothman 2009; Valdés 2000). In contrast, L2ers are successive bilinguals who have already successfully acquired one (or more) first language(s) in childhood when they acquire an L2 at a later age. The typical L2er starts to acquire his/her knowledge mainly based on classroom instruction, even though there are, of course, also other types of L2 speakers who acquire

their L2 only through immersion. We will concentrate on the former type of learner. Importantly, heritage bilinguals' linguistic knowledge is mainly based on naturalistic input. Although the two groups differ from each other with respect to age of onset of language acquisition and with respect to the type of input they are exposed to, there are also similarities in some aspects, e.g. both groups of speakers have command of an additional and dominant language and they receive less and different input in comparison to monolinguals. Several studies show that this may lead to similarities between HSs and L2ers (Cuza/Frank 2015; Keating et al. 2011; Kupisch 2012; Montrul 2010; O'Grady et al. 2001); for instance, both may show similar effects of transfer (Montrul 2010). Nevertheless, studies comparing both speaker types also demonstrate that heritage bilinguals and late L2ers differ from each other in many respects. On the basis of these results, we argue that similarities between L2ers and HSs are often only superficial and that the two groups have different language learning needs in the classroom. Consequently, different approaches to language teaching, different curricula and different learning tools are adequate for the two groups of learners. More concretely, we will show that, for heritage bilinguals, grammar instruction has an instrumental function serving the development of linguistic competence and should particularly focus (a) on complex linguistic phenomena, which are acquired late in first language acquisition and (b) on properties related to the formal register.

The paper is structured as follows. In the second section, we will provide evidence from comparative studies on L2ers and HSs of European Portuguese (EP), showing that HL acquisition is indeed different from L2 acquisition. In the third section, we will address various factors shaping the differences between the two groups of learners. In the fourth section, we will sketch some concrete proposals on how to implement our findings in the classroom. Section 5 summarizes and concludes.

2. HL and L2 acquisition as different types of learning: Empirical evidence

In this section, we will provide empirical evidence from different studies comparing L2ers and HSs of EP who live in Germany, showing that both types of acquisition ought to be differentiated.

The first study (Flores et al. 2017) compared the morphosyntactic and the phonetic competence of EP heritage bilinguals and German L2ers of EP. It contrasted the performance of the two groups with respect to their morphosyntactic knowledge of pronominal clitics and their global accent. We tested the morphosyntactic knowledge of pronominal clitics of the speakers because the EP pronominal system is different from the German system of object pronouns and it shows a high degree of variability in form and position. The results revealed interesting differences between L2ers, heritage bilinguals and monolingual speakers. Portuguese clitic forms show allomorphic variation depending on the phonological context, as shown in (1a-c).

(1) a. A Maria viu-o. (non-shaped form)
'Mary saw him.'
b. As meninas viram-no. (shaped form after nasal ending)
'Mary did not see him.'
c. A Maria pode fazê-lo. (shaped form after *-r*, which drops)
'Mary can do it.'

With respect to allomorphic forms of the clitic pronoun (1a-b), L2ers were clearly more accurate than HSs in their judgments. Interestingly, monolinguals and HSs showed identical variation regarding the type of shaped form, *-lo/la* (1c) being less problematic than *-no/-na* (1b), given the greater phonetic saliency of the former. This asymmetry was not found in the L2ers' judgments.

Concerning the variability of clitic climbing (examples 2a-b), HSs were much more prone to accept grammatical clitic climbing structures (2b) than L2ers and even more than monolinguals. The reason is that the climbed order is dispreferred in written and formal registers, although it is the preferred order in spoken EP (Barbosa et al. 2017). Schoolteachers of EP in Portugal often correct the climbed order to the non-climbed one (2a). The particular performance of the HSs thus reflects their reliance on spoken and colloquial input.

(2) a. O João pode comprá-lo na semana que vem.
the John can buy=it in-the week that comes

b. O João pode-o comprar na semana que vem.
the John can=it buy in-the week that comes
'John can buy it next week.'

Interestingly, EP shows some accusative-dative case asymmetries, which lead to variation in the spoken language. The first asymmetry is related to topicalization structures: Although topicalization with and without resumption (examples 3a-b) is grammatical in EP, the monolingual speakers who participated in this study found topicalization without clitic resumption more acceptable in the dative than in the accusative condition. HSs performed just like monolinguals and more target-like than L2ers, both in terms of general adequacy of their judgments and in terms of showing the expected case asymmetry. L2ers recognized topicalization with resumption (i.e. clitic left dislocation) as grammatical in EP but they hardly recognized at all that topicalization without clitic resumption is also part of the EP grammar.

