An Online Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary & transcultural topics in Humanities & social sciences

TJHSS

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Transcultural Journal for Humanities and Social Sciences (TJHSS) is a journal committed to disseminate a new range of interdisciplinary and transcultural topics in Humanities and social sciences. It is an open access, peer reviewed and refereed journal, published by Badr University in Cairo, BUC, to provide original and updated knowledge platform of international scholars interested in multi-inter disciplinary researches in all languages and from the widest range of world cultures. It's an online academic journal that offers print on demand services.

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خطاب رئيس مجلس الأمناء

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رئيس تحرير

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تحية طيبة وبعد ،،،

تتقدم إليكم جامعة بدر بالقاهرة بالشكر على ما تبذلونه من جهد مادي ومعنوي لإصدار المجلة، فتميزكم المشهود خير قدوة، ممتنين لعملكم الدؤوب وتفوقكم الباهر، ونتمنى لكم المزيد من النجاحات المستقبلية.

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رئيس مجلس الأمناء

د/ حسن القلا

Editorial:

Embracing Diversity and Inclusion in the Age of Digital Humanity

The Third International Conference hosted by the School of Linguistics and Translation at Badr University in Cairo, titled "Diversity and Inclusion in the Age of Digital Humanity", marked a significant milestone in the ongoing dialogue about the intersection of technology, language, and humanistic values. Held on October 26–27, 2024, the conference brought together scholars, researchers, and activists from around the world to explore how digital advancements can foster inclusivity while addressing the challenges posed by rapid technological evolution.

The Digital Transformation of Humanities

One of the central themes of the conference was the imperative for digital transformation in humanities disciplines. Keynote speaker Professor Ruslan Mitkov's presentation, "Language and Translation Technologies in the Artificial Intelligence Era", underscored the transformative potential of Natural Language Processing (NLP) and AI in translation and linguistics. Mitkov highlighted the evolution from rule-based systems to generative AI, emphasizing both the capabilities and limitations of Large Language Models (LLMs). His insights reinforced the idea that while AI can enhance efficiency, human expertise remains indispensable in navigating linguistic nuances, ambiguity, and cultural context.

The conference also addressed the need for integrating computational linguistics into academic curricula. Recommendations included developing undergraduate and postgraduate programs in digital humanities, equipping students with skills for emerging roles like AI translators and prompt engineers, and promoting bias-free AI technologies. These measures are critical to preparing future generations for a labor market increasingly shaped by AI.

Diversity and Inclusion in Digital Spaces

Another focal point was the role of digital platforms in promoting diversity and inclusion. Discussions highlighted the importance of creating safe digital environments for marginalized groups and minorities, as well as the ethical responsibilities of AI developers to mitigate biases in data and algorithms. Professor Sameh El Ansary's presentation on corpus-based language teaching exemplified how empirical approaches, such as using real-life language data, can bridge gaps in traditional pedagogy and foster more inclusive learning experiences.

The participation of researchers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds—with 57 papers presented in multiple languages, most of them published in this issue—further demonstrated the conference's commitment to inclusivity. The inclusion of voices like Italian poet Domenico Pisana (we publish in this issue his valuable lecture), and scholars specializing in underrepresented languages underscored the value of cultural and linguistic diversity in academic discourse.

Charting a Path Forward:

The conference concluded with a call for continuous monitoring of AI developments, ethical AI practices, and interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure technology's role as a tool for empowerment. Professor Zain A. Hady's article, "The Internet from the Age of Innocence to the Age of Decadence: A Study in the Digital Postcolonialism," furthered the discussion on the societal impacts of digital evolution. The imperative to safeguard humanistic values while embracing AI's potential was underscored.

The insights from this conference serve as a crucial reminder that the digital age must be guided by principles of diversity, inclusion, and human oversight. By aligning technological advancements with equity, we can build a future that authentically reflects the richness of our global community. The success of this conference reaffirms academia's vital role in shaping inclusive digital landscapes, urging us to carry forward its lessons and ensure technological progress aligns with understanding, respect, and inclusion.

