Discrimination: One of the Key Reasons for Linguistic Assimilation

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Introduction

This paper uses findings from a comprehensive four-year study into consequences of contemporary German speakers' immigration to New Zealand across three familial generations (G1, G2 & G3) to inform about social attitudes influencing heritage language transmission to G3. Europeans see learning another language as beneficial, with surveys suggesting that nearly all see such learning as important for the future of their children (Piller, 2012). Learning at least one other language is also compulsory at school from an early age and in German-speaking Europe, English is usually the first of these languages learned (cf. Wilton & De Houwer 2011). Therefore, the participating contemporary immigrants from German-speaking Europe and their children who went to school before arriving in New Zealand were bilingual in German and English at arrival in New Zealand even though their language skills varied. At the time of this study, G1 and G2 participants were fluent bilinguals.

The terms community language (see e.g., Pauwels, 2005) and heritage language (see e.g., Melo-Pfeifer, 2015) tend to refer to the same phenomenon in societies with a different dominant or national language, namely minority languages spoken and either maintained or lost across the generations. Heritage language is also defined as languages other than the official or indigenous languages in a country (Duff & Li, 2009), or as ancestral or background language(s) of groups whose members have shifted or are in the process of shifting to the majority language (Heritage Language, 2004). I choose the term heritage language over community language here because contemporary German speakers in New Zealand are distributed throughout cities and the country rather than living in wider German language communities (cf. Holt, 1999).

Research into conventional assimilation into English shows immigrants' heritage languages lost within three generations (Portes, 2002; Portes & Hao, 1998) and pressures to convert to English-only have not changed much according to Alba, Logan, Lutz and Stults, (2002). This occurs despite the generally acknowledged positive influences of bilingualism on cognition, on academic performance and aspiration (cf. Portes & Rumbaut, 2001) and despite the preservation of heritage language allowing subsequent immigrant generations to better understand their cultural origins (Portes, 2002). A number of determining factors for the language switch to English have been identified. Widespread intercultural marriages and closeness of languages are factors promoting the switch (Clyne, 2003), as are social and political English-only ideologies (Portes, 2002), whereas supportive familial *and* communal contexts encourage heritage language maintenance (Alba et al., 2002). The family indeed provides essential foundations for heritage language acquisition and maintenance (Pauwels, 2005; Schüpbach, 2009). For Schüpbach (2009), three clusters of factors determine intergenerational language transmission: family types, transmission strategies, and parents' language attitudes and beliefs. Attitude of both G2 and G3 is a factor identified by Portes and Hao (1998) and Portes and Rumbaut (2014) in surveys of over 5,000 G2 students in grades 8 and 9, and of 6,135 young G3 adults in the USA. They all chose English as their preferred and only language. This shows the importance of language attitudes and beliefs in heritage learner generations. Causation processes are complex according to the researchers, with the school context important because of the time spent there. The researchers point to societal pressure for immigrants and their descendants to change to English-only. Indeed, societal attitudes matter considerably as the history of the German language in Anglophone countries shows, in which German heritage language transmission ceased due to war-related hostilities towards German speakers (e.g. Bade & Braund, 1998; Clyne, 2003; Portes & Rumbaut, 2014). Identity negotiation is strongly linked to language and feelings of belonging within sociocultural settings and peer groups (Berardi-Wiltshire, 2012; Phinney, Romero, Nava & Huang, 2001), which also influence affective connection to the heritage culture and language (Dressler,2008).

In her interview study of 102 German immigrants who arrived in New Zealand from the 1930s to the 1990s, Bönisch-Brednich (2002; 2005) found, for example, that parents switched to English as their home language to avoid their children being seen as outsiders. This was not the case in my study as G1 and G2 consistently spoke German with each other. Yet, this paper shows an effect of social discrimination experienced by young G2 participants on their subsequent lack of German heritage language transmission to the third familial generation.
The linguist Röhlen (n/d) argues that because children are opportunists, they need to see an immediate practical necessity of learning another language. Therefore, the minimum requirement for bilingual or plurilingual success in the home is the child's experience that the languages are of instant usefulness, in addition to intensive contact with people who keep using the relevant languages with the child. Yet, Röhlen also contends that parents tend to give up on bilingual efforts easily. This paper also describes patterns applied by G1 and G2 to transmit the German language to G3, and G3's attitude to their heritage language.