(3) a. A Linda não gosta de doces,
the Linda not likes of sweets
mas, o teu bolo, ela comeu / comeu-o com prazer.
but the your cake she ate ate=it with pleasure
'Linda doesn't like sweets but she ate your cake with pleasure.'

b. À sua mãe, o João ofereceu / ofereceu-lhe flores.
to.the his mother the John offered offered=to.her flowers
'To his mother, John offered flowers.'

In contrast, although EP – as opposed to German – does not allow for strong pronouns in object position (examples 4a-b), L2ers and HSs diverged from the monolinguals in accepting these structures to some extent. However, their judgments differed in an interesting way: HSs and monolinguals significantly differentiated between the dative and accusative conditions - they accepted strong datives more than strong accusatives. This correlates with the observation that there is some variation in colloquial speech (Brito 2008): Native speakers of EP produce such structures more often in the dative than in the accusative. L2ers, on the other hand, did not show a case asymmetry.

(4) a. *O professor chumbou ele.
the teacher failed him

b. ??A mãe ofereceu uma pizza a eles.
the mother offered a pizza to them
'His mother offered pizza to them.'

The same study also investigated HSs' and L2ers' pronunciation by applying a global accent rating task in which speech samples of 12 heritage bilinguals, 6 L2 learners and 6 monolingual speakers were rated by 46 monolingual EP listeners according to their degree of nativeness.[1] Specifically, this task aimed at determining whether native speakers of EP perceived the accent of Portuguese heritage bilinguals who lived in a German-speaking country as (i) similar to the accent of Portuguese monolingual speakers or (ii) more similar to the accent of highly proficient German speakers of L2 Portuguese. As shown in Figure 1, the results revealed clear differences between the groups: In the monolingual group, the participants were consistently rated as native speakers of EP, with a high level of certainty. By contrast, the raters classified the L2ers consistently as having a non-native accent. Although the ratings of the heritage bilinguals showed more variation concerning the degree of nativeness of their accent in comparison to the monolinguals, the mean score of the HSs' group was very close to the monolinguals'. Figure 1 shows the mean ratings received by each participant.

[1] The global accent rating task consisted of two steps, following the procedure of de Leeuw et al. (2010) and Moyer (2004). In a first step, after listening to a triad of sentences, informants made a binary judgment by labelling it as a sample of native EP speech or non-native speech. In a second step, the speakers had to indicate their degree of certainty on a three-point scale (1 = certain, 2 = semi-certain, 3 = uncertain). For statistical analysis, the two judgments were combined and converted into a 6-point Likert scale (1 = certain of native speech, 2 = semi-certain of native speech, 3 = uncertain of native speech, 4 = uncertain of non-native speech, 5 = semi-certain of non-native speech; 6 = certain of non-native speech).

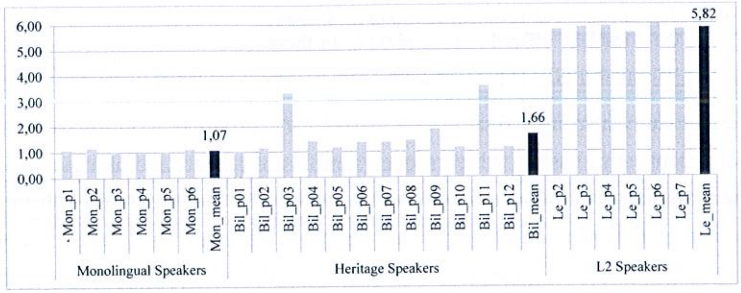

Figure 1: Degree of nativeness per group (from Flores et al. 2017).

These results suggest that proficient L2ers' pronunciation is clearly distinct from that of HSs of EP. Early exposure to a language, even in the context of acquisition of a minority language, is a strong predictor of native-like phonetic proficiency, although there might exist some inter-individual variation.

In another study on HSs of EP living in Germany, Santos/Flores (2016) compared a group of 20 school-age heritage bilinguals (9-11 years old) with 20 age-matched children living in Portugal. In addition to the child participants, two adult groups were tested: 21 EP speakers raised in a monolingual context and 21 L2ers of EP whose L1 is German (all university students). The study investigated knowledge of adverb placement and production of VP-ellipsis, two aspects of grammar that depend on a core syntactic property of the language: verb movement.