The Editorial Board

Heritage Language Maintenance Among Second-Generation Hispanic Immigrants: The Role of Settlement Context and Community Support in Bilingualism

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Abstract: This study examines the process of heritage language maintenance among second-generation children of immigrant professionals from Mexico residing in the United States. Given their higher education and the necessity of English fluency for high-status occupations, these immigrants often prioritize English, risking the loss of their heritage language in subsequent generations. The research focuses on how different settlement contexts—whether dispersed or concentrated near ethnic enclaves—affect heritage language transmission. Through semi-structured interviews with 24 immigrant parents, the study explores individual, familial, and community factors that influence language maintenance.

The findings reveal that geographic mobility often undermines heritage language support, increasing the likelihood of children becoming monolingual in English. Conversely, those who settle near ethnic enclaves benefit from community resources, leading to more successful heritage language transmission. Although some families achieve balanced bilingualism, many experience a gradual shift toward English dominance.

The study underscores the critical role of educational institutions and community programs in supporting heritage language maintenance. It advocates for the integration of heritage language programs within school curricula, community involvement through partnerships with ethnic organizations, and teacher training focused on culturally responsive practices. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of broader policy support, including funding for bilingual education and the development of heritage language media.

By drawing on successful models from other countries, this research provides valuable insights into how the United States can better support immigrant families in preserving their linguistic and cultural heritage, thereby enriching the broader society through linguistic diversity and multiculturalism.

Keywords: Heritage Language Maintenance; Bilingualism; Multilingual Education; Multiculturalism; **Linguistic Diversity**

Introduction

The present study examines the process of heritage language maintenance in the second generation, focusing on a group of immigrant professionals from Mexico residing in the USA. Due to their higher education and the requirement for fluency in

English for most high-status occupations, these immigrants often become fluent in English. According to studies of children of immigrants in the United States, family characteristics such as two-parent families and high levels of parental education and income contribute to children's fluent bilingualism (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). At the same time, there is evidence that high levels of parental education and income increase the likelihood that their children will only speak English (Alba et al., 2002).

This paper examines the experiences of immigrant professionals in different contexts of settlement (dispersed versus concentrated near ethnic enclaves) and considers the individual, familial, and community factors contributing to heritage language maintenance in the second generation. The current study offers an in-depth look at parents' attitudes and efforts toward heritage language maintenance and examines the barriers encountered in transmitting the heritage language to their children and the adjustments required.

The study demonstrates that geographic mobility often results in a lack of language maintenance support, increasing the likelihood that children become monolingual in English. In contrast, immigrant professionals who settle near ethnic enclaves are more likely to use ethnic community resources and, as a result, have greater success in heritage language transmission and maintenance. While there are some success stories of balanced bilingualism in the second generation, the reality for many immigrant families is that the heritage language is gradually lost as English becomes the dominant language.

Background

a. Familial Context and Heritage Language Maintenance and Loss

Based on the experiences of past immigrants, Fishman (1978) describes the process of heritage language loss in the U.S. as taking place across three generations. First-generation members experience instrumental acculturation, speaking some English but preferring their native language at home. Second-generation members speak English in school and with friends, increasingly responding to their parents in English at home, thus becoming limited bilinguals whose language of choice in adulthood becomes English. Finally, the remnants of the first generation's language are lost to third-generation members due to a lack of support both at home and in the outside environment.

Researchers identify significant factors that promote the preservation of the heritage language among children of immigrants. These factors include parents who share and speak the same heritage language, friends of the same national origin, and supportive ethnic networks (Alba et al., 2002). Kenji and D'Andrea (1992) mention that home language practice is one of the most powerful predictors of heritage language retention. Furthermore, it has been discovered that the birth order of children influences the heritage language experiences of immigrant families. Fillmore (1991) explains that later-born children become more English-dominant than the firstborn due to a familial language shift prompted by the school entrance of the older child and increasing sibling interaction in English. Tuominen (1999) also points out that

children of immigrants prefer to use English when communicating with their siblings and peers, even those of the same background.