New Zealand background

De jure, New Zealand has two official languages: Māori and New Zealand Sign Language. De facto, as a result of colonization the country is overwhelmingly Anglophone. Despite the country's cultural super-diversity (Harvey, 2015) with 190 languages spoken in the country, according to the most recent census 81.4% of the population are monolingual English speakers (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Yet, a census does not necessarily provide accurate information about languages because, as Clyne (2003) points out, answers depend on questions asked, for instance, about regularity of language use, home language, language proficiency, mother tongue or first acquired language. The New Zealand census asks, 'In which language(s) could you have a conversation about a lot of everyday things?'

Generally, New Zealand's cultural and linguistic super-diversity has become part of public discourses that consider it a challenge rather than a resource. This is despite the New Zealand Human Rights Commission (2008, p. 4) demanding that, 'People whose community or heritage language is other than English, Māori or Pacific should have the opportunity and support to learn and use these languages through public and community provision.' Encouraging words, but there is no national language policy to support this. Rather, the monolingual mindset of English-language complacency that Clyne (2007) sees in Australia also thrives in New Zealand as the high levels of English monolinguals indicate. In 1992, Waite suggested that a second language should be included into the core school curriculum; but this was declined due to lack of funding (Loewen, Ellis & Hacker, 2006). Spending priorities, however, reflect underlying ideologies and this decision reflects a hidden focus on English-only[1]. The subtractive bilingualism that assumes that students' heritage or first languages are obstacles rather than educational and social resources is evident in education policy (May, 2002). Whilst the Ministry of Education promotes 'learning a new language'[2] at secondary school, i.e., from the age of about 13, these 'new languages' are generally taught as a 'foreign language'[3], a term that Fishman (2002) describes as insulting in contexts in which some of these languages have been spoken in the country for a very long time. With German speakers the second-biggest immigrant group in the 19th century, this applies to German in New Zealand (see e.g., Alastair, Adams & Skyrme, 2013). Furthermore, teaching language from beginner level at age 13 does not fall within or is at the very end of the critical period of implicit language acquisition (cf. Paradis, 2004) and a beginner level does not encourage motivation for learners with pre-existing language knowledge. Thus, these school subjects do not support heritage-language learners. As Harvey (2015) concludes, children may have a heritage language basis when they enter the education system but most leave as monolingual English speakers.

German in New Zealand

Language is mediated in social interactions (Scollon, 2008), which are subject to empowerments and constraints in social spaces (Blommaert & Huang, 2009). As in other countries, early German-speaking settlers in New Zealand maintained their language and passed it on to subsequent generations (Clyne, 1991; Kloss, 1966; Morris, 1993; Portes & Rumbaut, 2014; Wildfeuer & Eller, 2009).

[1] Exception: Māori is now funded comprehensively as part of Treaty of Waitangi obligations.
[2] See e.g., http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/The-New-Zealand-Curriculum/Learning-areas/Learning-languages Accessed September 2015.
[3] See, e.g., http://www.education.govt.nz/school/working-in-a-school/other-staff/foreign-language-assistants/ Accessed September 2015.