Regarding adverb placement, the results indicate similar performance across child and adult groups, showing that late L2ers and heritage children have no problems in acquiring adverb placement. No influence of a V2 grammar was attested in this domain.

The more interesting results of this study come from the (written) task which elicited constructions that aimed at avoiding redundancy within the VP (see (5a) for a very redundant text; one redundant VP is marked in bold). To reduce redundant information, participants could resort to VP-ellipsis (5b), a structure that exists in EP but not in German, or other structures that are part of the

grammar of both languages (using pronouns or adverbs (5c), argument drop (5d) or pseudo-stripping[2] (5e)).

(5) a. A Marta e a Margarida gostam muito de ir a parques. Este verão, a Marta não tem feito muitos piqueniques no Parque das Conchas, mas a Margarida **tem feito muitos piqueniques no Parque das Conchas**.
'Marta and Margarida love to go to parks. This summer, Marta has not made many picnics in the Parque das Conchas, but Margarida has made many picnics in the Parque das Conchas.'

b. … mas a Margarida tem (feito).
but the Margarida has (done)

c. … mas a Margarida tem feito piqueniques lá.
but the Margarida has done picnics there

d. … mas a Margarida tem feito no Parque das Conchas.
but the Margarida has done in.the Parque das Conchas

e. … mas a Margarida sim.
but the Margarida yes

Table 1 shows the distribution of answers per structure in the stimuli with auxiliary verbs in total numbers and in percentages (example of a stimulus in (5a)).

group	VPE (aux V)	VPE (main V)	pseudo-stripping	pronouns adverbs	argument drop	noun ellipsis	total answers
L1 adult	44 55.7%	12 15.2%	15 19%	7 8.9%	0 0%	1 1.3%	79
L2 adult	18 26.1%	8 11.6%	22 31.9%	21 30.4%	0 0%	0 0%	69
heritage children	14 24.6%	18 31.6%	0 0%	17 29.8%	7 12.3%	1 1.8%	57
L1 children	15 23.4%	31 48.4%	0 0%	4 6.3%	14 21.9%	0 0%	64

Table 1: Distribution per answer types (%), auxiliary in the stimulus (from Santos/Flores 2016).

The overall results show that the EP heritage children perform much more similarly to EP monolingual children than to the L2ers, when they have to reduce redundant information. For instance, both child groups use argument drop (including null objects) in this context, contrary to the adult groups. Furthermore,

[2] Pseudo-stripping is a mechanism of ellipsis in coordination structures where everything but one constituent is elided in the second conjunct and an adverb expressing similarity or dissimilarity with the first conjunct (e.g. *sim* 'yes') is added (see Depiante 2000; Santos 2009).

neither monolingual nor bilingual children use pseudo-stripping, also differing from the adult groups. In addition, the higher proportion of production of pseudo-stripping in the L2 group, when compared with the L1 group, indicates a preference for this structure (which exists in their L1 German) instead of using VP ellipsis (the preferred structure for EP speakers). Finally, and as a core conclusion of the study under review, heritage children show that they have acquired VP ellipsis and they produce it at rates that are comparable to monolingual children at the same age. This is particularly relevant, since according to Santos (2009), VP ellipsis is acquired very early (before 2;0), on a par with the very early acquisition of verb movement in EP and on the basis of the high frequency of VP ellipsis in colloquial EP in answers to yes-no questions. We will get back to this type of facts in the next section.

In general, this study constitutes a piece of evidence in favor of the approaches to heritage bilingualism which defend that HL acquisition is an instance of native language acquisition, showing similar processes of grammar development (see Rothman/Treffers-Daller 2014). L2 learning, on the other side, shows particularities not attested in heritage grammars.

3. Factors explaining the distinction between L2 and HL knowledge

The studies reported so far have revealed that HSs and L2ers – despite showing superficial similarities – differ in interesting ways. In this section, we will systematize these findings in order to better characterize both types of learners.

The first obvious difference between HSs and L2ers is the onset of acquisition. As in other cases of acquisition of an L1, HSs are exposed to the HL in their family, typically from birth. By definition, L2 speakers, even in cases of child L2, are exposed to the L2 language later, after the relevant period of acquisition of the core aspects of their L1 (see Schwartz 2004, among others).

