

# Community-based Curriculum Development

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# Our tasks

- To describe community-based ongoing curriculum development projects for teaching Spanish and Indonesian to heritage language learners (HLLs);
- To present the data underlying these projects;
- To discuss general implications of this data for curriculum design and professional development in the heritage languages.

# Presentation overview

- Part I: The data (Maria)
- Part II: The Indonesian curriculum (Juliana)
- Part III: The Spanish curriculum (Maria)

# The Data

## The Heritage Language Learner Survey

- A project of the National Heritage Language Resource Center
- Funded by a grant from the US Department of Education
- Research Team

*Maria Carreira, CSU Long Beach;*

*Linda Jensen, UCLA*

*Olga Kagan, UCLA*

Research Assistants:

*Sonja Tighearnain and Agazit Abate*

# Survey overview

- Number of respondents as of May 14, 2008: 1564;
- Respondents were heritage language learners (HLLs) enrolled in heritage language classes;
- Working definition of the term “heritage language learner”:  
A student whose home language is different from English.
- Number of questions: 45 (2 open-ended);
- Languages surveyed: 22 (see next slide);
- Areas of inquiry: HL background, usage, abilities, attitudes
- Key findings:  
Significant commonalities to all HLLs and HL learning contexts;  
Significant differences between languages;  
Significant differences within the same language.

# Languages surveyed

Arabic	1.8%	28
Armenian	3.6%	57
Cantonese	11.1%	174
Hindi/Urdu	1.5%	24
Japanese	1.2%	19
Korean	7.6%	119
Mandarin	17.1%	268
Persian	3.8%	60
Russian	10.7%	167
<u>Spanish</u>	<u>20.1%</u>	<u>314</u>
Tagalog	6.6%	103
Thai	0.7%	11
Vietnamese	7.2%	113
Other (Indonesian, Ilokano, Polish, Portuguese, Amharic...)		

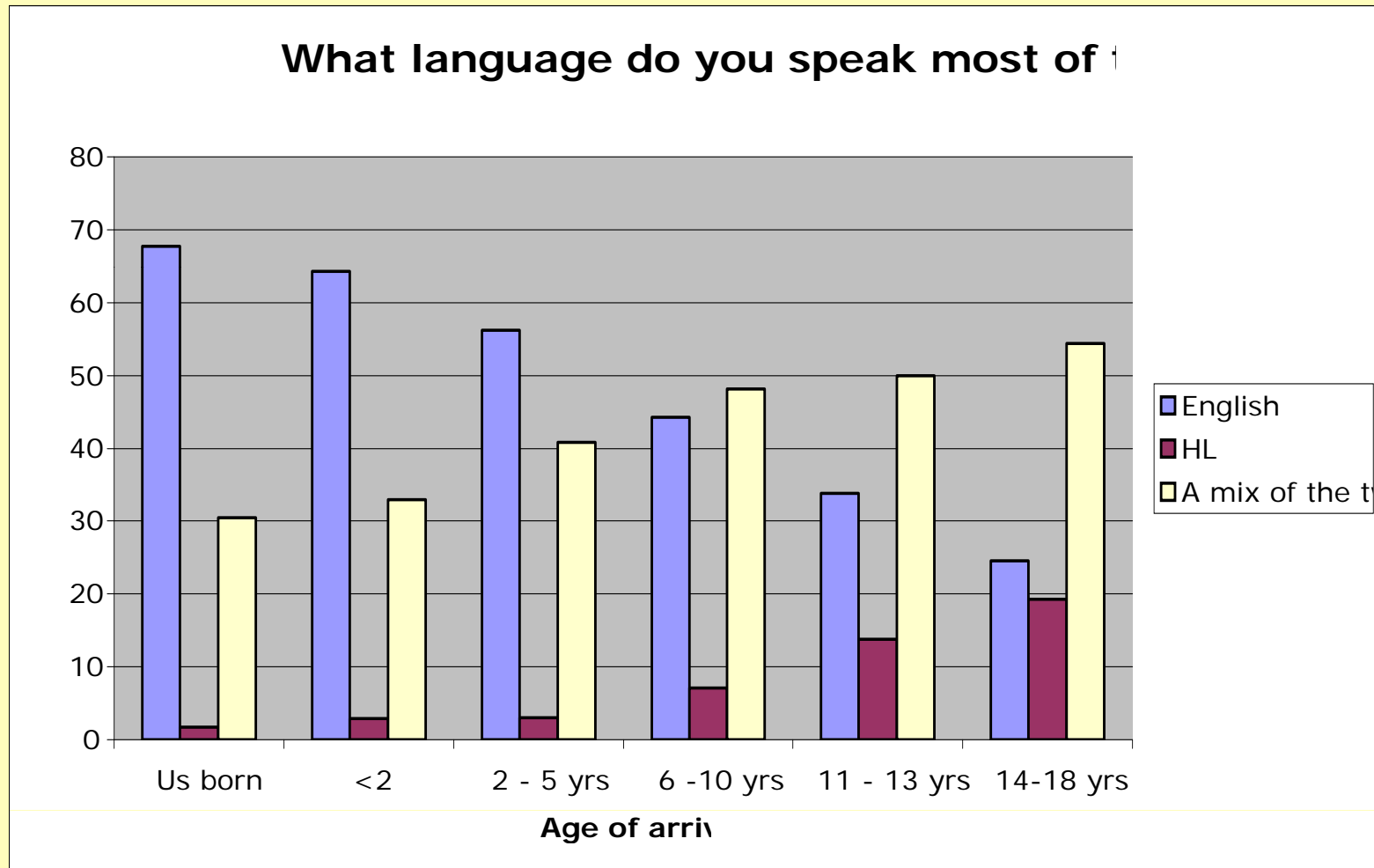
# Summary of main findings: Commonalities

- **Background**: Most HLLs are US born or early arrivals in the US and have little or no formal training in the HL;
- **Usage**: Most HLLs have very little exposure to their HL outside of the home environment. They feel most comfortable using a mix of English and the HL;
- **Proficiency**: They are more confident about their aural skills than their literacy skills and are aware of their limitations in the HL (and in English);
- **Goals for the HL**: a) To connect with their cultural and linguistic roots, b) to communicate with family and friends in the US, and c) To fulfill a language requirement.
- **Attitudes**: Most value their HL identity and have had positive experiences with their HL.