Yet, this heritage language transmission ceased due to hostilities against German speakers related to WWI and WWII[4] (Clyne, 2003; Grosjean, 1984; Morris, 1993; Portes & Rumbaut, 2014; Thompson, 2008; Wildfeuer & Eller, 2009). Renewed German–New Zealand diplomatic relations have been in place for well over sixty years; and immigrant numbers from Germany are steadily increasing (see Statistics New Zealand, 2014). To cite Bade and Braund's (1998) book title, this suggests that Germans[5] in New Zealand have moved 'Out of the shadow of war'. Indeed, with 5% of 2013 census respondents listing German as one of their languages, German is once again one of the most commonly spoken languages in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Indicating immigrants' successful workplace integration and societal respect for their proficiencies, for example, German is one of the European languages most frequently used, for instance, in New Zealand government institutions alongside English (Watts & Trlin, 2000). The level of sociocultural tolerance and speaker confidence indicated by this suggests that German language transmission to the next generations might once again be expected. Yet, as my study shows, discriminatory attitudes nevertheless are strangely persistent. In the following, I explain my perspective as the researcher and the method employed that led to the discovery of language transmission strategies. Findings of intergenerational language use between G1 and G3, and between G2 and G3 are detailed next, as are participant rationales.

Methodology

Researcher perspective

My social constructionist perspective has evolved from living in various cultures, some very distant from the one I grew up within. As a German-speaking immigrant with descendants in New Zealand, I was an insider researcher and during four years of data collection, I came to know the participants well. This translated into sympathetic understanding of common experiences, yet remaining as neutral a researcher as possible.

Method

Ethics approval for my study was granted by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee. The study progressed from a pilot study with G1 immigrants (n=3) to the main qualitative study involving three well-settled families (n=32, see Table 1). An online survey (n= 317) tested the findings of the qualitative study in the wider community. For the qualitative study, I used a snowball method of participant recruitment starting with an acquaintance. Data collection started with informal audio-recorded interviews with G1 and G2 and proceeded with intermittent observations of natural intra- and intergenerational interactions (audio-recorded if it was not intrusive or notes during or after observations) over a four-year period. During this time, I was invited into participants homes, trotted along to the zoo and the museum with G3 and their parents or grandparents, observed G3 interactions in their homes with siblings, parents, grandparents, playmates and adults not belonging to family, and observed Skype interactions between participants. Informal chats with G3 tried to elicit German language as well as attitudes to the heritage language and culture from those old enough. Much of the data collection and analysis progressed concurrently. I clarified additional questions with the participants via email, phone, or face-to-face conversations. For the current paper, I extract examples of language interactions and language-related responses to illustrate the (lack of) intergenerational German language transmission to G3 by their parents and grandparents and explain the reasons given by participants.

Participants

Participants' identities have been kept confidential. In the following table, G2 participants are identified by family and birth order (e.g., B/3); and G3 participants by family, participating parent and birth order (e.g., A/2/3 is the youngest-born of the male G2 participants in family A).

[4] New Zealand declared war to Germany twice: in 1914 and in 1939.

[5] Bade comments that he uses Germans for those who speak German rather than for nationalities because of the difficulties to define Germany in the 19th and 20th centuries through recurrent border/power changes in the German language areas. My interest also was in immigrants who had German as a first language rather than principally in their nationalities.
German is first language for about 100 million people in Europe, with German language areas including today's Germany, Austria, Luxembourg and Liechtenstein as well as parts of Switzerland and Belgium, and South Tyrol in Italy. Although most of my survey respondents were Germans, responses also reflected this spread of the German language.