One important and related finding is that HSs and L2ers rely on different input sources. This means that both populations acquire their linguistic knowledge on the basis of qualitatively different input: HL acquisition is (almost exclusively) based on aural and colloquial input – as in the first stages of L1 acquisition –, whereas L2 acquisition in the classroom is based on both aural and written input,

mainly pertaining to the standard variety. The study on HSs' vs. L2ers' knowledge of clitics summarized in the preceding section (Flores et al. 2017) has shown that HSs are very sensitive to variation in the aural input. Their judgments reflect that they are recognizing the variability present in the colloquial register, the different clitic climbing options and the different topicalization strategies with and without resumption. In contrast, L2ers tended to systematically reduce variability to only one option, possibly the one that they were explicitly taught in the classroom, typically the option available in the standard variety. In the case of clitic climbing, they resorted considerably more to the non-climbed order, which is the preferred option in formal and written EP. With respect to topicalization, L2ers tended to only accept topicalization with resumption (i.e. with the presence of a resumptive clitic pronoun/clitic left dislocation). This construction is the object of explicit instruction and often contrasted with the German type of topicalization (without resumption). This may lead L2ers to assume that clitic left dislocation but not topicalization without resumption is part of the grammar of EP.

Reliance on written and formal input sources brings advantages in some domains of grammatical knowledge as shown by the results concerning allomorphic clitic forms, which are problematic for the HSs but less so for the L2ers. However, the results also show that the more salient these forms are in the spoken language, the more accessible they are for HSs.

The same study also points to another major difference between HSs and L2 speakers acquiring language in formal contexts: The fact that the latter, but typically not the former, have built relevant explicit linguistic knowledge, which they can use as a resource, especially in off-line tasks. Even though the study shows that HSs and L2ers may diverge in similar ways from monolinguals in their judgments, it has become clear that they do so for different reasons. HSs are native speakers who rely in these tasks mainly on their implicit linguistic knowledge; in contrast, L2 speakers who acquire the language through formal instruction also have access to a large amount of explicit knowledge, which they may be using to solve the tasks. This became obvious by comparing the judgments of the two groups with respect to strong pronouns and topicalization. HSs and monolinguals, but not L2ers, have access to subtle accusative-dative asym-

metries. Although both HSs and L2ers overaccepted strong forms in object position, the HSs and monolinguals differentiated between the accusative and the dative, contrary to the L2ers. The fact that L2ers accept strong pronouns in object position may be due to the influence of German.[3] However, this is less likely for the type of answers given by HSs because German does not show a case asymmetry and it would be unclear why HSs differentiate between the accusative and the dative.

Hence, the weight that cross-linguistic influence has in each of the two groups is an additional aspect distinguishing the linguistic knowledge of HSs and L2ers. There is evidence that cross-linguistic influence plays a more prominent role in the case of L2 acquisition than in the case of HL acquisition. As shown by the study on VP-ellipsis (Santos/Flores 2016), when reducing redundant information, monolingual children and adults as well as bilingual heritage children show a clear preference for VP ellipsis in EP, whereas the L2 group resorts much more to pseudo-stripping – a structure which is, in contrast to VP ellipsis, also available in their first language, German.

That cross-linguistic influence may not be a strong factor predicting the outcome of heritage bilingualism has also been shown by studies comparing bilingual speakers with different language combinations. One particular study, which analysed heritage EP in contrast with Spanish and German, was Rinke/Flores (2018), with respect to anaphora resolution.

In null subject languages like EP, null pronouns in subordinate clauses tend to refer to the subject of the main clause (topic continuity) and overt pronouns to the object of the main clause (topic shift).

(6) O rapaz$_i$ cumprimentou o avô$_j$ quando *pro*$_i$ / ele$_j$ chegou a casa.
The boy$_i$ greeted the grandfather$_j$ when *pro*$_i$ / he$_j$ came home
(Lobo/Silva 2016: 321)

In non-null subject languages like German, overt subject pronouns signal topic continuity and demonstratives express topic shift.

(7) Der Junge$_i$ grüßte den Großvater$_j$, als er$_i$/dieser$_j$ nach Hause kam.
'The boy greeted the grandfather when he/this one came home.'