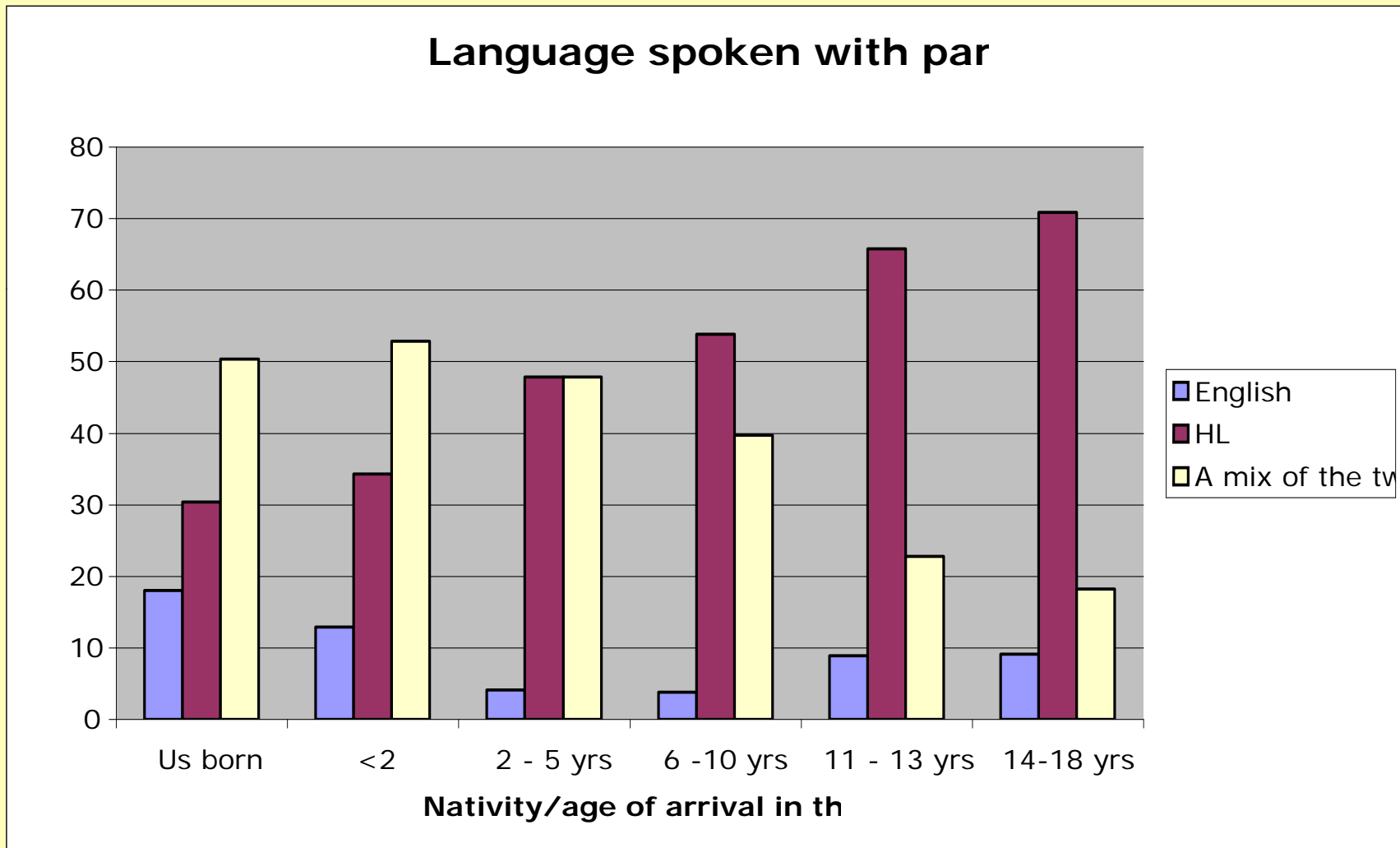
## Background: HLLs have limited formal and informal exposure to their HL

- 61.5% are US born;
- 70% of the foreign-born arrived in the US before the age of 11;
- 58.6% have not attended a community or religious school in the US;
- 74.1% did not attend school in their country of origin and those who did, did so for a short period of time (1-2 years);

