Toward an Identity Theory of the Development of Chinese as a Heritage Language

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Abstract
This paper proposes an identity theory of Chinese as a Heritage Language (hereafter CHL) development, based on the characteristics of the Chinese as a Heritage Language learner and drawing insights from Language Socialization, Second Language Acquisition, and Conversation Analysis. It posits that CHL development takes place in a three-dimensional framework with intersecting planes of time, space, and identity. Temporally, CHL development recontextualizes the past, transforms the present and precontextualizes the future. As such, it fosters rooted world citizenry with appreciation of and competence in Chinese language and culture. Spatially, it transforms local, independent communities into global, interdependent communities. A learner's CHL development depends on the degree to which s/he is able to find continuity and coherence in multiple communicative and social worlds in time and space and to develop hybrid, situated identities and stances.

I. The Learner of Chinese as a Heritage Language

Based on Valdés' (2001:38) definition of heritage learner, I define the CHL learner broadly as a language student who is raised in a home where Chinese is spoken and who speaks or at least understands the language and is to some degree bilingual in Chinese and in English. More specifically, I focus on learners who see Chinese "with a particular family relevance" (Fishman 2001:169) and who are English-dominant with no or limited reading/writing ability in Chinese. In other words, I focus on CHL development rather than maintenance.

Given this understanding, Jason Chen would be a typical student in a university-level CHL classroom:

> Jason Chen is a 19 year old in a beginning level CHL class in a university. He can speak Cantonese and understands Mandarin, but does not know how to read and write in Chinese. He was born in Canton and immigrated with his family to Queens, New York when he was 3. Before he started Kindergarten at 6, he spoke Cantonese at home with his parents, his grandmother, and his aunt, all of whom speak Cantonese, comprehend Mandarin, and have limited command of English. He had some knowledge of English from television and from the children he played with who spoke a mixture of English, Vietnamese, Cantonese, Fujianese, Chaozhou dialect, and Mandarin. When Jason started school, his teacher thought his English was weak and placed him in extra help sessions taught by teacher aids who were bilingual in Cantonese and English. It didn't take him long to pick up English language skills. Very soon, Jason was speaking English fluently and became one of the highest achieving students in his class, all

> the way through high school. However, as his abilities in English grew, his interaction with his family became less frequent and insignificant. Since a time he no longer recalls, he has been speaking English to his parents and his aunt at home too; the only person he still speaks Cantonese to is his grandmother, with whom he keeps a minimum level of communication. In his own words, "I love my family. But I don't talk to them. Well, I'd like to talk to them, but there's such a language barrier." At some point during his formative years, his parents sent him to a community-based weekend Chinese language school, where he was taught Mandarin. He went for a year but felt "the teacher was just totally boring" and he "didn't learn anything". His best friends are Bob, his roommate at the dorm who is from a Jewish family background, and Jim, a transfer student from Korea who shares his interest in business and finance, basketball, and video games. He is also seriously dating a girl from a Mandarin-speaking family background. When asked why he is taking CHL, Jason said, "I am Chinese. I feel stupid not knowing the language. Plus I'd like to do business in China, some day." [1]

As Lynch (2003) argues, defining the term HL learner is a prerequisite to developing a theory of heritage language learning. In particular, the development of such a theory rests on an elucidation of what HL learning entails and whether HL development is similar to or different from second language acquisition (SLA) and first language (L1) acquisition. In an effort to achieve "explanatory adequacy" and "pedagogical relevance", Carreira (2004) proposes the differences between HL learning from SLA and L1 acquisition as follows: Due to their family background in the heritage language or culture, HL learners' identity and/or linguistic needs differ from those of second language learners. Due to insufficient exposure to their language and culture, HL learners cannot fulfill basic identity and linguistic needs as L1 learners. HL learning is one way for HL learners to fulfill these needs.

To the above I would add that the HL learner brings with himself/herself a set of ambiguities and complications that are typically absent in the SL leaner or L1 learner and which can be sources of both challenges and opportunities. If we consider how HL is acquired and socialized, the transmission of HL is not merely horizontal (e.g., formal education in the classroom) but also, and perhaps more importantly, vertical (e.g., across generations in the home and community). If we examine learner motivations, we may find that the vast majority of (adult) HL learners cite "cultural/social identity" as the principal reason for studying the language; to a greater extent than the SL learner, the HL learner is likely to be motivated by an identification with the intrinsic cultural, affective, and aesthetic values of the language. Accordingly, the propositional contents of message conveyed in the HL (e.g., the contents of HL textbooks) and the ways in which HL is used (e.g., how HL instructors communicate with students in everyday classroom interaction) have a direct impact on how the HL learner perceives the language /culture and how s/he consequently positions him/herself. Furthermore, the HL learner, by virtue of his/her own family and community background, blurs and blends the distinction

between native and target languages and between the native speech and target speech communities.

Having considered the universal traits the CHL learner shares with other HL learners, I now move on to the particularities of learning CHL.

II. The Learning of Chinese as a Heritage Language

"Chinese" is an umbrella term that subsumes numerous dialects grouped under Wu, Xiang, Gan, Min, Cantonese, Hakka, and Mandarin. Many of these dialects are mutually incomprehensible. "Mandarin" refers to the majority dialect family of China; its pronunciation and grammar are associated with the speech of Beijing and the surrounding countryside, regions which for centuries have enjoyed political and cultural significance. Also known as *putonghua* (普通话) in mainland China, *guoyu* (国语) in Taiwan, and *huayu* (华语) in Singapore, Mandarin serves as the standard dialect and is thus the most commonly taught variety in Chinese language classrooms. Yet even Mandarin Chinese is not a monolithic entity—Mandarin used on the mainland, Taiwan, or Singapore, for example, varies in terms of lexicon, phonetics, and discourse norms. Moreover, although there is one writing system, it has two variants: the simplified script, which is officially used in mainland China and Singapore, and the traditional script, mainly used in other Chinese-speaking regions (Norman 1988, Chen 1999). One or both forms may be taught in CHL classrooms. Hence CHL learning can include the following possibilities:

1. Mandarin is the learner’s home dialect or is comprehensible to home dialect speakers

    a. classroom script is the same as home script (i.e., both use Traditional and/or Simplified scripts)
    b. classroom script different from home script (i.e., Traditional in class, Simplified at home, or vice versa)
    c. no home literacy in Chinese

2. Mandarin is unintelligible to home dialect speakers

    a. classroom script same as home script (i.e., both use Traditional and/or Simplified scripts)
    b. classroom script different from home script (i.e., Traditional in class, Simplified at home, or vice versa)
    c. no home literacy in Chinese

Consequently, for learners under Scenario 1, CHL learning can be integrated with intergenerational family contact and may enable learners to establish deeper bonds with members of the heritage culture to varying degrees, depending upon whether there is home literacy and what kind of script the home uses. But even for 1(a), learners may acquire a so-called "overseas Chinese" accent and discourse norms that differentiate them from native speakers of Mandarin in their or their parents’ native speech community. Below is a self report from a university student enrolled in a CHL class.

Data Segment 1. University Student's Self Report

> I was born in Brooklyn, NY. My parents came from Fuzhou. They speak to me in Mandarin. When I was young, my parents made me go to the Chinese Language School where we lived. I went for 10 years. I didn't like the school that much but I always thought that my Mandarin is pretty good. Summer 2001, we went to Beijing and Datong to visit relatives. Everybody said that my Mandarin is good but I sound like a foreigner. I asked them "is my pronunciation bad?" They said that my pronunciation is very good but my way of talking is strange. It's like when I sneeze I say "dui bu qi (excuse me)" and they all laugh. They say that they'd never say it [when they sneeze]. Also, I always ask them "wo keyi wen ni yige wenti ma? (Can I ask you a question?)" before I actually ask them a question and they kind of like look at me really strange.

The case of 1b can be illustrated with the following excerpt from a weekend Chinese language school involving a teacher from mainland China and her young students with mixed family backgrounds. (Transcription symbols for this and subsequent interactive data segments (segments 5 and 6) can be found in Appendix A; a grammatical gloss is provided in Appendix B.)

Data Segment 2. jiantizi versus fantizi (He, 2001)
((fantizi=Traditional characters; jiantizi or jianzi= Simplified characters))

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1      Tz:   zhe  ge  zi        xie  de  dui     bu  dui?
             This MSR character write PRT correct NEG correct
             Is this character written correctly or not?

2            ((pointing to B1's writing "men" of "nimen", in jiantizi,
             incorrectly, on the blackboard))

3      B2:   bu  dui,    shao le, shao le=
             NEG correct miss PRT miss PRT
             Not correct.  Missing- missing-

4      Tz:   =hao, Jiayi lai  xie
              Good       come write
             Ok, Jiayi [B2] come to write

5           ((B2 writes on blackboard, in fantizi, mistakenly also))

6      Tz:   Jiayi xie   de  shi <fantizi>
                   Write POS COP
             What Jiayi wrote is fantizi.

7            ((Tz looks at blackboard, then turns to the class))

8            ta  xie  de   dui     bu  dui     a?
             he write PRT  correct NEG correct PRT
             Is his writing correct?
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9     B1:   fantizi bu  hao
                    NEG good
            Fantizi is not good.

10    B2:   jianzi, nage jianzi bu     dui
                    That        NEG correct
            Jianzi, that jianzi is not right.

11    Tz:   fantizi jiantizi dou keyi  a,
                             All okay PRT
            Fantizi and jiantizi are both fine

12          danshi ni  yao    xie   dui.
            But    you should write correct
            But you should write them correctly

13          ((T corrects both B1 and B2's writing))

14    B2:   laoshi  xihuan women xie    jianzi haishi fantizi?
            Teacher like    we   write         or
            Teacher, do you prefer that we write in jianzi or fantizi?

15    Tz:   Un  jiantizi bijiao   rongyi xue
            PRT          relative easy   learn
            Un jiantizi is relatively easy to learn

16          ye   you   ren    juede fantizi bijiao   haokan
            also exist person feel          relative pretty
            There are also people who feel that fantizi looks better
            relatively.

17    B2:   wo mama   shuo jianzi dou- dou  kan  bu  dong
            My mother say         even even read NEG comprehensible
            My mother says that it is hard to read jianzi

18    Tz:   ni  xie   fantizi jiu   fantizi hao le
            You write         CONJ          ok  PRT
            If you want to write in fantizi, that's fine.
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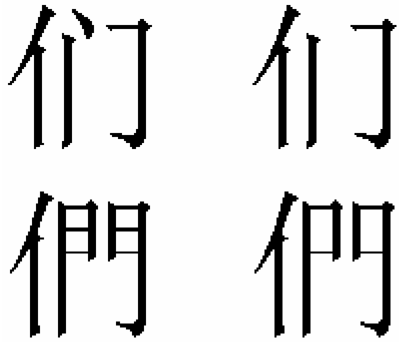

Figure 1. Choice of Script and Correct/Incorrect Forms
Top left: simplified script or jiantizi, correct form; top right: simplified script or jiantizi, incorrect form produced by B1; bottom left: traditional script or fantizi, correct form; bottom right: traditional script or fantizi, incorrect form produced by B2.

In cases where Mandarin is not comprehensible in the home, CHL students face the challenge similar to SL learning. The following university student's self report speaks to a common phenomenon described in data excerpt 2.

Data Segment 3. University Student's Self Report

> I want to learn to speak Mandarin. At home my parents speak Cantonese and I can understand it but I don't like to speak it. I think Mandarin is better. My parents don't speak Mandarin but they are glad that I am learning it. . . . Whatever I learn in class, I can't practice it at home, because my parents can't understand it. . . . But no big deal. It's just like when I took Spanish in high school, you know.