[3] Note that an influence from Brazilian Portuguese (BP) is not plausible in this case. L2ers who claimed to have regular contact with (or strong influence from) BP were excluded from this study.

It has been shown in many studies that anaphora resolution is a vulnerable domain in simultaneous bilingual and L2 acquisition (Sorace 2011), because bilinguals tend to interpret overt pronouns in null subject languages in terms of topic continuity instead of topic shift (Tsimpli et al. 2004). However, this effect cannot be attributed to cross-linguistic influence, given that it occurs independently of whether the two languages of the bilingual are a non-null subject language and a null subject language or two null subject languages, as has first been argued by Sorace et al. (2009). The study by Rinke/Flores (2018) comparing German-EP and Spanish-EP bilingual heritage children and adolescents with monolingual children/adolescents and adults also revealed that differences between the bilinguals and the monolinguals occur independently of the contact language. German-EP bilinguals and Spanish-EP bilinguals do not differ at all from each other, and it turned out that it is not decisive whether the contact language is a non-null subject language or not.

Let us now point to what may seem a common factor determining HSs and L2ers: Restricted input, concerning not only its quality but also its quantity. We aim at showing that, also in this case, differences are more important than similarities. To understand this, we must look at exposure along linguistic development. As has often been highlighted, a major characteristic common to the majority of HSs is that their exposure to the HL radically diminishes once they start schooling, when schooling occurs in the majority language, as it is typically the case. HSs are therefore characterized by a radical drop in the quantity of input and opportunities of language use at some point during their infancy, at 6 years or earlier. In contrast, the amount of exposure in the case of L2ers who acquire a language in formal contexts tends to be steadier, even though high variability may be observed also in this population, depending on several factors, including the occurrence of immersion periods.

Therefore, the effects of restricted input in the case of HSs must be seen in light of the fact that input reduction most often occurs between the end of infancy and adolescence. It is thus expected that the influence of restricted input becomes particularly evident with respect to properties of the language that are acquired late in first language acquisition.

A case in point is the distribution of the subjunctive in some contexts, as shown by Flores et al. (2017). The results of this study demonstrated, based on an aural sentence completion task which elicited complement clauses, that the acquisition of the subjunctive by German-EP heritage bilinguals in this context may be protracted in comparison to monolingual L1 acquisition. This is particularly evident in contexts where also monolingual EP children show delayed development, i.e. in complement clauses introduced by weak epistemic verbs (Jesus 2014). Nevertheless, HSs of EP with German as their environmental language display the same stages of acquisition of mood selection as monolingual children and older bilingual children (adolescents) showed high proficiency. This contrasts with the general low performance of L2 learners of EP in the domain of mood choice (Bento 2013).

The fact that reduced input is indeed relevant for the acquisition of complex properties which are acquired late in L1 acquisition could be confirmed by the observation that bilingual children who only used Portuguese at home used the subjunctive in a more accurate manner significantly earlier than children with Portuguese and German as home languages. In contrast, for the adolescents, the sociolinguistic background was no longer a relevant factor. The authors concluded that restricted input affects the timing of acquisition of linguistic properties but not its ultimate attainment.

This finding is confirmed by a follow-up comparative study on the acquisition of the subjunctive by German-EP bilinguals living in Germany and French-EP bilinguals living in France. Flores et al. (2019) demonstrate that children living in France do not show advantages in subjunctive selection in complement clauses relatively to children living in Germany, although French encodes the same semantic values as EP in the mood system, whereas mood selection in German is not guided by the same semantic features. The study concludes that cross-linguistic influence plays a minor role in the explanation of the results obtained and that restricted input explains the particular developmental path observed in the two groups of HSs.

In contrast to late acquired properties such as the subjunctive, properties acquired early in L1 acquisition are less problematic and usually very stable in heritage bilinguals' language competence. This could be shown by the results

obtained in the accent rating task (see Section 2), in which HSs displayed native-like pronunciation, but also by the experiment aiming at assessing verb movement and properties associated to it (e.g. adverb placement and VP ellipsis), which are very early acquired in L1 acquisition of EP (Santos 2009).

To summarize, Table 2 presents an overview of the different factors distinguishing heritage bilinguals and L2 learners.

	heritage speakers	**classroom L2 learners**
onset of acquisition	(typically) from birth	after the acquisition of a L1
type of input	more colloquial register restricted access to formal registers	more formal register restricted access to colloquial registers
type of knowledge	judgments rely more on implicit knowledge	judgments rely more on explicit knowledge
cross-linguistic influence	less relevant	more important, especially at earlier stages of acquisition
timing of acquisition/ linguistic complexity	advantage of properties which are acquired early	no clear advantage

Table 2: Differences between HL acquisition and L2 learning.