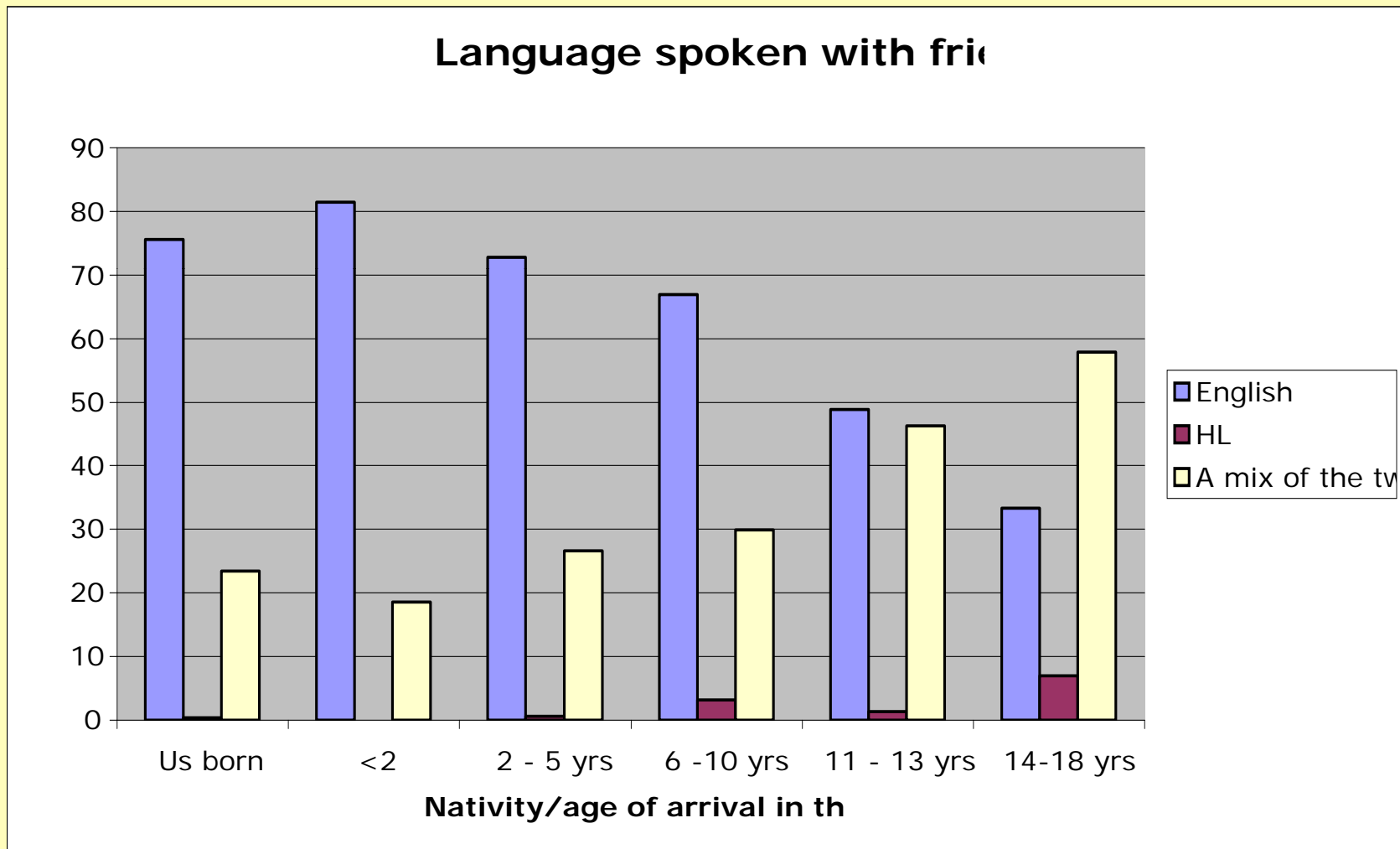
Usage: Most of often, they use their HL in conjunction with English