In the case of 2a, CHL learning deepens the bond with members of the heritage culture to some degree through shared script. At the same time, differences may develop as learners acquire an additional dialect. Here is another university student's self report.

Data Segment 4. University Student's Self Report

> . . .well, sometimes when my mom sees the traditional characters in my book, she'll know it and she can help me a little bit with my homework. But she can't read simplified [characters]. So if I want to get her to help me, I'll have to go to the traditional [characters]. . . . My mom speaks "taishan hua" and here I'm learning Mandarin. I like Mandarin. Sounds better than other dialects. Don't know why just feels that way. But my relatives and my mom they don't speak Mandarin. And they think it's funny when I speak Mandarin. They want me to speak their dialect but I - I can understand it but I don't want to. I mean if I want to find a job like in China I want to be in big cities like Beijing or something. I don't want to be like you know where they came from . . .

In the case of 2b and 2c, CHL learning leads to a different, possibly more prestigious and useful variety and may also lead the learner to establish differences, rather than similarities, with members of the heritage culture as a result of adopting speech and script that differ from what family members use.

As can be seen in all cases above, to learn CHL means not merely to inherit one's heritage language and maintain one's heritage cultural identity but also to transform the heritage language (in terms of changes in dialect, script, accent, discourse norms, etc.) and re-create one's identity. For example, Jason Chen, whose profile appears above, brings into the CHL classroom linguistic and behavioral patterns that he formed early in life, and that remain active or await to be reactivated; experiences interacting with his Cantonese-speaking family members, his English-, Vietnamese-, Cantonese-, Fujianese-, Chaozhou dialect-, and Mandarin-speaking neighbors, his English-speaking but multi-ethnic peers and teachers, and his English- and Mandarin-speaking girlfriend, and ways of speaking and being that mirror those used by all of these people; memories of past experiences learning the CHL as well as expectations and anticipations about the verbal and non-verbal behavior of his present CHL teacher and CHL classmates; dreams of working in China some day, and ideas of what it means to be a Chinese-American. In other words, Jason embodies characteristics that are both hetero-temporal and hetero-spatial. He is still learning to cope with, understand, accept or reject, model or modify the language and cultural behaviors of every community he has encountered. Learning CHL will enable him to inherit some of his family's and community's Chinese heritage but will also enable him to become a different kind of Chinese-American from his family and his neighbors.

This article locates learner identity as the centerpiece rather than the background of heritage language development. In other words, identity is understood not as a collection of static attributes or as some mental construct existing prior to and independent of human actions, but rather as a process of continual emerging and becoming, a process that identifies what a person becomes and achieves through ongoing interactions with other persons (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; He 1995; Ochs 1993). In the words of Lemke (2002: 72), "What else is an identity but the performance, verbally and nonverbally, of a possible constellation of attitudes, beliefs, and values that has a recognizable coherence by the criteria of some community?" In this sense, the identity of the HL speaker is to a large measure formed through his/her speech. This article explores the challenges and opportunities that CHL development presents to the construction and negotiation of CHL learner identities and conversely how identity formation and transformation is symbiotic with CHL development. It asks whether CHL development will place learners in interactional conditions of cultural and linguistic ambiguity that they are prepared to handle and whether the growing cultural complexity of communication as a result of CHL development will lead to the withering away or the emergence of certain types of identity constructs. The overall purpose of this article is thus to formulate an identity-based model for CHL development.

III. Theorizing CHL Development

It is becoming a widely held view that heritage language knowledge is an immensely valuable resource both for the individual and for society. Heritage language development can lead to academic and economic benefits, be an important part of identity formation, and enable the heritage language speaker to benefit from deeper contact with family, community and the country of origin (Krashen et al. 1998; Peyton et al. 2001; Wong-Fillmore 1991). Chinese is being taught as a heritage language to an increasing number of students at all levels throughout the United States (ACTFL). While some empirical research has been conducted (He 2000a, 2001, 2003a, 2004a, 2005; Li 2005; Tse 1998, 2000, 2002; X. Wang, 1996), CHL has received little attention in terms of theory building thus far (but see S. Wang, 2005). Very little is known about either the rate or the route of CHL development. In this article my overall objective is to tentatively propose a theory of CHL development which aims to account for what is already known about CHL development from existing empirical work and also to predict what will be observed. It is hoped that future research will test the hypotheses derived from the theory so as to confirm or to refute and modify it. In other words, as a form of "hermeneutic reasoning" (Habermas, 1971; Gadamer, 1975), the theory will be presented in a way that it is falsifiable and will remain open to interpretation, testing and modification.

An identity theory of CHL development can be located in the partial convergence of three strands of research: (1) Language Socialization, (2) Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theories, specifically the Acculturation Model and Accommodation Theory, and (3) Conversation Analysis. In what follows, I will outline these strands of work that have served as sources of theoretical inspiration, discuss their relevance to our current purposes, outline an identity theory with its associated hypotheses, and finally discuss its potential and limitations.

IV. Theoretical Predecessors

Language Socialization

Grounded in ethnography, Language Socialization, as a branch of linguistic anthropology, focuses on the process of becoming a culturally competent member through language use in social activities. As originally formulated by Ochs & Schieffelin (Ochs, 1990, 1996; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986a, 1986b, 1996), Language Socialization is concerned with: (1) how novices (e.g., children and language learners) are socialized to be competent members in the target culture through language use, and (2) how novices are socialized to use language. Language Socialization analyzes the organization of communicative practices through which these novices acquire socio-cultural knowledge, and it relates the grammatical, discursive, and non-verbal details of interaction to the construction of social and cultural ideologies that define a community.