Studies on immigrants' attitudes toward their heritage languages reveal a strong desire to teach their children their native language to transmit their culture (King & Fogle, 2006). While the use of a heritage language by children in immigrant families is positively associated with cohesive family relationships, the rapid assimilation of second-generation children contributes to a decrease in fluent communication between parents and children as the children abandon their heritage language. Portes and Rumbaut (2001) declare that, over time, the children's English abilities exceed those of their parents, and they increasingly respond to their parents in English, thereby undermining parental control and weakening parental authority. The same researchers discovered increased parent-child conflict, low self-esteem, and feelings of embarrassment about their parents' culture in families with children who are not fluent in their immigrant parents' language.

b. Societal Context and Heritage Language Support

Kravin (1992) indicates that parental input alone is insufficient for the continued development of a family's heritage language; broader linguistic input from peers and community support is also necessary. Residential concentration and the availability of ethnic social networks provide immigrants with opportunities to speak their native language, thus increasing heritage language maintenance. Stevens (1992) adds that immigrant groups that have the opportunity to use their native language in various social domains (e.g., family, religion, work, government) are more likely to maintain it.

Other studies indicate that immigrant social networks influence patterns of heritage language maintenance, resulting in a shift toward the dominant language. Personal contact with relatives in one's ethnic homeland has a strong positive effect on native language use, while limited contact with native language speakers in a new context has a negative effect. Furthermore, intermarriage significantly impacts the language used by the third generation by determining the language spoken at home (Hulsen et al., 2002). In short, immigrants and their children who have extensive social networks have frequent opportunities to use their heritage language with family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues, and consequently, they have a better chance of maintaining it.

c. The Linguistic Outcomes of Immigrant Professionals in the United States

Immigrants vary greatly in terms of human capital and legal status, resulting in a wide range of adaptation experiences in the host country. The participants in this study belong to a group of immigrant professionals (educated and legal immigrants) who often occupy high-tech, science, or engineering professions, as well as positions in universities and the medical field. Kaushal and Fix (2006) analyze that immigrant professionals typically enter the United States legally through one of the following channels: (a) as employees of U.S. companies who use priority worker visas, such as professionals with advanced degrees or exceptional ability aliens; (b) as students who

may later adjust their status through marriage to a U.S. citizen or by acquiring a job and obtaining an H-1B visa through U.S. employers; and (c) as visitors on other visas. Highly skilled immigrants differ from other types of immigrants in that they are more likely to be geographically dispersed within the United States and to migrate internally as they pursue job opportunities. Since immigrant professionals use English extensively at work and are less likely to live in ethnic communities where they can speak their native language, they have a greater chance of assimilation and heritage language loss over time and through subsequent generations.

Portes and Rumbaut (2006) illustrate a model of linguistic outcomes for first- and second-generation immigrants, which is based on: (1) immigration type (workers, entrepreneurs, and professionals); (2) the context of settlement (dispersed or concentrated); and (3) the availability of ethnic community resources (from ethnic enclaves to none). According to this model, despite their intellectual and economic resources, dispersed professionals may face more challenges in preserving their native language than concentrated professionals. Dispersed professionals are expected to become fluent bilinguals, whereas their children are expected to become monolingual in English. In contrast, professionals concentrated in ethnic neighborhoods, which reinforce their native language and culture, are predicted to develop into limited bilinguals, while their children are likely to become fluent bilinguals.

d. Hispanic Parents' Challenges for Heritage Language Maintenance

The present study provides an in-depth look at the challenges faced by Hispanic parents in maintaining their heritage language in Chicago. Based on semi-structured interviews with 24 immigrant parents from Mexico residing in the United States, I collected data to explore specific points related to parental attitudes toward heritage language transmission to their children, parental efforts to transmit the heritage language, reported challenges to heritage language maintenance, and parental adjustments in response to their children's heritage language skills. The research question for this study is: What are the challenges Hispanic parents face in maintaining their heritage language in Chicago? The study's findings show that the context of settlement and community support play a pivotal role in helping Hispanic parents maintain and transmit their heritage language to their children.