In the next section, we will discuss potential implications for classroom instruction.

4. Didactic implications

It is very often the case that HSs are integrated in the same classes as L2ers and that both groups are considered to have similar instructional needs. However, the simple observation of Table 2, in the preceding section, would easily lead to the conclusion that both speaker groups have different needs. This is indeed expected if HSs are native speakers of their HL.

One important outcome of the discussion in the preceding sections is the fact that a central factor underlying several differences between monolinguals and HSs, as different subtypes of native speakers, is linked to the type of schooling instruction in the HL (or its absence). Therefore, manipulating this factor must be central in determining the acquisition outcome. This is also in agreement with the assertion in Bayram et al. (2016), concerning the end state of acquisition of a HL, when the HSs receive literacy training, as monolinguals do:

> Recent work has shown that when HSs, defined by the context of the acquisition in early childhood, receive significant literacy training in the heritage language as part of their primary education they show very few to no differences from age-matched monolinguals in adulthood (Bayram et al. 2016: 2).

In what follows, we will highlight the didactical consequences of the main characteristics of HL acquisition, as defined in the preceding sections, and define how schooling can correspond to the HSs' needs. This exercise means to assume the bidirectionality of the interactions between linguistics and research on language teaching: On the one hand, we will explore the consequences of the linguistic studies and results outlined in the preceding sections to define methodological and didactic answers to HSs. On the other hand, we are assuming that language teaching influences linguistic development (see Hudson 2004).

The first step in shaping a relevant answer to HSs' needs is a good diagnosis of the students' linguistic knowledge. This is generally true in education, but it is especially important when the teacher deals with a very diverse population. The question is therefore particularly relevant in the case of HSs, since the diversity of HSs' profiles and the diverse proficiency resulting from it is one of their major characteristics (see Montrul 2016). For instance, even though it is generally assumed that HSs are proficient in phonology and knowledge of the lexicon, in contrast with certain areas of syntax, there are also studies which found specific production and perception difficulties among HSs (see Bayram et al. 2016 for a review) and significant variability in lexical knowledge (Correia/Flores 2017). A good diagnosis of students' linguistic knowledge implies the development of assessment tools adapted to the type of linguistic profile presented by HSs, which is different from the case of monolinguals as well as from the case of L2 speakers. The development of such tools is identified here as a priority.

The second step in contributing to a relevant educational answer for HSs implies assuming, in the case of instruction in a HL, a similarity with other situations of native language teaching, namely those in which the students are not speakers of the standard variety.

In the preceding sections, we have shown that HSs are native speakers, since they are generally exposed to the HL from birth, but contrary to monolinguals, their linguistic knowledge results from reduced input, both quantitatively and

qualitatively. In particular, they have reduced access to the type of input that monolinguals get during school years, including structures associated with formal and written registers of the language. If the HSs' families are not speakers of the standard variety, as it is often the case, their children lack access to it, whereas in monolingual contexts, in cases in which the families are equally not speakers of the standard variety, the standard variety comes with schooling.

More generally, as in the case of monolinguals, HSs who enter school and become dominant in the majority language are still in the process of developing knowledge of their HL, i.e. performing in a non-adult manner in areas of expected late development. This means that they lack the relevant input at the moment at which some generally late acquired properties are "scheduled" to be acquired. If we take the acquisition of EP as a case in point, there is now ample evidence for the late development (through teenage years) of several structures, as well as, in certain cases, evidence for the impact of schooling, contact with formal registers of the language and even the impact of formal instruction in these areas of late development. Relevant examples include the acquisition of the distribution of clitics according to the standard grammar (Costa et al. 2015; Santos 2002), the production of relative clauses involving pied-piping[4] (Fontes 2008; Valente 2008), the expression of contrast through different types of coordinate clauses and concessive subordinate clauses (Costa 2010; Prada 2001) or the expression of causality (Ferreira 2010). Not surprisingly, most of these areas are also areas of (sociolinguistic) variation in the language (e.g. clitics and relative clauses) – see Costa et al. (2015) and Barbosa et al. (2017) for clitics; Peres/Móia (1995) and Herdeiro/Barbosa (2015) for relative clauses. When one considers these facts, it is clear that the HSs' teacher faces a problem that is not new in native language teaching: The combination of late development, variation and absence of home exposure to the standard variety.