The theory of Language Socialization rests on a theory of indexicality. Indexicality, as a number of linguistic anthropologists such as Ochs (1990), Duranti and Goodwin (1992) and Wortham (2003) argue, is central to the linguistic and cultural organization of social life, something that constitutes language as a context-bound, interactively-accomplished phenomenon. From sociolinguistics and other fields, we have learned that a single

linguistic form may index some contextual dimension (e.g., honorific forms such as *nin* (您) or *laorenjia* (老人家)in Chinese can index social and affective relationships between the speaker and the addressee or between the speaker and the referent). Likewise, a set of linguistic forms can index contextual dimensions. Isolated linguistic features often have a wide range of indexical possibilities (e.g., mispronouncing *da hui lang* (大灰狼) ("big grey wolf") as *da fei lang* (大飞狼) ("big flying wolf") can index speech by a child, a non-standard dialect speaker, a foreign language speaker, or a creative speaker), and often a combination of several indexes narrows the indexical scope in terms of identities of and relations between the language users, dispositions of the language users, and the activities at hand (e.g., duplication of syllables along with high pitch might index a child Chinese speaker, etc.)

In contrast to the view that language forms directly index sociocultural contexts, within the framework of Language Socialization, indexicality is conceived of as a property of speech through which sociocultural contexts (e.g., identities, activities) are constituted by particular stances and acts which in turn are indexed through linguistic forms (Ochs 1990, 1992, 1993). That is to say, from a LS perspective, the indexical relationship between linguistic forms and sociocultural contexts is often achieved indirectly, instead of directly. Major sociocultural contexts include participants' social identities, relationships, affective dispositions (e.g., their feelings, moods, and attitudes toward some proposition), epistemological dispositions (beliefs or knowledge vis-à-vis some proposition, e.g., the source of their knowledge or the degree of certainty of that knowledge), social / speech acts and activities, and genre. Ochs (1990) argues that among these contexts, affective and epistemological dispositions are recurrently used to constitute other contextual dimensions. Hence this two-step indexical relationship can be illustrated in Figure 2:

Linguistic forms→affect/stance → contextual features (e.g., identity)

Figure 2. Indexical Relationship between Language and Identity

For example, in the Chinese heritage language classrooms that I have studied, teachers consistently use three-phased directives to moralize their commands for the students to act according to the teacher's wishes (He, 2000a), as shown in data segment 2.