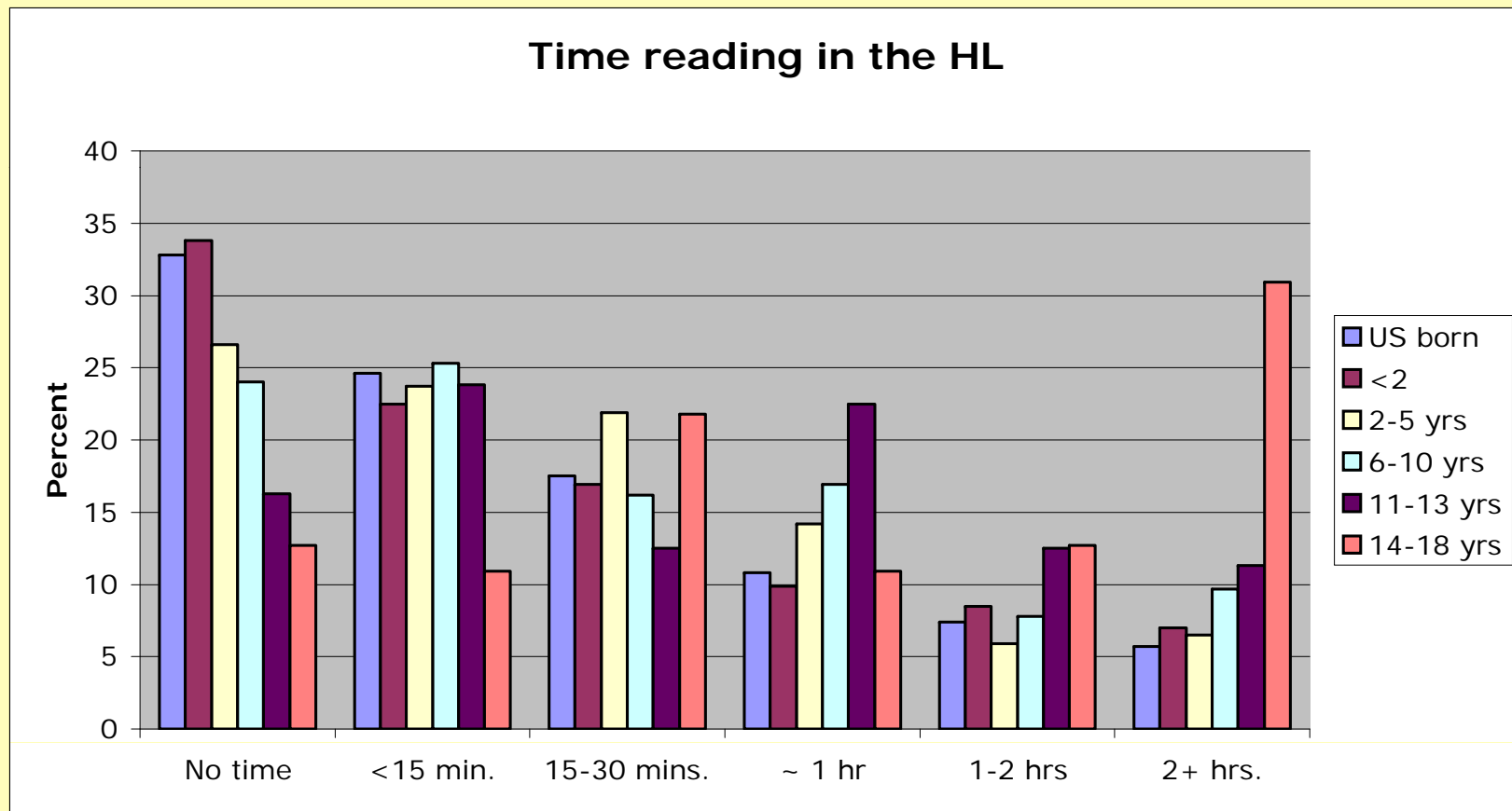
However, at home, many favor the HL



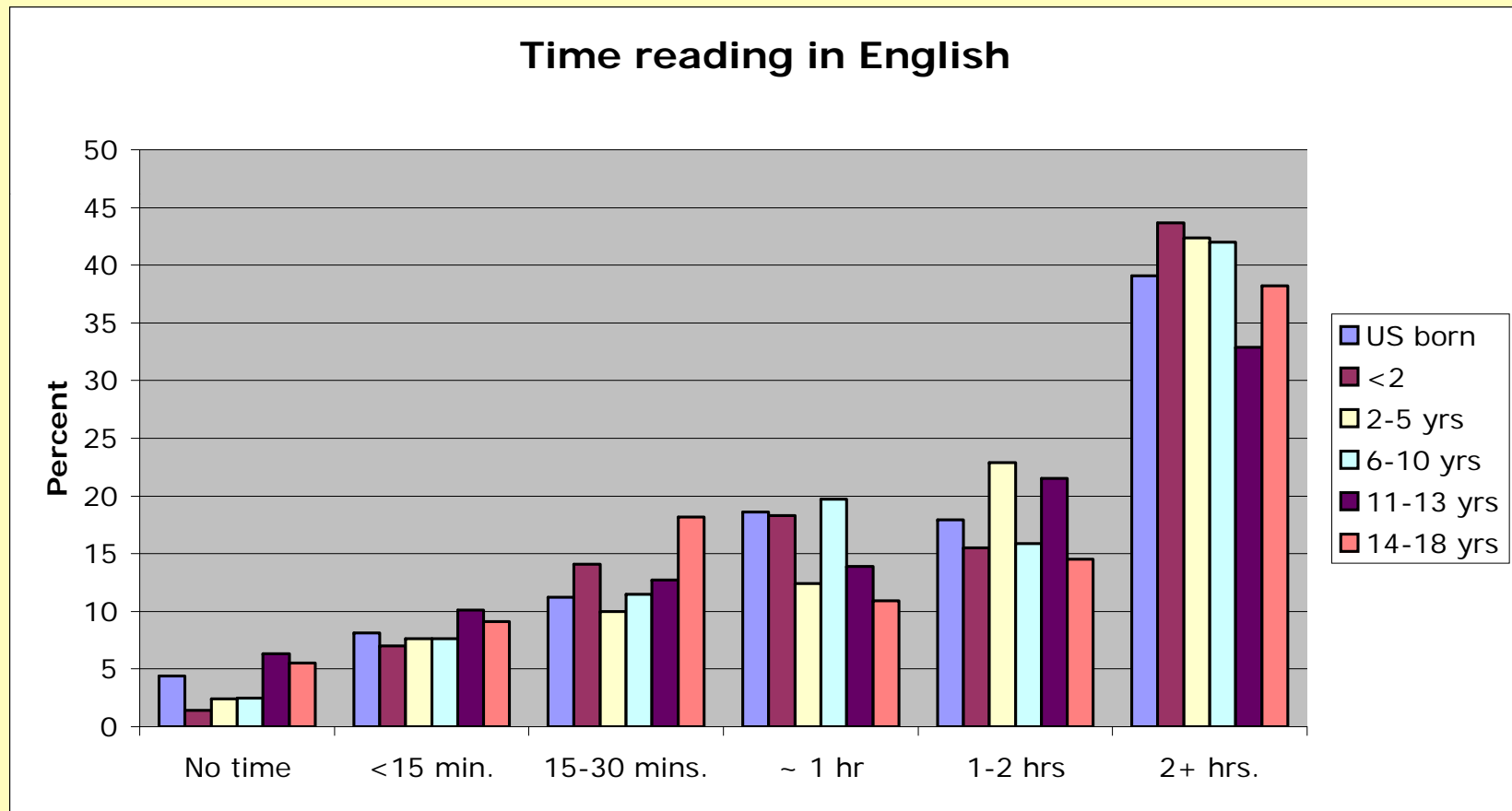
# With friends, they favor English



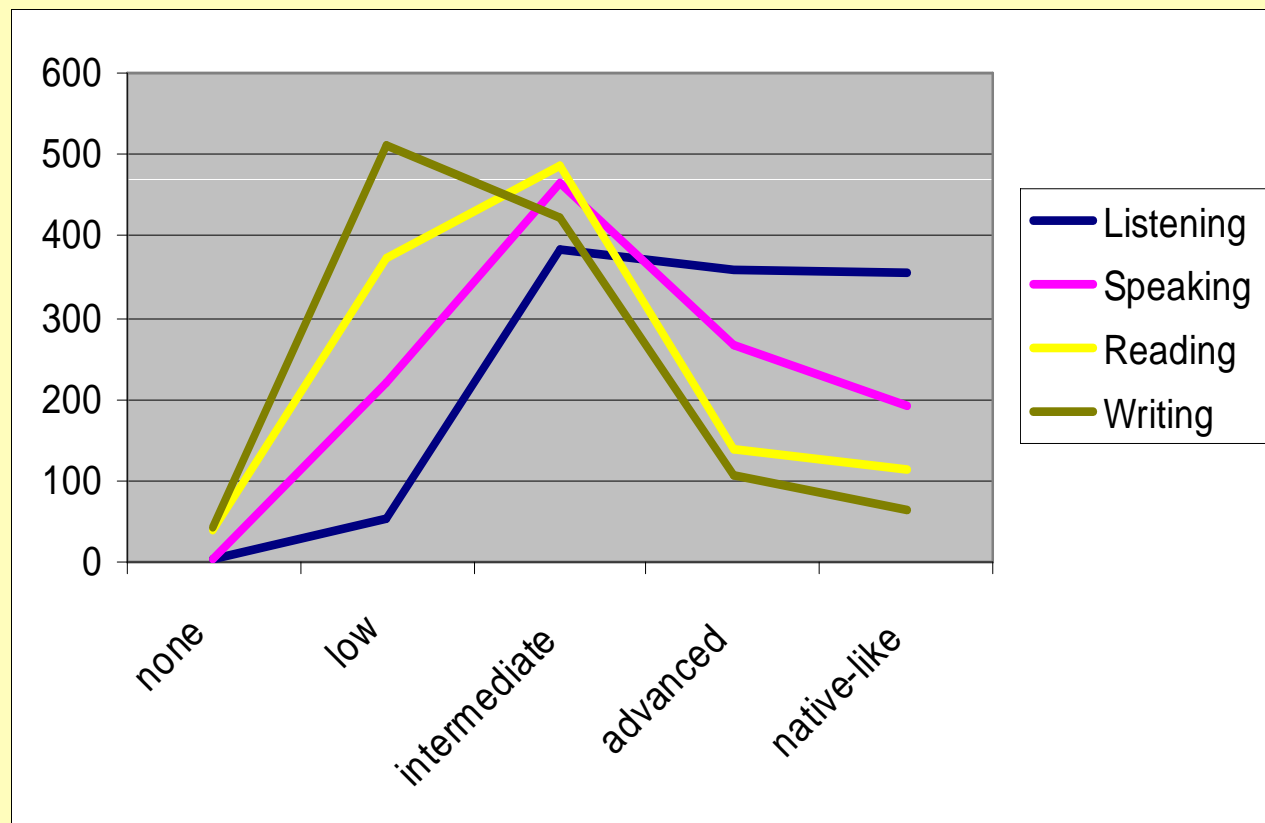
# They read very little in the HL



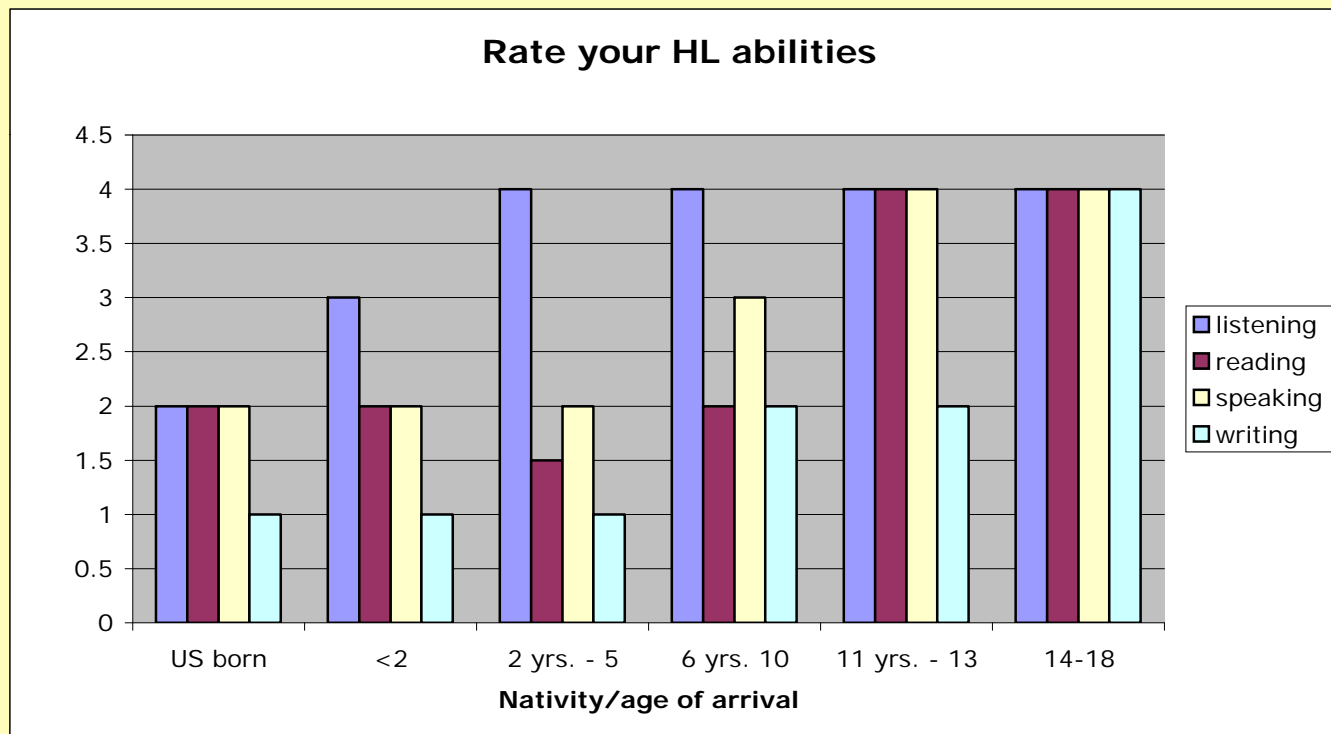
# They read a lot in English



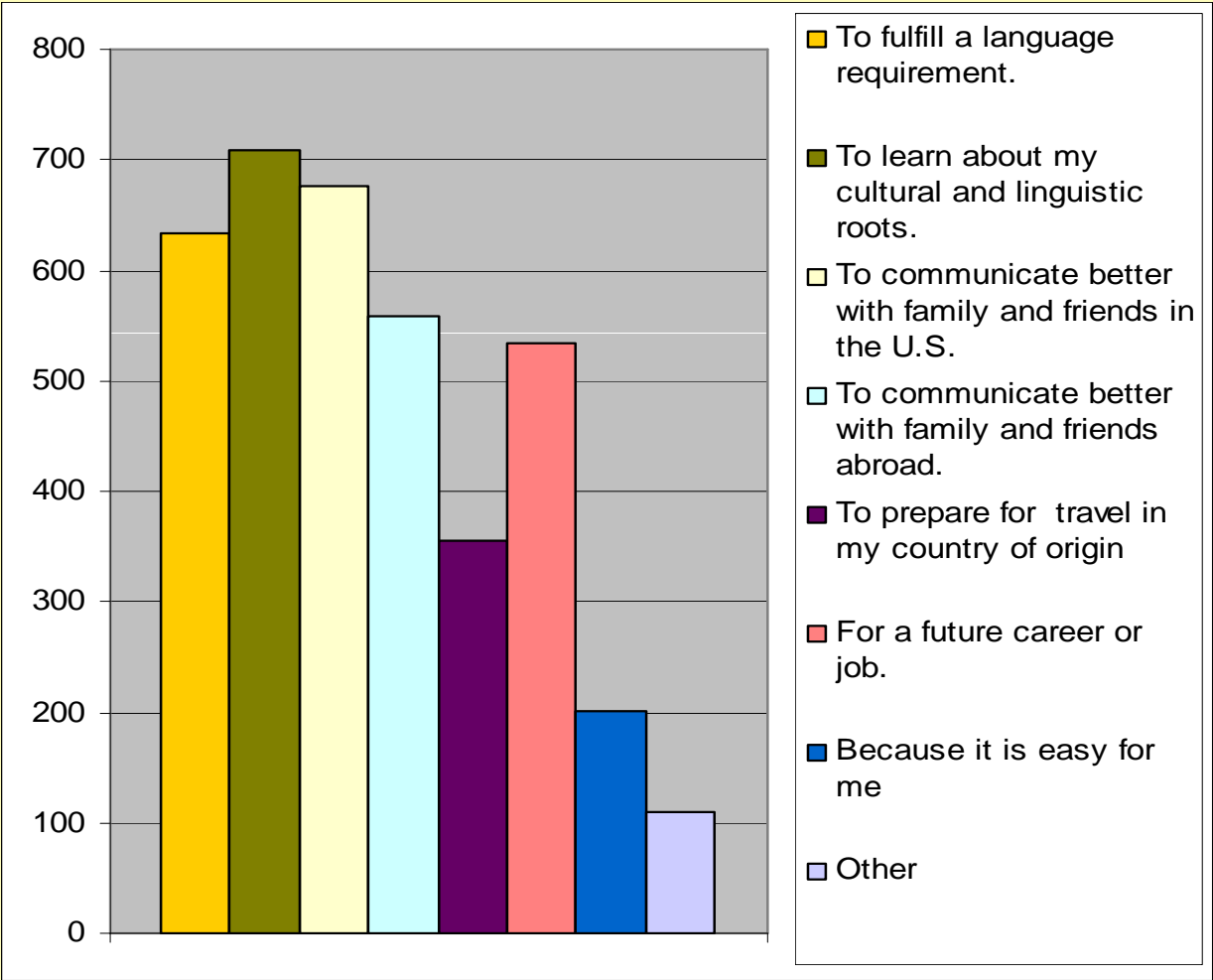
Proficiency: They rate their HL abilities in the intermediate range (except for writing)



# They rate their aural skills higher than their literacy skills



# Goals: Many study their HL for personal reasons



# Attitudes

## Open-ended questions

1. How has your knowledge of your heritage language affected your experience in school? Can you remember an incident when your heritage language was helpful or caused you problems in school?
2. How has your knowledge of your heritage language affected your experience outside of school, for example in your home, church, or neighborhood? Can you remember an incident when your heritage language was helpful or caused you problems in any of these settings?