Methods

A qualitative methodology with in-depth semi-structured interviews was used to solicit detailed narratives related to parenting in immigration and to understand the participants' perspectives, motivations, conflicts, and meaning-making of their new circumstances (Patton, 2014). In this study, I interviewed 24 immigrant parents residing primarily in the Chicago Metropolitan Area. This approach yielded data from Mexican immigrants dispersed throughout Chicago.

a. Data Collection

Purposeful criterion sampling was used to recruit participants from two understudied groups: contemporary immigrants from Mexico and highly educated professional immigrants. The participants had to meet the following criteria: (1) They must be

first-generation immigrants from Mexico; (2) They must be part of a married couple with children to study parental efforts to maintain and transmit the heritage language; (3) At least one of the spouses must be in a professional occupation to investigate the effects of using two different languages at home on their children; and (4) They must have resided in the United States for a minimum of five years. Participants were recruited through a combination of newspaper advertising, personal contacts, and snowball sampling. Before the interviews, each participant signed a consent form and filled out a demographic information sheet. Interviews typically lasted 60 minutes and were recorded. I conducted half of the interviews in person and half over the phone.

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 24 participants. Most interviews were done in English and Spanish. I later translated the Spanish answers into English, taking into consideration the cultural context.

b. Interview Questions

The participants were asked the following questions: What language do you speak at home? How important do you think it is for your children to know your native language? After the parents responded, I asked clarifying questions: What do you do to promote your native language to your children? What language do your children use to communicate with you and their siblings? Can your children read and write in the language of their ancestors? Data related to heritage language maintenance was obtained from the parents' responses to the following questions: What are the greatest challenges you face as an immigrant parent? What adjustments did you have to make? How important is an ethnic community to you? Do you belong to an ethnic community, and if so, how?

c. Description of Participants

A total of 24 immigrant parents from Mexico participated in the study. They have resided in the USA for between 5 and 21 years. The fathers are between 34 and 56 years old, and the mothers are between 31 and 50 years old. The participants are highly educated, representing 7 doctoral degrees, 8 master's degrees, and 9 bachelor's degrees. The participants' employment categories include university positions (8), industry/business (8), and self-employment (e.g., music teacher, freelance photographer) (8). In total, the participants have 30 children (15 girls and 15 boys), with ages ranging from eight months to 17 years, with an average age of 11. Most of the children were born in the USA. Some of the children immigrated to the USA with their parents in early and middle childhood (average age of five years). The children were not interviewed.

d. Data Analysis

The study is guided by grounded theory methodology (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). Data collection and analysis were performed simultaneously. After each interview, I typed observational field notes that were further supplemented with comments following the interview transcription. Immediately after transcription, I performed open coding to identify any developing concepts in the interview data (Corbin & Strauss, 2014). I used a combination of line-by-line and sentence/paragraph coding to identify

segments of text that correlate with specific concepts. After conducting more interviews, I continued with axial coding, which allowed for making connections between categories.

Conclusion

The present study examines the process of heritage language maintenance among contemporary immigrants from Mexico who are married, highly educated, and in professional occupations. These parents generally have positive attitudes toward the transmission and maintenance of their heritage language to communicate with grandparents and extended family, as well as to enhance their children's intellectual development and education, a finding consistent with studies of other educated immigrants (King & Fogle, 2006). The parents report that they use their heritage language at home in addition to maintaining contacts with grandparents, ethnic friends, and a broader ethnic community when available. According to the participants, there is a positive relationship between immigrants' language maintenance and the number of contacts in their social networks who speak the heritage language. However, after a longer stay in the United States and continued extensive use of English in their professional occupations, many immigrants report English infiltration into their home conversations.

Other common barriers to communicating in a heritage language that parents reported in the study include maternal employment and an accompanying rushed lifestyle, a lack of contact with grandparents, children's tendency to communicate with and respond to their parents in English, and a lack of ethnic friends and community support. The study's participants were at different stages of the family life cycle, offering a view of heritage language maintenance across various children's ages. Having a stay-at-home mother who speaks limited English, along with the presence of grandparents, extended family, ethnic friends, and supportive schools, is beneficial. However, in most families, both immigrant parents must work and/or study hard to establish themselves in the new country, facing multiple demands on their time and energy. As these parents evaluate their work and family responsibilities, they inevitably have to prioritize. Due to their focus on their children's educational success, highly educated parents often promote mastery of English at home to ensure that their children succeed in school. According to the participants, it is possible to transmit the heritage language to young children, but maintaining it during the adolescent years becomes more difficult due to developmental pressures. The participants also mention that transmission and maintenance of the heritage language require significant and intentional parental efforts. Over time, many parents acknowledge the powerful forces contributing to English monolingualism and become more realistic in their language expectations and behaviors, ultimately settling for less than they previously expected.