Data Segment 5. Directive: Respect for Parents' Efforts

((In the middle of a class, several students, especially B2 and B5, appear tired or bored. They are sitting sideways, kicking their legs and not paying attention to Tw, the teacher.))

```
1     Tw:-> A:  baba   mama   hua   le   hen  DA  de  liqi
            PRT father mother spend PERT very big POS effort
            Ah, your parents spent lots of efforts

2           cong HEN YUAN de difang ba  nimen song lai >shi   bu  shi<?
            from very far POS place PTP you   send COMP right NEG right
            sending you here from distant places, right?
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 3          (.5)

 4    Tw:   Hai zai waitou  deng zhe nimen,
            even at outside wait DUR you
            They are even waiting for you outside

 5    ->    ruguo nimen meiyou haohao xuexi  meiyou dedao eh:::
            if    you   NEG    well   study  NEG    gain
            If you do not study hard, and learn something, eh:::

 6          meiyou dedao  dongxi de   hua, (.2) a,
            NEG    gain   thing  PRT  case      PRT
            if you don't get anything

 7          na   jiu  bu  heSUAN     le
            then CONJ NEG worthwhile PRT
            then it is not worthwhile

 8          (.4)

 9    Tw:-> A,  suoyi (.2) women YIDING yao    zuo hao::.
            PRT therefore  we    surely should sit well
            Ah, so, we must sit well.

 10         ((B2 and B5 stop kicking, sit straight, facing Tw))
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Noticing that some students are not sitting up or paying attention, Tw first points out the efforts their parents made to send the children to weekend Chinese language school (lines 1-4). The significance of her statement is not clear until the next utterances in which she projects the negative consequences of the students' behavior (lines 5-7). Only finally does she issue a directive (line 9). Note that the problem itself, that some students are not sitting up or paying attention, is never formulated overtly; rather, it is embedded in negative conditional clauses (if-not clauses in lines 5 and 6). Teacher Wang (Tw) conveys to them that children should be filial and grateful to their parents by meeting their expectations. Her directive is grounded in a moral appeal: if the students do not study hard, their parents' efforts will have been wasted, and if that happens, they are not good children.

Here we see a three-phased directive pattern, namely, Orientation >Evaluation > Directive. The teacher first orients the students to a state of affairs that renders the students' behavior problematic, then formulates negative consequences that may result from the their problematic behavior, and only then does she issue a directive to correct the behavior. Rather than simply issuing directives, the teacher weaves cultural values and ideology in the prefaces so as to warrant the directives for desirable behavior.

Moralized directives like (5) index both an affective disposition and social identity. They directly index affective dispositions of morality and authority and indirectly index the social identity of the speaker as a parent or teacher, since in Chinese culture parent/teacher roles are largely defined in terms of moral and authoritative dispositions. It

is thus considered the teacher's and parents' prerogative and responsibility to socialize students/children such that they acquire the principles that regulate human conduct.

Although "teacher" is a universal social role, the communicative practices of teachers vary considerably across cultures and societies (see He 2003a). In other words, there is not a one-to-one mapping relationship between three-phased moralized directives (language forms) and the social identity of the teacher (cultural context). Instead, the association of moralized directives with the identity of the Chinese teacher is constituted and mediated by the relation of language forms to stances (e.g., moral and authoritative), activities and other social constructs. As such, students in CHL classes come to understand a teacher’s role in part by becoming familiar with certain recurring stances (e.g., upholding moral values such as filial piety).

As argued elsewhere (He, 2003b), the Language Socialization approach to indexicality provides a systematic account of how language relates to cultural context. In the diaspora situation of teaching and learning a heritage language in the adopted culture, it is possible that the CHL learners will fail to achieve the identity of "a CHL community member" through failure to act and feel in some way expected by the CHL community or due to the CHL community’s failure to ratify the learner’s displayed acts and stances. Using Language Socialization, we can examine the construction of various identities and relationships that result from certain acts and stances. Language Socialization also allows us to examine the construction of identities in multilingual, multicultural, and immigrant contexts.

SLA Theories

Two theories from SLA are of particular relevance to building a theory of CHL development with reference to learner identity: the Acculturation Model (Schumann 1978a, 1978b) and the Accommodation Theory (Giles 1977, Scherer & Giles 1979, Giles & Byrne 1982). Both theories associate successful language acquisition with the relationships between the language learner’s social group and the target language community. The Acculturation Model’s central premise is that second language acquisition is a form of acculturation, and the extent of learners’ acculturation to the target language group determines acquisition of the second language. Acculturation is in turn affected by the degree of social and psychological distance between the learner and the target language culture. Variables that affect distance include whether the target language and native language groups view each other as socially equal; whether the target culture and native culture are congruent with each other; whether both communities have positive attitudes toward each other; leaner motivation; and ego boundaries (Schumann 1978b). This model treats social and psychological distance as significant but static and fixed, and does not consider the role of interaction between the language learner and the target language speaker.

The Accommodation Theory shares the Acculturation Model’s concern with motivation and learner identity, but its primary objective is to investigate how inter-ethnic communication and its associated social and psychological stances shape SLA. While the

Acculturation Model treats social and psychological distance as an a priori given, the Accommodation Theory considers inter-ethnic group relationships as subject to ongoing negotiation during the course of each interaction. These relationships are thus understood as dynamic, and they fluctuate along with the shifting, evolving view of identity that each group holds of the other. This theory considers the level of learner motivation to be a reflex of how learners define themselves in ethnic terms, which in turn is governed by a number of variables: (1) identification with the learner's own social group, (2) inter-ethnic comparison, (3) perception of ethno-linguistic vitality (whether learners see their social group as holding a low or high status and as sharing or excluded from power), (4) perception of inter-ethnic boundaries (whether the learner sees his social group as culturally and linguistically separate from the target language group or as culturally and linguistically related), and (5) identification with other social categories (whether the learner identifies with some social categories (occupational, religious, gender) and as a consequence whether s/he holds adequate or inadequate status within his/her social group).

Accommodation Theory suggests that a speaker's sense of ethnic identity is an important and ever-changing variable. The theory also encompasses language acquisition and language use within a single framework (cf. Firth & Wagner 1997; Kasper 1997). It accounts for the learner's variable linguistic output as follows: learners continually modify their speech to reduce or accentuate the linguistic and social differences between them and their interlocutors depending on their assessment of the interactive situation. This theory can be used to explain the development of a new dialect, accent or script. For example, Jason Chen, who is quoted above, may speak Cantonese with his grandmother to diminish the differences between them and maintain communication, speak newly acquired Mandarin with his girlfriend and write to her using the simplified script to enhance intimacy, and speak Mandarin with a standard northern accent to differentiate himself from his parents and aunt.

Conversation Analysis

The third strand of work that directly relates to identity theory is Conversation Analysis (He 2000b, 2004b; Markee 2000; Sacks et al., 1974; Sacks 1992; Schegloff 1991). Conversation Analysis sees language and interaction as an essential cultural and social form, often linked to and in some contexts criterial of identity (Sacks 1992). From the CA perspective, identity inheres in actions and in language use rather than in people. As the product of situated social action, identities take on an emergent quality and may shift and recombine, moment by moment, to meet new circumstances. In this view, CHL can be seen as a form of social action. Learner identities are formed through interaction with other individuals and experience in various social contexts including families, ethnic and other socioculturally defined groups, and various social institutions such as schools and work places (He 1995, 1997, 2004a).

Sacks' work in CA on "membership categorization", i.e., how people describe participants (Sacks, 1992), directly addresses identity construction. Sacks noted that when speakers are called on to use descriptions, they employ categories to label

themselves, others, and objects. These categorizations are "inference-rich" (1992: 40-48) in that members of a society rely on their local knowledge of the meaning of these labels, associating them with characteristics and behaviors that are presumed to be known about the category. Sacks also observed that any feature can be used for membership categorization and that several categories can be applied to the same person (e.g., a Chinese American, a student, a female, a daughter). Of interest are the procedures by which participants select membership categories.

Conversation Analysis compels us to pay attention to the interactional, moment-by-moment production of identity and motivation, rather than learners' overall, general goals as suggested by the SLA theories. It enables us to look at how identity and motivation emerge from interaction itself – how meanings are communicated, expressed, oriented to, received, negotiated, and modified. Unlike the foreign/second language learner, who is clearly a member of his/her "native culture" and is attempting to learn the norms and rules of the "target culture", the learner of a heritage language appears to have a multi-faceted identity as someone who is socio-historically connected with the target culture and yet experientially displaced from it. In data excerpt (3) (He 2004a), we may be able to see that with the use of varying language forms—personal pronouns and shifting lexical entailments in various repair trajectories—the students and teacher present themselves differently and project varied interpersonal alignments with regard to cultural/institutional groups.

Data Segment 6. Who "we" Are: Multiple, Shifting Learner Identities
((Tc is organizing the class to set up a writing contest between two groups. **women**=we; **nimen**=you; **tamen**=they))

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1     Tc:   hao (.2) women xianzai fen    cheng liang ge  zu=
            Good     we    now     divide PERT  two   MSR group
            Ok now let's break into two groups.

2     B3:   =women bisai?!
             We    compete
             We're going to have a contest?!

3     Ss:   [Yeah::

4     Tc:   [bisai (.) dui (.) kan na zu you kuai you hao
             compete yes see which-Q group CONJ fast CONJ good
            Yes, competition.   See which group is both faster and
            better.

5     G4:   sh- shui shui shu  shui jiu  mai cookies yeh::
              who-Q  who  lose who  CONJ buy
            Whoever loses buys cookies (for everybody)

6     Tc:   mai cookie?  Women xuexi ah  bu  yong chi de
            buy          we    learn PRT NEG use  eat POS
            Buy cookies? We are here to learn.  We don't need food.

7           ((Pause. Students moving seats to get into groups.))
```

8 G4: zai xuexiao Mrs. Colon jiao **women** zhe yang
at school ask us this manner
At school Mrs. Colon asks us to do like this.