# Connecting through the HL

- It has made my experience at school more pleasant. By taking a HL class, I was able to meet more students with my HL. Thus, I have created new friendships with students of the same background as mine. It has never caused a problem for me. (Armenian)
- It has helped me make more friends, because most of my friends that I'm close with now are all Chinese too. If I need to ask or talk to someone privately with people around, I can ask them in Chinese. It never caused problems for me.
- I find my heritage language very useful in school. When I was in high school, it helped me find my very first friends. I was a new transfer student so I didn't know anyone, and this girl came up to me to make friends. And knowing Chinese has helped me to communicate with her in a better way since Chinese is her native language.

# Connecting (cont.)

- It is very helpful. I met most of my friends because we all knew how to speak Russian and we were all coming from the same place of moving to America when we were little kids. I also find that my heritage language has helped made school more enjoyable. We would always laugh about a joke in Russian or something else that the English students couldn't or wouldn't understand. It made school fun!
- My heritage language at school is at most useful to tell jokes amongst us HL speakers. It's helpful in that we can rant about other things in a language people don't understand and are therefore free to whatever we please. Other than that, we don't talk in our HL much. It's only used for jokes (Cantonese)

# Belonging

- All my life, I've been around people not of my native heritage. To be in a class with people of the same culture as I am feels inviting and accepting. I am now able to speak to my classmates in a different language whilst making myself feel integrated in my culture (Vietnamese)
- During middle school and high school, I felt that my heritage language was not something that I would consider a valuable skill. I only spoke Tagalog when calling relatives back in the Philippines during holidays and special occasions. I only started to take pride in my knowledge of my heritage language after coming to UCSD and joining Filipino clubs as well as enrolling in classes such as Advanced Filipino.

# Helping others

- Several times the knowledge that I have of my HL has been to the benefit of teachers that had problems because of the language barrier between them and new students that spoke mainly Cantonese. So in the end I ended up sitting next to them, being the big buddy, or whatever it was. In the end, it showed how much I really knew my language, even though it was easier to get the point across if I had explained it, but I still had a long way to go if I wanted to be fluent in Cantonese.

# Getting ahead in school

- When I was in elementary school, I made every effort to avoid speaking my heritage language. It made me feel different, and like all children that young, all I wanted was to fit in. It wasn't until I was a sophomore in high school that I realized how important it was for me to be fluent in my HL. Academically, having knowledge of my HL has been nothing but beneficial. In high school I took three years of French, and, my HL being Spanish, I was able to pick up the language very quickly. I received the highest grade in the class each year, and also received the highest AP score of my class.
- When reading Russian literature in translation, I was able to help my class understand the connotation of certain words that were not very clear in the translation. Also, surprisingly, when I studied Latin, I found certain vocabulary to have similar roots. The grammar systems of these two languages is also very similar (at least in contrast to English). Also, there are many Russians involved in my major study of mathematics, so this has been useful at times, though as of yet I do not have a technical vocabulary that would be useful in reading papers in Russian.

# Curricular implications

HL curricula should

- Be grounded in local (HL) communities;
- Be authentic and personally meaningful;

Rationale:

Most HLLs are US born or are early arrivals; study the HL to communicate with family and friends in the US; use their HL in the context of the home, derive benefit from belonging to a community of speakers;

# Curricular implications (cont.)

## HL curricula should

- Have a bilingual and bicultural outlook;  
Rationale: HLLs frequently make use of both of their languages together
- Be input rich;  
Rationale: HLLs have little exposure to their HL
- Progress from the aural to the written registers;  
Rationale; HLLs have relatively strong aural skills and weak reading and writing skills;
- Accommodate different levels of proficiency;  
Rationale: HLLs in a given class can vary significantly from each other.

# Part II

## The Indonesian curriculum

# Indonesian HL Material Development Project

- This project adapts the *Abuelos Project* developed by Ana Roca and Helena Alonso
- An oral-history project that trains students to document the experiences of elderly members of their heritage-language community.
- Collaborative Project between UCLA-Indonesian program and CSULB – Spanish program
- Under the auspices of UCLA Center for World Languages

# Goals:

- Through the Indonesian oral history project students will learn the language and culture by completing a task of documenting Indonesian immigrant experience in the US, particularly in the greater Los Angeles area.
- In this project differentiating instruction will be implemented to create multiple paths for students with different proficiency and abilities

## The project:

- Introduces students to a few genres: newspaper articles, folk tales, etc.
- teaches pre-writing and editing strategies;
- provides opportunities for linguistic practice
- engages students in ethno-linguistic research involving their heritage culture; and
- connects different generations of immigrants.

## **Lessons:**

### **Week 1:**

Introduction: Objectives/Goals, Procedures

Readings: 1) Indonesians' immigration to the US: geography/history  
2) Literature about Indonesian immigrant experience

### **Week 2:**

- 1) Continue reading – Literature about immigrant experiences  
Discuss students' family history – write an essay
- 2) Introduce the Indonesian community journals/magazines published in the US (*Kabari*)  
Brainstorm on what topics to pursue during the interviews

### **Week 3:**

Watch video interviews with:

- 1) a musician/artist
- 2) a scholar/community leader

Transcribe and discuss the questions and the responses

Students will submit an essay about their family history

**Week 4:**

Read and discuss written interviews (from newspapers/journals)  
Write and discuss questions that will bring the best aspects of the persons they will interview

**Week 5:**

Pilot – test the questions by interviewing their peers  
Introduction about the invited speaker and discuss what questions and follow-up questions students can ask the invited speaker  
Students will submit a set of questions for an interview

**Week 6:**

Invited speaker (who will talk about his/her immigrant experience)  
Students will be engaged in Q & A sections  
Transcribe some sections of the talk and discuss them.