Table 1: Details of families participating in qualitative study

Family	G2 **Birth order** / ages in years @ arrival in NZ (gender) years of English @ arrival in NZ; nationalities	**G2 family situations; qualifications at time of study**	G3 **Birth order** / age in years at end of study (gender); nationalities
A	**1** / 15(f) 4 years school E; Austrian & New Zealand	Husband monolingual English; live next-door to G1; Dispensing optician.	**1** /15(m) **2** / 13 (f); Austrian & New Zealand
	2 / 13(m) 2 year school E; Austrian & New Zealand	Wifemonolingual English; live 10 minutes from G1; Builder.	**1** / 6(m) **2** / 5(m) **3** / 4(m); Austrian & New Zealand
B	**1** / 21(f) 9 years school &university E; Austrian & New Zealand	Divorced from monolingual English speaker; lives with G1 and children (by end of study for about 7 years). MA Business.	**1** / 15(m) **2** / 12(f); Austrian & New Zealand
	2 / 28(m) 3 years school E; New Zealand	Separated from G1 Filipina; children live with mother; limited contact between G1 and B/2, and between B/2 and his boys. Chef.	**1**&**2**/twins 9 (m); New Zealand
	3 / 16(m) 5 years school E; Austrian& New Zealand	Wife English/German bilingual; reported one-parent, one-language; see G1 weekly on Skype; G1 visits 2-3 times/year. MA Business.	**1** / 4(f) **2**&**3**/twins 2½(m); Australian
C	**1** / 12(f) 2 years school E; E (& French) through family & friends from infancy; German	Husband monolingual English; live 1½ hours flight from G1. G1 visit about 3–4 times/year; G2 & G3 visit G1 once a year; weekly phone contact. BSc Agricultural Science.	**1** / 12(m) **2** / 10(m) **3** / 8(m) **4** / 6(f); New Zealand & British
	2 / 5(f) Basic E through family & friends; no school E; German	Husband monolingual English; live 1 hour drive from G1; G1 visit weekly or more frequently. BSc Food Science.	**1** / 9(m) **2** / 7(f) **3** / 3¾ (m); German & New Zealand

Due to extended periods of travel, spatial distance, or dissimilar family relationships, frequencies of contact between the generations varied. For instance, G1 in family A spent a total of three to five months traveling in Australia and/or Europe almost each year. At the other end of the scale, G1 in family B had lived with their daughter (B/1) and her children in the same home for about seven years by the end of my study, with G1 looking after G3 every day when B/1 worked. B/3 lived in Australia for employment reasons. As population flows freely between New Zealand and Australia (Lidgard & Gilson, 2002) and this move was an indirect consequence of his parents' migration to New Zealand, he and his Australian-born children were included in the study. The other G3 participants were born in New Zealand. By the end of data collection from the families, the G3 participants were between 2½ and 15 years old.

Nexus Analysis

I chose Nexus Analysis (NA) (Scollon & Scollon, 2004) as the appropriate method for this study because this strategic approach, commonly employed in Mediated Discourse Studies, balances social and linguistic inquiry. NA seeks to illuminate the complex relations between broader societal discourses and social actions by treating language in interaction and linked socio cultural discourses as equally important rather than considering one or the other as secondary context. That is, NA sees research as cooperation between researcher and participants, in which participants are co-researchers and the researcher is participant. The approach allows in-depth, holistic understanding by taking the mediated social action within a specific moment in time as the unit of analysis. Language is one of the many cultural tools of mediation in this moment. Other cultural tools are material objects, here for instance German books, DVDs, Internet sources, and songs. Cultural tools are considered within the intersecting connections that are relevant for the research questions.

Findings and discussion

Heritage language transmission and uptake by G3

With one exception (B/2), all G1 and G2 participants reported that they spoke German with G3. However, strategies, frequency and perseverance varied within and between the families.