In this situation, teaching (a HL) must in first place be conceived as providing the relevant input. This input is provided by the aural interaction with the teach-

[4] Pied-piping is a phenomenon of syntactic discontinuity and typically occurs in interrogative or relative clauses. In these constructions, a preposition moves along with the wh word (e.g. a relative pronoun) to the clause initial position: e.g. *This is the man about whom he heard stories.* Languages differ with respect to whether they allow for pied-piping (or whether they require it) and with respect to what can be pied-piped.

er and all the written materials used in the class, namely texts, exercises, questionnaires. In general, and given what was previously said, we expect the choice of these materials to be guided by a focus on less frequent structures and lexicon as well as on structures and the lexicon associated with formal registers of the language (i.e. the standard variety). These structures are generally also at least partially coincident with the set of structures expected to be late acquired in monolingual settings.

One last question concerns how students' attention to linguistic structures should be guided and what kind of linguistic knowledge we are aiming at. To this question, we suggest an answer inspired again in a number of studies in monolingual settings, including those which integrate bidialectal students.

The first assumption is that a descriptive view of grammar should be preferred to the traditional prescriptive view. A consequence is recognizing the relevance and the linguistic validity of the HL grammar. This is an important achievement, inasmuch as HSs' linguistic knowledge is very often the object of a double prejudice: HSs are speakers of a minority language in the community in which they are inserted and their language is often associated to a community with low socio-economic status; in addition, in the country of origin of their families, they are very often speakers of a (socially negatively marked) non-standard variety (see, for instance, Koven 1998 for self-reports on HSs' personal experience in this domain). But how does the teacher show that he/she recognizes HSs' grammars? With Wheeler (2010), who discusses the place of African American English in the classroom, we would like to suggest that "the method is the message". If HSs' grammars are considered relevant linguistic objects, they should be the object of study in the language classroom, on a par with the standard variety. This is an adequate answer for linguistically diverse classrooms in general. The teacher's role is to guide the student in the comparison of the two varieties and to foster the observation of lexicon and structures not available in his/her own variety (namely those strictly associated to formal uses of language).

As a consequence, the student acts in the classroom as a linguist, looking at his/her own grammar and other grammars as objects of study and using scientific methods of analysis. Such an approach to the language classroom is not

new, but has been advocated by many, notably by Hudson (1992) in the British context and by Duarte (1992) in the Portuguese context (see also Honda et al. 2010, on linguistics literacy as scientific literacy). In the specific case of HSs, we could add to the classroom the value of the comparative analysis of the HL on a par with the dominant language in the community. The benefits are clear: The construction of systematic and explicit knowledge concerning similarities and differences of the two languages and, once again, recognition of the HL, which contributes to the students' linguistic confidence and self-esteem.

The type of comparative analysis that we suggest should be a core activity in the HSs' classroom and aims at building explicit linguistic knowledge. This is not the complete answer: If the texts for reading and listening activities are correctly chosen, if the materials, genres and themes for speaking activities are adequate and if the teacher acts as a model, we are providing students with relevant input for acquisition to occur. Choosing correctly means in this case to choose the materials that contain the linguistic structures that research suggests to be in deficit and the teacher's diagnosis proved to be problematic for that particular group of students. However, what we want to suggest is that school adds value to the student's linguistic knowledge when instruction adds explicit linguistic knowledge.

Why is explicit linguistic knowledge relevant? This is an old question in the context of language teaching. Let us first insist on an obvious advantage of activities aiming at developing metalinguistic competence by using the scientific method to compare grammar patterns: They develop meta-cognition. The development of meta-cognition has a general positive effect on children's achievements at school. Moreover, as Wheeler (2010: 138) puts it, the type of conscious code-switching needed to determine the relevant variety to be used in a particular situation "requires cognitive flexibility, the ability to think about a task or situation in multiple ways, as it requires that children think about their own language in both formal and informal forms".