9 Tc: zheli- zheli uh shi zhongwen xuexiao ah **women** bu-
here PRT COP Chinese school PRT we NEG
It's it's uh Chinese School here. We don't-

10 **tamen** zhe yang **women** bu zhe yang ah
they this manner we NEG this manner PRT
They do this (but) we don't.

11 ((In the subsequent 2-3 minutes, the two groups are well into the contest. Tc is looking for the next word.))

12 B?: laoshi **women** ying le you extra credit ma?
Teacher we win PERT have Q
Teacher if we win do we get extra credit?

13 (.4)

14 B3: **women** ying le jiu jia fen.
We win PERT CONJ add point
We should receive extra points if (we) win.

15 (.2)

16 Tc: **nimen**- **women** bu yong ah
you we NEG need PRT
You- we don't need (to receive extra credit).

17 zai xuexiao **tamen** gei jia fen ma?
At-LOC school they PRT add point Q
Do they give (you) extra points at school?

18 Ss: [((inaudible))]

19 Tc: **women** bu yong- no cookie no extra credit ok?=
We NEG need
We don't need- no cookie no extra credit ok?

20 B3: [**women** you jia fen.
We have add point
We do have extra points.

21 **women** you dajia dou you.
we have everyone all-EMP have
We have- everyone gets (extra points).

22 ((A parent entered the classroom to pick up her child early and the discussion is interrupted and never picked up again in this class meeting.))

The table below summarizes the use of different pronouns by different speakers. CLS stands for Chinese Language School; DTS refers to the regular daytime school the students attend during weekdays.

Table 1. References in Data Extract (6)

Line #	Speaker	Pronoun	Referent	Activity
1	Tc	we	Ss at CLS	have a writing contest
2	B3	we	Ss at CLS	have a writing contest
6	Tc	we	Ss at CLS	don’t need food when learning
8	G4	we	Ss at DTS	have cookies as learning rewards
9	Tc	we	Ss & T at CLS	don’t need food/rewards
10	Tc	they	Ss & T at DTS	have/allow cookies as rewards
10	Tc	we	Ss & T at CLS	don’t need/allow food/rewards
12	B?	we	Ss at CLS	get extra points?
14	B3	we	Ss at CLS	should get extra points
16	Tc	you	Ss at CLS	
16	Tc	we	Ss at CLS	don’t need extra points
17	Tc	they	T at DTS	give extra points?
19	Tc	we	Ss at CLS	don’t need cookies or points
20	B3	we	Ss at DTS	get extra points
21	B3	we	all Ss at DTS	get extra points

If we focus on each of the pronouns, *women* ("we") is used to refer to (1) students at CLS (by both Ss and Tc), (2) students and teachers at CLS (by Tc), (3) students at daytime schools (by Ss), and (4) all students at daytime schools (by Ss). *nimen* ("you") is used by Tc to refer to students at CLS (line 16). *tamen* ("they") is used by Tc to refer to (1) students and teachers at daytime schools and (2) teachers at daytime schools (lines 10 and 17). Alternatively, if we focus on each speaker, the students are self-presented as (1) students at CLS, (2) students at daytime schools, (3) members of the entire student body at daytime schools. The students are presented by Tc as members of CLS only. In other words, while students identify themselves with daytime schools as well as with CLS using *women* ("we") in all cases, Tc clearly differentiates CLS from daytime schools, marking in each case students and teachers at daytime schools as *tamen* ("they").

This data segment is also characterized by a number of repair sequences (Schegloff 1979, 1992, 1996; Schegloff et al, 1977). In line 5, G4 completes a self-initiated same turn repair, announcing that whichever team loses the contest will need to buy cookies for

everyone. This turn is marked by perturbations in the beginning and the mid-turn code switch from Chinese to English. In line 6, Tc extends an other-initiated other-completed repair. She first offers a repair initiation through a partial repeat of G4's previous turn with a question intonation ("Buy cookies?"), which structurally could have functioned as a next turn repair initiation. However, without allowing any space for G4 to respond to the repair initiation, Tc continues and completes the repair herself within the same speaking turn, stating that learning should not be associated with food. On the one hand, Tc appropriates the English item introduced by G4 ("cookie"), thereby exhibiting her own identification with the students' linguistic membership categorization (i.e., bilingual in Chinese and English). On the other hand, she opts to use the least affiliative repair strategy, that of other-initiated, other-completed repair.

In line 8, G4 argues for the legitimacy of buying cookies by invoking the practices of her daytime school. In lines 9-10, Tc strives (as evidenced by cut-offs and hesitations in the beginning of the turn) to present a counter argument by differentiating Chinese Language School from daytime school. There are two instances of self-initiated same turn repair in lines 9-10. The first occurs at the beginning of the turn when Tc states that buying cookies is not appropriate. The second instance occurs when she contrasts what is acceptable in CLS with what is acceptable in DTS ("we" versus "they"). In line 16, in reply to a student's question (line 12) whether the winning team will get extra points, Tc produced another self-initiated same turn repair (from "you" to "we"), this time shifting from a categorization of students and herself as separate entities to an identification of students and herself as belonging to the same group.

The last instance of repair occurs in line 19. It is yet another self-initiated same turn repair. Unlike other instances of repair of the same type, however, in this instance, the repair is completed through code-switching from Chinese to English at the end of a turn-constructional-unit ("We don't need it"). As Tc clearly spoke Chinese much better than English and since she rarely used English in the classroom, code-switching in this case can be seen as evidence for identity adjustment (Martin-Jones, 1998) for Tc, who begins by making a clear distinction between the Chinese speaking "we" and the English speaking "they" and later becomes receptive to ambivalence, duality and possibly change.