Family A

G1 participants in family A repeatedly claimed that they 'always' spoke German with G3, yet this appeared to reflect wishful thinking rather than fact. That is, during observations they spoke English with G3 apart from very basic utterances related to food and daily routines. Nevertheless, emphasizing that their heritage-language transmission efforts worked, these G1 participants also asserted that G3 understood German well: *'die verstehen alles'* [they understand everything]. Yet, both G2 in the family disagreed: *'die verstehen nicht so viel wie Mama und Papa glauben'* [they don't understand as much as Mum and Dad believe]. G2 participants reported attempts at transmitting German to their children. A/1 reported that she stayed at home with her first-born until he turned three. Back then, she would often spend time with her mother and both would speak German with him. Yet, once he went to kindergarten, he would answer in English and she would switch to English. A/1 did not speak German to her second child at all. A/2 reported that experiences of discrimination and ridicule (being called Nazi; given the Nazi salute; Hitler impersonations) during his settlement led him to linguistic assimilation in order to be accepted: 'I tried really hard not to sound any different from them.' And indeed, in contrast to his sister he did not have any Austrian accent. His sister dismissed similar negative experiences as *'saublöd'* [bloody stupid] and did not take them to heart. A/2 said that he tried to speak German with his children despite these early experiences, but he was working all day and did not have the time or discipline necessary: 'they don't understand me so I gave up'. Only the oldest G3 member in this family (A/1/1) stated that he understood German: 'I understand some but I can't really speak it' (A/1/1). This teenager said that he chose German as a school subject (available at his school by correspondence from age 13) so he could communicate with family in Austria. Yet, when he returned from a visit there a year later, he commented: 'They don't even speak real German'. Due to his problems with the local Austrian dialect – even though his grandparents and his mother spoke this dialect – he dropped German as a school subject after one year. His problems with the local Austrian dialect indicate that his family did not support his German learning enough for him to understand their dialect. Just when my study ended, this then 13-year-old sister took up German as a school subject by correspondence. It would be interesting to see if she persists and if German communication between the generations will become more frequent. Yet, when I observed interactions in family A, G1 usually spoke English with G3. Only occasionally, especially after I had asked about G3's German, G1 made a conscious effort to speak it. The following is such an example from a conversation between G1, G3 and the researcher in family A at dinnertime. At the start of the conversation, A/1/2 sits at the table with her head in her hands.

Researcher	*Hast du KOPFWEH* [name]?
	[Do you have a HEADACHE [name]?]
A/1/2	What?
Researcher	Do you have a headache?
A/1/2	No. I'm tired.
	A/grandmother *Was hast du den heute GEMACHT?*
	[What did you DO today?]
A/1/2	I went to the stables.
Researcher	*Ah toll! Und bist du auch GERITTEN?*
	[Ah awesome! And did you GO RIDING too?]
A/1/2	Pardon?
Researcher	*Warst du auch REITEN?*
	[Were you RIDING too?]
A/1/2	Yes
A/grandmother	*Und was hast DU gemacht* [name]?
	[And what did YOU do [name]?]
A/1/1	LONG-BOARDING and BASKETBALL training
Researcher	Long-boarding? *Was ist denn DAS?*
	[What's THAT?]

A/1/1	It's a LONG board with wheels and stuff and you go down steep hills on it
A/grandmother	(offering G3 an extra portion of dessert) *Tut's euch TEILEN* [Do SHARE it]
A/1/2	mhm (proceeds to carefully divide the chocolate pudding into two portions)

There were a number of cues other than language (e.g., food on the table and offered to G3) to help understanding, which was indicated by G3 reactions. Familiar questions about the children's day were also understood. On the other hand, A/1/2 indicated not understanding key words such as *Kopfweh* [headache] and *geritten* (past participle of *reiten* [ride]) which she had perhaps heard less frequently as she had taken up riding just some months prior, for example. When the base form *reiten* [ride]was used in rephrasing the question, A/1/2 understood. This probably was due to the pronunciation of *reiten* (/rɑitn/) approximating *riding* (/rɑɪdɪŋ/). Yet, A/1/1 and A/1/2's natural German language production was restricted to politeness phrases *ja bitte* [yes please], *danke* [thanks] and *nein danke* [no thanks]. These formulaic expressions were not always applied correctly, however:

A/grandmother	*[name] es ist Zeit HEIMGEHN.* [It's time to GO HOME]
A/1/1	*nein danke* [No thank you]

The younger G3 members (A/2/1-3) liked staying with G1 when possible. Yet, such stays were few and far between due to G1's frequent travels of up to six months per year. Observations in G1's home showed patterns of G3 understanding German similar to their older cousins. That is, all three understood when told to come inside, or when asked if they were hungry, if they wanted certain commonly served food, and when told to wash their hands, for example. Again, cues such as food on the table, routines and body language assisted understanding. They showed comprehension, for instance by coming inside, by holding up their plate, or by washing their hands rather than through German responses. After an afternoon nap, for example:

A/Grandmother	*hast du gut geschlafen?* [did you sleep well?]
A/2/2	yes

I could not observe any German utterances from A/2's boys. The two older boys spoke English with each other.