Indeed, a very common question when discussing the value of metalinguistic knowledge concerns its effects on language use. In other words, can explicit knowledge of language be used to control language use, e.g. in formal written and aural tasks which require the use of the standard variety of the HL? There is

a long tradition of denial of the effectiveness of grammar teaching in the development of advanced competences of language use, namely writing skills (see Hudson 2001 for a critical discussion), even though this research tradition has always considered grammar instruction and writing instruction in isolation. In contrast, recent research focusing on contextualized grammar instruction has shown significant effect of grammar teaching on writing performance (Jones et al. 2013). Even though this particular research has been conducted with monolinguals, there is no reason for not expecting it to have similar effects on HSs.

5. Summary

In this paper, we have argued that HSs have particular needs concerning classroom instruction in their HL, which differ from those of second language learners. Studies comparing L2ers and HSs of EP show that the two speaker groups are distinct regarding their linguistic knowledge. HSs are in general more successful than L2ers concerning structures acquired early in first language acquisition, properties of the colloquial language and tasks exclusively based on implicit linguistic knowledge. On the other hand, they typically struggle with complex linguistic properties, which are acquired late and belong to the formal register. The studies on EP reported in this paper have revealed that despite superficial similarities concerning the proficiency of HSs and L2ers, HL and L2 acquisition are fundamentally different processes.

Besides the obvious fact that HSs and L2ers differ with respect to the age of onset of language acquisition, they also mainly rely on different input sources. HSs base their linguistic knowledge on the colloquial register and have only restricted access to the standard language, in contrast to L2ers. They develop implicit and intuitive knowledge of the language and much less explicit linguistic knowledge than L2ers who acquire the L2 in the classroom. Timing of acquisition (a reflex of linguistic complexity and quantity of input) is an important predictor for HSs proficiency in certain linguistic areas. In contrast, cross-linguistic influence seems to play a minor role and is less relevant than in L2 acquisition.

These differences between the two types of learners lead to the conclusion that different approaches to language teaching are needed for the two groups,

including different curricula and different learning tools. In the first place, adequate diagnostic tools to assess the linguistic proficiency of HSs have to be implemented. During classroom instruction, teachers should provide access to the standard variety both in the spoken interaction and on the basis of written sources and materials. In particular, properties of the language which are acquired late and/or only learned through formal instruction should be made available for HSs. During classroom instruction, a descriptive instead of a prescriptive view of grammar should be assumed and teachers are encouraged to recognize the relevance and the linguistic validity of the HSs' grammar. Building explicit linguistic knowledge based on a comparative analysis of the HL, on the one hand, and the environmental language, on the other hand, can be an additional resource supporting HL development. Also, the comparison between the HSs' particular non-standard variety and the standard language is a useful strategy in the HL classroom.

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Heritage languages at school: Implications of linguistic research on bilingualism for heritage language teaching

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Abstract: This paper discusses the implications of linguistic research on heritage bilingualism for heritage language teaching. It is argued that heritage speakers and second language learners have different instructional needs in the classroom because teaching of a heritage language is a case of native language instruction. Based on a number of comparative studies on heritage speakers and second language learners of European Portuguese, we show that heritage language acquisition is indeed different from L2 acquisition. The linguistic differences between the two groups of speakers can be accounted for by considering their age of onset of acquisition, the type of input they are exposed to, the type of knowledge they mainly rely on, the relative importance of cross-linguistic influence and the relevance of linguistic complexity and timing of acquisition. We argue that these findings have implications for heritage language teaching in the classroom, such as, for example, the necessity of appropriate diagnostic tools for determining the linguistic proficiency of heritage bilinguals, the provision of access to the standard variety by supplying adequate spoken as well as written input sources, the focus on properties of the language which are late acquired and only learned on the basis of formal instruction and the fostering of explicit linguistic knowledge.

1. Introduction

The present paper discusses potential implications of linguistic research on heritage language (HL) acquisition for language teaching. We will argue that heritage speakers (HSs) and second language learners (L2ers) represent fundamentally different learner types and, therefore, have different needs in the classroom. We discuss the particular linguistic demands of these groups of learners and provide suggestions on how to take them into account.

HSs are simultaneous or early bilingual speakers of a minority language who acquire their HL, i.e. their home language, in the context of a dominant environmental language (see Rothman 2009; Valdés 2000). In contrast, L2ers are successive bilinguals who have already successfully acquired one (or more) first language(s) in childhood when they acquire an L2 at a later age. The typical L2er starts to acquire his/her knowledge mainly based on classroom instruction, even though there are, of course, also other types of L2 speakers who acquire