Table 2 locates the use of personal pronouns in the trouble source-repair initiation-repair completion sequence of the discussion.

Table 2. Pronouns and Repair Sequence in Data Segment (6)			
Line number	Speaker	Pronominal reference	Location of reference in repair sequence
Line 6	Tc	("buy cookie") We	(Trouble source) Other repair
Line 9	Tc	We They	Trouble source Self-repair
Line 16	Tc	You We	Trouble source Self-repair
Line 19	Tc	We (Code-switch)	Trouble source (Self-repair)

Table 2 shows that only the teacher combines personal references and repair sequences. As specified above, in each of these instances, the teacher attempts to categorize the students as members of CLSs (as opposed to DTSs) and to align herself with the students.

To sum up, the students' self presentation appears to be multi-faceted and fluid; they categorize themselves as members of simultaneously-existing multiple groups and move in and out groups with ease, aligning themselves with CLS, their daytime school and/or their teacher at various points in the discussion. The teacher, on the other hand, appears to make every effort, including a succession of self repairs, to categorize the students solely as members of CLS. In other words, as the participants collaboratively (although variously) define the identity of the students, they at the same time also jointly re-create the identity of the teacher.

To conclude this section, Language Socialization provides a theory of indexicality, which views language as a resource for developing specific, multiple and fluid discourse patterns, stances, and values, which in turn index various social and cultural identities. It prompts us to understand the meanings and connections that learners make between CHL learning and their everyday lives and to look at CHL development as social practice rather than a set of language skills to be acquired. This social practice shapes and is shaped by learners' sense of identity. The Acculturation Model and Accommodation Theory from Second Language Acquisition highlight the importance of motivation in language development and view motivation as deriving from learner identity. They further categorize learner identity in terms of concrete sets of relationships among learners, their own social group, the target language speaker, and the target social group. Accommodation Theory shows great promise as it suggests that learners' language acquisition has to do with their ongoing, evolving self-assessment against his/her own social group and the target language/dialect group. Conversation Analysis also enables us to see that language development is rooted in learners' co-construction of participation frameworks, situated tasks, and interactionally achieved identities. It provides the

analytical resources to examine how learner identity may be established, sustained or altered in actual, real-time, moment-by-moment interaction. These three analytical perspectives, although diverse in origin, converge in their concern with the role of identity as it is shaped by and shapes language use.

Having considered language development as a socially indexical practice, learner identity as a crucial driving force for language learning, and the interactional production of learner identity, we are now ready to propose an identity theory of CHL development.

V. Toward an Identity Theory of CHL Development

I have argued thus far that the question of identity may be a key to CHL development. An emphasis on learner identity as a prime dynamic force in CHL development can bring into focus the significance of cultural as well as language factors to conceptualizing evolving tensions and transformations that take place both within the learner and among the learner and the multiple worlds that s/he inhabits. As discussed earlier, identity, when seen as a process, is also identification or positioning. It rests on two fundamental constitutive features—temporality and spatiality.

First, construction of identity involves a process that extends through time (Heidegger 1962) and involves multiple timescales (Lemke 2002). On a macro level, cultural/social identities are historically emergent. As such, they presuppose assumptions about the origins of groups, their evolution through historical periods, their arrival at the present stage, and their projected and perceived destinations in the future. On a micro level, identities are dynamically and fluidly negotiated, validated, challenged or changed as social interaction develops in real time. Second, construction of identity involves a process that extends in space, in that it is connected with a specific territory endowed with meanings. The spatiality of identity construction may apply to demographic identities such as ethnic groups in an indirect, indexical manner. For example, Chinese-American ethnic identification traditionally was located in largely self-contained enclaves of Chinatown. Nowadays Chinese Americans no longer occupy a contiguous geographical space, but they do define themselves, and are defined by others, partly in reference to their ancestral homelands (Chang 2003). [2]

An identity theory of CHL development may thus read like this: CHL development takes place in a three-dimensional framework with intersecting planes of time, space, and identity. Temporally, CHL development recontextualizes the past, transforms the present and precontextualizes the future. As such, it fosters rooted world citizenry with appreciation of and competence in Chinese language and culture. Spatially, it transforms local, independent communities into global, interdependent communities. A CHL's development depends on the ability to find continuity and coherence in multiple communicative and social worlds in time and space and to develop hybrid, situated identities and stances.

The following ten hypotheses can be formulated accordingly. Along the temporal dimension are:

- **The Rootedness Hypothesis.** The degree of success in CHL development correlates positively with learners' desire to be rooted in their heritage culture and to accentuate similarities with members of the CHL community. This explains why CHL students in university CHL classes often claim that they disliked taking Chinese lessons at a young age when they lacked the maturity and the desire to remain connected with their family background, whereas now that they are fully grown and ready to embrace their cultural heritage from the past, they are eager to learn CHL.
- **The Benefits Hypothesis.** The degree of success in CHL development correlates positively with the learner's envisaged benefits and rewards, both social and economic, in the future.[3] Although Chinese texts are recorded with a single writing system, Mandarin Chinese, the lingua franca for all Chinese speakers irrespective of their native dialects, is the language of literacy and is associated not only with literary activity but also with economic opportunities. Learning the language well makes practical, functional sense.
- **The Interaction Hypothesis.** The degree of success in CHL development correlates positively with learners' desire to communicate successfully in a moment-by-moment fashion. Existing research, though limited, has supported our hunch that strong long-term motivations may not lead to success in CHL learning (Tse 2002). An important aspect of motivation comes from the reward of communicating in situated activities (e.g., understanding a comic strip or a letter from grandparents, being able to talk to relatives or to travel independently in Chinese speaking areas). This hypothesis is particularly applicable to young CHL learners when the Rootedness Hypothesis and the Benefits Hypothesis are indeterminate.