Family B

Contact between G1 and their oldest son (B/1) was infrequent, and G1 contact with his boys was limited to once or twice a year. B/1 only spoke English with the boys when I observed them and he confirmed that he never spoke German with them. Apart from this, G1 in this family also asserted that they spoke German with G3 'all the time'. This was what I expected to find in their home, where they lived with their daughter (B/1) and her children, not least because G1 looked after G3 as B/1 worked and G1's English skills were basic though fluent and interspersed with key terms in German. During repeated observations, G1 and G2 spoke German to one another, but they almost exclusively spoke English to G3. B/1 confirmed that she only spoke English with the children from birth because for her English was her language of habit. When she arrived in New Zealand at twenty-one years of age as a fluent bilingual to be with her English-speaking boyfriend, the immediate switch to English-only felt 'normal' to her. As in family A, any G1 German utterances directed at G3 were restricted to basic daily routines such as *'gut Nacht und Zähne putzen nicht vergessen'*[good night and don't forget to brush your teeth] or the table was set and G1 would ask, for example, *'magst Fritatensuppe[6]?'*[Would you like pancake soup]. Here, food on the table and word similarity (*Suppe* and soup) helps understanding. G3 always answered in English. It was my impression that B/1/2 only paid attention to German when she was aware that she was spoken to directly. B/1/1 had gained more German skills in this bilingual home, in contrast to his sister who did not appear to understand more than very basic routine sentences. For example, I asked as he and A/1/1 were sitting side by side, each with his laptop and talking with each other in English:

[6]Fritaten = Austrian German for pancakes. The cold pancakes are cut into noodle-like strips and served in broth with chives.

Researcher	*Was spielt ihr denn da?*
	[What are you playing there?]
B/1/1	it's called Minecraft
Researcher	*Spielt ihr miteinander oder gegeneinander?*
	[Are you playing with or against one another?]
B/1/1	with each other because you have to cooperate to complete the task

B/1/1 confirmed, 'I understand almost everything'. After a skiing trip to Austria, this then 15-year-old boy reported that it took him about two weeks before understanding the people there 'but I don't like speaking German'. He could not rationalize his dislike of the language though: 'I just don't like it'. As his mother was a fairly balanced bilingual and comfortable speaking English and German, this points to a change in the feelings of belonging and identity between G2 and G3. B/1/1 did produce some German key words when asked about his food preferences, some of which are loan words in English:

(B/1/1) I love *Apfelstrudel* [apple strudel], actually all *Kuchen*
[cakes] and I like *Fritatensuppe* [pancake soup] and *Schnitzel* and *Frankfurter*

The B/3 participant who was married to a G2 German–English bilingual in Australia reported one-parent, one-language strategies. In terms of language choice and heritage language transmission this is intriguing since the parents were both German-speaking G2 and German could have been their home language. Yet, whilst B/3's wife demonstrated her German in fluent conversation, she also stated her preference for English. Observations during a family visit to New Zealand and during Skype sessions with G1 confirmed that B/3 spoke German to his children and the children understood, yet they responded only in English. B/3 was working fulltime and therefore did not spend as much time with his children as their stay-home mother did, resulting in less German language input, which may explain G3's English replies. When compared to family A, G3 in family B appeared to understand a greater variety of German utterances. Yet, responses were always in English and typically, English G3 responses triggered G1 to switch to English as in the following example from a Skype interaction when B/3/1 was nearly four years old:

B/grandmother	*Ja [name], was ist denn das? Hast schon WIEDER eine neue Brille?*
	[What's that? Have you got new glasses AGAIN?]
B/3/1	My glasses broke
Grandmother	You BROKE your GLASSES?
B/3	*Sag der Oma wie deine Brille gebrochen ist. Was ist passiert?*
	[Tell grandma how your glasses broke. What happened?]
B/3/1	I felled over from the car on the tiles.
B/3	*Du bist beim Aussteigen gefallen*
	[You fell as you got out]
B/3/1	(nodding)