The study also examines the role of the settlement context in the linguistic outcomes of immigrant professionals and their children. The results show that whether the children of immigrant professionals become English monolinguals or fluent bilinguals is primarily determined by the context of settlement. The participants in this study have diverse settlement contexts: one-third of the families live in areas of Chicago

with high concentrations of ethnic communities, while two-thirds of the families, before settling in the Chicago Metropolitan Area, had relocated several times due to employment opportunities and/or university attendance. Geographic mobility and relocation often come at the cost of language maintenance support, and, according to the parents' reports in this study, their children are more likely to become monolingual in English. In contrast, the immigrant professionals who settle near ethnic enclaves are more likely to report utilizing ethnic community resources, resulting in more successful heritage language transmission and maintenance.

While there have been some success stories of developing balanced bilinguals in the second generation, the reality for many participants in the present study is a gradual loss of the heritage language as English becomes the dominant language. The study also finds that immigrant parents realistically understand that English is the language of their newly chosen country, while their heritage language serves more as a nostalgic link to their original culture. Furthermore, for the children of these immigrants, English is or has become their first language—the language of their peers, school, country, and lives.

This study contributes to the field by drawing on the real experiences of Hispanic immigrants in the United States, especially since the number of Hispanic immigrants is increasing. It is important to study the challenges Hispanic parents face in maintaining their heritage language and transmitting it to their children. Additionally, this study may contribute to bilingualism research by investigating the challenges Hispanic parents face in preserving their heritage language in the U.S., particularly in sociolinguistic studies focusing on Spanish as a heritage language among immigrants.

Implications for Educational Policy

The findings of this study underscore the critical role that educational institutions and community programs can play in supporting heritage language maintenance among children of immigrant professionals. Given the unique challenges faced by these families, particularly those who are geographically mobile or live outside ethnic enclaves, targeted policies and programs are essential to preserving their linguistic and cultural heritage.

1. Integration of Heritage Language Programs in Schools:

One of the most direct ways to support heritage language maintenance is through the integration of heritage language programs within the school curriculum. Schools, particularly those with significant populations of immigrant students, should consider offering heritage language classes as part of their standard curriculum. These programs could be designed not only to teach the language but also to foster an appreciation of the cultural context in which the language is used.

- **Dual Language Programs:** Schools could implement dual language programs where students are taught in both English and their heritage language. These programs promote bilingualism and biliteracy, ensuring that students maintain their heritage language while achieving academic proficiency in English. Such

programs have been shown to benefit not only language retention but also academic performance and cognitive development.

- **After-School and Weekend Heritage Language Classes:** In addition to regular school hours, after-school and weekend classes could be offered to provide additional support for heritage language learning. These classes could be tailored to different proficiency levels, ensuring that both fluent speakers and those with limited exposure to the heritage language can benefit.

2. Community Involvement and Support:

Community involvement is crucial in creating a supportive environment for heritage language maintenance. Schools and local governments can play a pivotal role in fostering connections between immigrant families and community resources.

- **Partnerships with Ethnic Organizations:** Schools could partner with local ethnic organizations to provide resources and support for heritage language maintenance. These organizations often have the cultural and linguistic expertise needed to effectively support immigrant families. Collaborations could include language workshops, cultural events, and mentoring programs that connect students with fluent speakers from their community.

- **Community Centers as Language Hubs:** Community centers can serve as hubs for heritage language maintenance by offering language classes, cultural activities, and spaces for families to gather and use their heritage language. These centers can also provide resources such as bilingual books, language learning materials, and technology that supports language learning.

3. Teacher Training and Awareness:

For heritage language programs to be effective, educators need to be adequately trained and aware of the importance of heritage language maintenance. Professional development programs should be implemented to equip teachers with the skills and knowledge needed to support bilingual students.