Along the spatial dimension:

- **The Positive-Stance Hypothesis.** The degree of success in CHL development correlates positively with the stance of the English-speaking community towards the Chinese language. For a long time, China's economy was undeveloped and Chinese language was not considered important in American schools. However, conditions have changed, and more students are studying Chinese as a foreign language. CHL students may feel inspired and compelled to master the language, especially in contexts and on campuses where cultural tolerance and diversity are promoted and celebrated.
- **The By-Choice Hypothesis.** The degree of success in CHL development correlates positively with the frequency with which the learner's family uses CHL by choice. It has been observed anecdotally that when families use CHL by necessity (i.e., parents speak CHL because their English is limited), learners are likely to see CHL as limiting rather than enriching. By contrast, when parents speak CHL because they choose to, learners see a model of the development and

maintenance of CHL "where the motive is linguistic, cognitive, and cultural enrichment—the creation of citizens of the world" (Hakuta, 1985: 229-230). This hypothesis may to some extent explain why there seems to be pride for school-attained CHL on the one hand and sometimes uneasiness about home-acquired CHL on the other.

- **The Diverse-Input Hypothesis.** The degree of success in CHL literacy development correlates positively with the extent to which the learner has access to rich and diverse CHL input. Input originates not only from reading and A/V materials at home and school but also from interactions with Chinese speaking family members as well as visits to places where Chinese is used natively.
- **The Discourse-Norms Hypothesis.** Success in CHL development correlates positively with the extent to which the discourse norms (ways of speaking, patterns in turn-taking, allocation of speech roles, preferences in conversational topics, etc.) in CHL-speaking contexts (home, classroom, or community) are sensitive to discourse norms in the English-speaking community.

Along the identity dimension:

- **The Enrichment Hypothesis.** Success in CHL development correlates positively with the extent to which the learner has created a niche (linguistic, social, cultural) in the English-speaking community. This explains why adult CHL learners tend to be more enthusiastic about and committed to CHL learning than children as the former have found their own place in the English speaking world, where they see themselves as linguistic and social equals to others. It can be predicted that children who speak CHL only before school age are more likely to develop a negative attitude towards CHL when they start school than early bilinguals (those using two languages from infancy). The child CHL learners see CHL as holding them back and see CHL as the cause for not understanding English; whereas the adult learners, who are already comfortable with English, do not need to resist CHL to position themselves in the English speaking world.
- **The Multiplicity Hypothesis.** Neither in the temporal nor spatial sense is identity singular, unitary, or non-contradictory. The CHL learner assumes multiple identifications that may be overlapping and/or competing. The salience of various identifications varies contextually and relationally (Lo & Reyes, 2004). The degree of success in CHL development correlates positively with the ease with which the learner manages differences and discontinuities presented by multiple speech roles in multiple, intersecting communities.
- **The Transformation Hypothesis.** As CHL learners cope with multiple linguistic codes of family, peer groups, and school institutions, they are engaged in a double process of socialization into speech communities and acquisition of literacy as a means of asserting personal meanings that have the potential to transform the speech community. In other words, CHL can be used both to inherit heritage practices and to transform the practices that first motivated CHL learning.

V. Conclusion

This article has taken the position that heritage language development is grounded in learners' participation in social practice and continuous adaptation to the multiple activities and identities that constitute the social and communicative realms they inhabit. A theory that is oriented towards learner identity has been tentatively put forth to describe and predict the key variables responsible for CHL development. While the identity theory presented here might be applicable to heritage languages in general, at present it is intended to address CHL. Depending upon the learner's developmental stage, variables important to CHL child learners, for example, may be different from those important to CHL adult learners. By the same token, some hypotheses may be primary and others come into play in cases where the primary hypotheses are indeterminate (e.g., the patterns of CHL use in the family may become a crucial variable when other variables, such as the stance of the English speaking community toward the Chinese language, constitute neither a clearly positive nor a clearly negative influence).

Finally, the proposed theory has yet to specify the route of CHL development (cf. Lynch 2003). For example, is it the case that CHL follows a natural sequence of development with variations in the rate of development of specific lexico-grammatical and discourse features and in the level of proficiency achieved? Do classroom CHL learning and naturalistic CHL learning at home follow the same developmental path? Only when these and other related questions are addressed may we have a comprehensive picture of CHL development.

Notes

1 The interview data presented in the article were gathered in a U.S. university where both CHL and CFL courses are offered. The classroom discourse segments presented in this article were collected in two community based Chinese Heritage Language Schools in two different cities in the U.S. where evening or weekend Chinese language classes are offered to children with Chinese family backgrounds. The interactive data segments have appeared in previous publications (see references) for various analytical purposes.

2 From an ecological perspective, language development can also be seen as both temporal and spatial positioning (Kramsch, 2002).

3 This is also known in SLA as instrumental motivation (Gardner & Lambert, 1972).

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Appendix A. Transcription Symbols for Data Segments 2, 5, and 6)

CAPS	emphasis, signaled by pitch or volume
.	falling intonation
,	falling-rising intonation
°	quiet speech
[ ]	overlapped talk
-	cut-off
=	latched talk
:	prolonged sound or syllable
(0.0)	silences roughly in seconds and tenths of seconds (measured more according to the relative speech rate of the interaction than to the actual clock time)
(.)	short, untimed pauses of one tenth of a second or less
()	undecipherable or doubtful hearing
(())	additional observation
T:	at the beginning of a stretch of talk, identifies the speaker; T is for teacher (different teachers are represented by different small letters such as Ts or Tz), G for girl, B for boy, Ss for whole class.
->	speaking turns of analytical focus
<>	slow speech
><	fast speech

Appendix B. Grammatical Gloss for Data Sets 2, 5, and 6

COMP directional or resultative complement of verb

CONJ conjunction

COP copula

DUR durative aspect marker

EMP emphatic marker

LOC locative marker

MSR measure

NEG negative marker

PERT perfective aspect marker

POS possesive

PRT sentence, vocative or nominal subordinative particle

PTP pre-transitive preposition