Family C

Expressing disappointment that G3 did not grow up bilingually, G1 participants in family C admitted that their own efforts of transmitting German to G3 were largely futile due to lack of frequent enough contact and perseverance:

C/grandmother *Wir sehen sie nicht oft genug und wenn sie englisch antworten reden wir halt auch englisch*
[We don't see them often enough and when they respond in English we just speak English also]

Occasionally, communication between G3 and G1 broke down or German resulted in misunderstandings:

C/grandfather *Ich brauch einen Dolmetscher damit ich sie versteh* [I need an interpreter to understand them]
C/grandmother *Ich sag, 'guten Morgen' und er sagt,* 'I'm not Morgan', I'm [name]'
[I say, 'good morning' and he says, 'I'm not Morgan, I'm (name)]

The G2 participants in family C reported that they spoke German with their children before they went to kindergarten, or at least with their first child, but that they did not persevere, as the children got older. Their intercultural marriages with English speakers were a considerable factor:

C/1 *Es war irgendwie schizophren,eine Sprache mit den Kindern und eine andere mit*[husband's name]
[It was somehow schizophrenic, one language with the children and another with (husband's name)]

C/1 also saw having no German language support as a problem:

C/1 *Es wäre anders wenn die Kinder deutsch in der Schule lernen würden*
[It would be different if the children learned German at school]

Yet, pointing to the complexity of factors influencing heritage language use and transmission, C/1 also expressed doubts if that was such a good idea based on her own settlement experiences in the 1980s, when her German surname and language had been outsider markers that provoked discrimination at school:

C/1 *Dass die mich immer Nazi geheißen haben, hat mir schon schwer zu schaffen gemacht*
[That they always called me Nazi bothered me a lot]

At the time of the study, C/1 had no German accent when speaking English and did not disclose her German background unless necessary for legal reasons. English also had become the dominant language for C/2, who came to New Zealand at the age of five. She commented that English had become a habit and was easier than German. C/2 also spoke English with another German, who lived in the neighborhood with her New Zealand husband and who brought her own children up bilingually. C/2's reasoning for speaking English even with other Germans was that she felt embarrassed speaking German because she made mistakes. Because C/2 worked fulltime, her neighbor offered to take C/2's children to the German playgroup her own children went to. C/2/1 joined once and decided that he did not like it because it felt like school and he did not understand anything. Although C/2 herself was immersed in the English-medium school system when she arrived in New Zealand at the age of five and could not remember any problems, she did not insist on her children going. Despite her children's dual German and New Zealand citizenships, C/2declared there were no advantages of having German as another language for them as they did not need it in New Zealand. Only family C had German books and DVDs in their homes. Narrative accounts and observations showed occasional German reading to G3. Observations showed that such reading was well received by under-school-age G3. Yet with the exception of C/1/3, who tried to read German and managed first-reader books, the older children either were not interested or did not understand because the text remained obscure.

C/2/2 (at age 7, with increasing volume)
I don't want to read that German book blablabla. Read ENGLISH! ENGLISH!

This example suggests dislike of German because the language was inaccessible. In contrast, her brother's question suggests interest but lack of comprehension:

(C/2/1 at age 9) What does it say in English, *Oma*?

C/2/1 repeatedly looked at pictures in German books and asked about the content if it interested him, such as airplanes and science for children. Despite his earlier refusal to go to the German children's group, at age ten he declared that he would study engineering in Germany because 'My teacher said they have very good engineers'. My comment that studying in Germany would require him to learn German was met with confidence: 'I can learn it. No problem.'