- **Culturally Responsive Teaching:** Teachers should be trained in culturally responsive teaching practices that recognize and value the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of their students. This approach can help create a more inclusive classroom environment where students feel that their heritage language is respected and valued.

- **Language Pedagogy Training:** Providing teachers with specialized training in language pedagogy, particularly in teaching heritage languages, can enhance the effectiveness of heritage language programs. This training should include strategies for teaching bilingual students, addressing language attrition, and integrating cultural content into language instruction.

4. Family Engagement Programs:

Engaging families in the educational process is essential for supporting heritage language maintenance. Schools and community organizations should develop

programs that encourage family involvement and provide parents with the tools they need to support their children's bilingual development.

- **Parent Workshops:** Workshops for parents can be offered to provide guidance on how to support heritage language maintenance at home. These workshops could cover topics such as creating a bilingual home environment, strategies for language use, and the importance of maintaining the heritage language for cultural identity.

- **Bilingual Communication with Families:** Schools should ensure that communication with families is available in both English and the heritage language. This approach not only respects the linguistic diversity of the families but also encourages parents to engage more fully in their children's education.

5. Policy Advocacy and Support:

Finally, there is a need for broader advocacy at the policy level to support heritage language maintenance. Educational policy at the local, state, and national levels should recognize the importance of bilingualism and provide the necessary support for heritage language programs.

- **Funding for Heritage Language Programs:** Advocacy for increased funding for heritage language programs in public schools is crucial. This funding could support the development and expansion of dual language programs, the training of teachers, and the creation of instructional materials tailored to heritage language learners.

- **Legislation Supporting Bilingual Education:** Policymakers should consider enacting or strengthening legislation that supports bilingual education and the inclusion of heritage language programs in public schools. This could include mandates for offering heritage language classes in schools with significant populations of immigrant students and incentives for schools that successfully implement bilingual education programs.

Government and Community Programs to Support Heritage Language Maintenance

The preservation of heritage languages among immigrant families is not solely the responsibility of educational institutions. Governments and community organizations also play a crucial role in creating environments that support bilingualism and cultural retention. By examining successful models from other countries and regions, we can gain insights into how such programs can be tailored to meet the needs of immigrant families in the United States.

1. National Language Policies: Lessons from Canada and Wales

Several countries have implemented national language policies that prioritize the preservation of minority languages, providing valuable models for how governments can support heritage language maintenance.

- **Canada's Multiculturalism Policy:** Canada's approach to bilingualism and multiculturalism provides a robust framework for supporting heritage languages. The Canadian Multiculturalism Act, along with the country's official bilingualism policy, promotes not only the use of English and French but also the preservation of other languages spoken by immigrant communities. Government funding is allocated to support language classes, cultural programs, and community organizations that promote the use of heritage languages. This model demonstrates how national policies can foster an environment where multiple languages are valued and preserved.

- **Wales and the Welsh Language:** The revival of the Welsh language in Wales offers another example of a successful government-led initiative. The Welsh Government has implemented comprehensive policies to promote the use of Welsh through education, media, and public services. These efforts include Welsh-medium schools, where instruction is delivered primarily in Welsh, and public service announcements and documents provided in both Welsh and English. The success of these initiatives shows that with sustained government support and community engagement, minority languages can not only be maintained but also revitalized.

These examples highlight the importance of national policies that explicitly support the maintenance and promotion of minority languages. By adopting similar policies, the U.S. government could create a more supportive environment for the preservation of heritage languages among immigrant communities.

2. Community-Based Programs: Best Practices from Australia and Sweden

Community-based programs are essential in complementing government efforts to maintain heritage languages. These programs often provide the grassroots support necessary to sustain language use within families and communities.

- **Australia's Ethnic Schools Association:** In Australia, the Ethnic Schools Association provides a network of community language schools that offer weekend and after-school classes in various heritage languages. These schools are often run by community organizations and receive government support through grants and resources. The program not only helps children of immigrants maintain their heritage language but also strengthens ties within ethnic communities. By learning their heritage language in a structured setting, children gain a deeper understanding of their cultural identity and a stronger connection to their community.