**Week 7:**

Discuss the transcriptions and results of the interview in class.  
Students in pairs write a written interview (an article with interview format) for practice.

**Week 8:**

Students interview their subjects (outside class)  
Lab/Class discussion on the progress  
Field Trip to the Indonesian Food Court (West Covina)

**Week 9:**

Students interview their subjects (outside class)  
Nursery Rhymes, Folk Tales  
Lab/Class discussion on the progress

**Week 10:**

Students' presentations

# THE STUDENTS



# Week 10: Final Presentations



Students' presentations on the interviews/findings:

-they can show clips of the interviews and comment on them (Kim, Charly, [Liz](#))

-bring related pictures/literature related to the interviews

-they can bring posters (poster presentation)

- Invite other students (from lower classes) to attend and listen to their presentations

# Field Trip to Indonesian Food Court West Covina – So Cal



# Summary

- This task-based project will provide access and continuous learning of the history, language, culture and literature pertaining but not limited to the immigrants' experience.
- The project that is collaborative in nature will also create an enriched environment for students with different levels of proficiency and provide opportunities for heritage and advanced second language learners to teach and learn from each other.

# Part III:

## The Spanish curriculum

# Curricular implications

## HL curricula should

- Be grounded in local (HL) communities;
- Be authentic and personally meaningful;
- Have a bilingual and bicultural outlook;
- Be input rich;
- Progress from the aural to the written registers;
- Accommodate different levels of proficiency;

# In addition...

- With Latino students, the curriculum should focus on developing general literacy skills.

Rationale: The Latino academic gap, Latinos' professional goals for Spanish.

Note: Relative to other HLLs, Latinos have well-developed reading and writing skills in their HL (decoding and encoding). However, their literacy skills in English (command of registers) may not be as strong as those of other students.

# There are significant differences between languages with regard to these skills

*Aural proficiency (the average of listening and speaking scores)*

<b>Native-advanced</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>	<b>Low</b>
Spanish	Russian	Persian
		Korean
		Vietnamese
		Mandarin and Cantonese
		Tagalog

*Literacy skills (the average of reading and writing scores)*

<b>Native-advanced</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>	<b>Low</b>
	Spanish	Russian
		Korean
		Vietnamese
		Persian
		Tagalog
		Mandarin and Cantonese

# Description of the Spanish Curriculum

Students work with texts and an older relative or neighbor to

- Explore their HL communities and their identities as US Latinos;
- Tap into their strong aural skills to further develop their reading and writing skills;
- Strengthen their general literacy skills;

# Texts

- Pertain to the US Latino experience;

- Are conversational:

Oral narratives (Unit I)

Interviews (Unit II)

Short stories (Unit III)

Songs/poems

(in all units)

# The relative or neighbor

- An older US Latino
- Students visit with this person at various times of the semester or school year, as they work on different projects;
- This person's life story forms the basis for the oral history, interview, and short story that they will produce.

# General organization of units

- Students read 3-4 samples of the type of text they will be asked to produce (**Providing rich input**);
- They compare their own life experiences to those described in the oral narratives (**Connecting to their communities of origin**);
- They analyze the organizational properties, and language of the narratives (**Progressing from the aural to the written registers, developing literacy skills, accommodating different levels**);
- They work with the older relative or neighbor to produce this type of text (**Exploring their HL community**).

# Unit I: The Oral Narrative Unit

- Students read and listen to three oral narratives <http://www.prdream.com/histories/index.html>;
- They study the structure of the oral narrative by a) comparing it to other ways of recording biographical information (the application and resume); b) analyzing its organization and structure;
- They use an interactive journal to a) compare their own experiences to that of the people in the oral narratives, b) learn vocabulary, spelling, etc.;

# The Oral Narrative Unit (cont.)

- Interview the older relative for the purpose of producing an oral narrative;
- They edit, transcribe, and annotate the narrative;
- They present their work to the class

# Making personal connections through the interactive journal

In this column copy a phrase of your choice from the oral narratives	In this column react to each phrase (for example, by comparing it to your experience, agreeing or disagreeing with it...)

# Exploring local communities through the interactive journal

In this column write something about the general experiences of US that is illustrated in the oral narratives (e.g. poverty, language use, discrimination, family unity...).	In this column, write down one or two facts you learned from further researching this experience using the Internet.

# Building linguistic skills in the HL using the interactive journal

<p>Use this side to write five past tense verbs that end that can be translated as “used to” or “would” in English.</p>	<p>Use this side to make two observations regarding how these verbs are spelled.</p>
<p>Use this side to write five connectors used in the oral narratives.</p>	<p>Use this side to translate these connectors to English</p>

# Exploring registers and genre using the interactive journal

	The oral narrative	The application	The resume
Language use (formality, sentence length, repetition, etc.)			
Organization (format)			
The focus (content)			

# Progression and differentiation of products

	Unit I: The oral narrative	Unit II: The interview	Unit III: The short story
<p>More accessible</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Less accessible</p>	<p>An annotated aural narrative (video);</p> <p>A transcribed and annotated narrative;</p> <p>Bilingual versions of the narratives;</p>	<p>An edited aural interview (video);</p> <p>A transcribed and edited interview;</p> <p>An annotated and edited interview</p>	<p>An informal story;</p> <p>A formal story</p>

# Taking it further

- The personal essay;
- The academic essay/the documentary;
- The interpretive unit (for English-speakers and monolingual speakers of the target language);
- The portfolio

# Thank you

Please contact us at:

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