Summary and Conclusion

The study of examining intergenerational heritage language transmission in New Zealand confirms the patterns of assimilation into English across three generations reported by Portes (2002) and Portes and Hao (1998). The findings of the qualitative study were tested in an online survey (317 responses), which strengthened the findings of language assimilation patterns. The findings related to families A, B and C made it clear that G1 wanted G2 and G3 to be proud of their heritage cultures and G1 expected their bilingual children to maintain German and transmit the language to G3. The most surprising findings therefore were the marked differences between G1's reported and observed German language use with G3. Indeed, of all the cultural tools in participants' mediated social actions, language changed most dramatically across the three familial generations. Observations and explanations suggested that the attempts at intergenerational transmission to G3 were varied and not consistent. As the findings presented here indicate, heritage language production was lost in G3 as a result. Grandparents generally gave up bilingual efforts with G3 as soon as G3 answered in English or indicated a lack of understanding German. This supports Röhlen's (n/d) argument that bilingual efforts are easily abandoned. G2's intercultural marriages to English monolinguals hampered bilingual home language practices.

In contrast to Clyne's (2003) argument that G1 German speakers switch to English-only, however, both G1 and G2 in my study were bilingual and literate in both languages. G2 reported and could be observed trying to transmit German to G3. However, these attempts were not enduring. Participants gave a number of explanations for switching to the use of English-only and the lack of a consistent approach to teaching German to G3. One was that English-only interactions were triggered by G3 answering in English as soon as they entered the monolingual English education system. Others related to doubts about the value of the German language in a New Zealand context and to fragmented feelings of belonging. Further reasons for giving up German transmission to G3 were based on the time and discipline necessary for bringing up children bilingually. English-only also created feelings of belonging in exogamous marriages. Surprisingly, preference for English in interactions with G3 resulted from habitual language practices even where the English monolingual ex-husband had not been part of the household for most of the children's lives. Also, the reported one-parent, one-language strategy to transmit German in the G2 family in which both partners spoke German had not resulted in productive G3 German heritage language by the end of my study. Yet, family aspects are not the only determiners of heritage language transmission.

A key reason for choosing English was that G2 had suffered under discriminatory behavior during settlement and their reaction was to strive for complete linguistic assimilation into the dominant mainstream language. Just as Bönisch-Brednich (2002; 2005) found in her Wellington study, these participants kept a low profile because of the discriminatory behavior they had encountered. The study suggests also that having the opportunity to use a language does not necessarily lead to socializing/socialization in the heritage language. This links back to parent and learner attitudes to the heritage language. My findings suggest a connection to the societal monolingual mindset and the (lack of) status of the heritage language as well as language policies informed by societal attitudes to multilingualism. New Zealand traditionally showed English-only policies (before the Maori Renaissance of the 1980s). For Australia, Ellis, Gogolin and Clyne (2010, p. 440) argue that the monolingual mindset 'forms part of a powerful national discourse that finds its way into the enacting of language policy and education policy'. This also persists in New Zealand. Unlike European and certain Asian countries, where learning at least one other language is a compulsory school subject from an early age, in New Zealand most youngsters leave school as English monolinguals (Harvey 2015). Offering 13-year-old school students foreign-language electives at beginner's level does not support heritage language maintenance. The late offering rather operates as assimilation pressure into the Anglophone mainstream as reported by Alba, Logan, Lutz and Stults (2002) and points to the insular perception that heritage languages are not useful resources.

The findings of this study identify and illustrate some of the complex relations that influence heritage language transmission. These include transmission strategies, parents' doubts about the value of the heritage language, and confirm Schüpbach's (2009) family types, transmission strategies, and parents' language attitude and beliefs as determining factors in intergenerational language transmission. Yet, as the findings show, these factors were not the only determiners of heritage language transmission and uptake. That is, my study also supports Portes and Rumbaut's (2014) findings that the heritage language learners' attitudes to the language matter for their language choices. Importantly, however, the study identifies a number of reasons beyond the family for the attitudes that influenced heritage language transmission in the long term. Nexus analysis has illuminated the complex linkages between broader societal discourses and participants' language choices by demonstrating the important linkages between language in interaction and sociocultural discourses.

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