- **Sweden's Mother Tongue Instruction (MTI) Program:** Sweden offers a unique example of how community-based programs can be integrated into the formal education system. The Mother Tongue Instruction (MTI) program in Swedish schools provides students with the opportunity to receive instruction in their heritage language as part of the regular school curriculum. The program is funded by the government and is available to students who speak a language other than Swedish at home. MTI not only supports language maintenance but also promotes academic success by allowing students to learn

in their strongest language. This program underscores the importance of integrating heritage language instruction within the mainstream educational system, rather than relegating it to extracurricular activities.

These community-based initiatives illustrate how government support can be effectively channeled through local organizations to provide language education that is accessible and relevant to immigrant families. Similar programs in the United States could be developed in partnership with ethnic organizations, ensuring that heritage language instruction is both culturally appropriate and responsive to the needs of different communities.

3. Media and Technology: Leveraging Digital Platforms for Language Preservation

The role of media and technology in heritage language maintenance cannot be overstated. Governments and community organizations can harness digital platforms to create accessible and engaging language resources for immigrant families.

- **New Zealand's Maori Language Broadcasting:** New Zealand's efforts to preserve the Maori language through media provide a compelling example of how technology can be used to support heritage language maintenance. Maori-language television channels, radio stations, and online content have been developed to make the language more accessible to younger generations. These media outlets play a significant role in normalizing the use of Maori in everyday life, thereby encouraging its use both at home and in the community.

- **Ireland's TG4 (Teilifís na Gaeilge):** Ireland's TG4, a public service broadcaster that provides content in the Irish language, offers another example of how media can support language preservation. TG4 broadcasts a wide range of programs, including news, entertainment, and children's shows, all in Irish. The availability of high-quality content in the heritage language not only supports language learning but also strengthens cultural identity among viewers. By creating similar media outlets or online platforms in the United States, the government could provide immigrant families with the tools they need to maintain their heritage languages in a modern, media-driven world.

- **Mobile Apps and Online Learning Platforms:** In addition to traditional media, mobile apps and online learning platforms can be powerful tools for heritage language preservation. Governments and community organizations could collaborate with tech companies to develop apps that offer language learning resources tailored to the needs of immigrant families. These platforms could include interactive lessons, games, and cultural content that make language learning engaging for children and accessible for parents. The success of apps like Duolingo in teaching new languages suggests that similar platforms could be developed specifically for heritage language maintenance.

4. Policy Recommendations for the U.S. Context

Drawing on these international examples, several policy recommendations can be made for the United States to better support heritage language maintenance among immigrant families:

- **Establish a National Heritage Language Initiative:** The U.S. government could establish a national initiative focused on promoting and preserving heritage languages. This initiative could provide funding for heritage language programs in schools, community organizations, and through digital platforms. It could also include public awareness campaigns that highlight the value of bilingualism and cultural diversity.

- **Support for Community Language Schools:** Similar to Australia's Ethnic Schools Association, the U.S. could provide funding and resources to support community language schools that offer heritage language instruction. These schools could be integrated into the public education system or operate independently, with support from local governments and community organizations.

- **Development of Heritage Language Media:** The U.S. could invest in the development of heritage language media, including television, radio, and online content. This could involve partnerships with existing ethnic media outlets or the creation of new platforms that provide high-quality, culturally relevant content in various heritage languages.

- **Incentives for Bilingual Education:** The U.S. government could offer incentives to schools that implement bilingual education programs, particularly those that include heritage languages spoken by significant numbers of students. This could involve grants, additional funding, or recognition programs that reward schools for their efforts to promote bilingualism.

Final Conclusion

The preservation of heritage languages among immigrant families is a multifaceted challenge that requires coordinated efforts from governments, educational institutions, and community organizations. By drawing on successful examples from other countries, the United States can develop policies and programs that provide meaningful support for heritage language maintenance. Whether through national language policies, community-based initiatives, media, or technology, there are numerous ways to create environments where heritage languages can thrive. These efforts not only benefit immigrant families by helping them maintain their cultural identity but also enrich the broader society by promoting linguistic diversity and multiculturalism. As the U.S. continues to grow as a diverse, multilingual nation, it is imperative that policies and programs be implemented to ensure that the linguistic heritage of all its residents is preserved for future generations.

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