

# Heritage language Learner Needs, Inclusion and Diversity

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## Overview

Children learn language from their language experience (1). While much of knowledge is fundamentally non linguistic (2), the concepts have implicit networks of meanings which are formed through the experiences and practice of the external world and, (3) under certain circumstances, the non linguistic knowledge in interwoven into language into the form of explicit knowledge which changes the concept as a whole. For young children, the language the child uses in the classroom must first be sufficiently well developed to enable the child to process the cognitive challenges of the class. [4]. To demonstrate that both L1 and L2 learners are capable of developing and achieving at the same pace but need sufficient understanding of the operating language, 40 (5-7 year olds) were tested for their ability to complete a range of age appropriate linguistic and non linguistic tasks. While most preschool (L1 & L2) completed most age appropriate non linguistic tasks, the L2 learners were unsuccessful with many linguistic tasks. Overall, the study suggest that children are capable of adjusting their views about the environment by as early as six months but to achieve, they need a understanding of the classroom language. The present study provides evidence in support of the use of heritage language and mother tongue for early education.

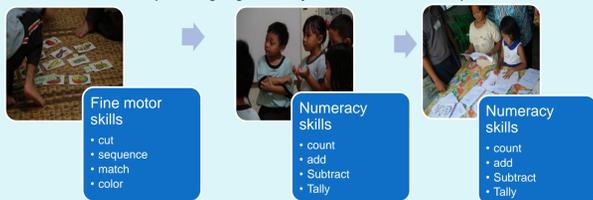
## Method

40 participants (4 x 10) = 3 Preschool

(Preschool 1 – Malay, Preschool 2 – Malay + Heritage learners, HL – Heritage Learners)  
+ 1 Year 1 (baseline)

Assessment – 6 months into the curriculum (8 item test)

motor skills - (cutting, connecting, matching, coloring)  
numeracy – (numbers, addition, subtraction, tally)  
Language – (vocabulary, reading, writing, cloze passage)  
Social skills – (belonging, safety, nature, weather)



## Experiment 1

RQ#1: Can HL learners develop as well as L1 learners?

10 Bidayuh (HL) preschoolers were tested with 2 groups of preschoolers from Kemas kindergartens. Their performance was compared with Year 1 children. (Baseline)

## Results

Results: HL's development were comparable to other preschoolers for motor and numeracy skills. Their performance was lacking in some areas of language skills.

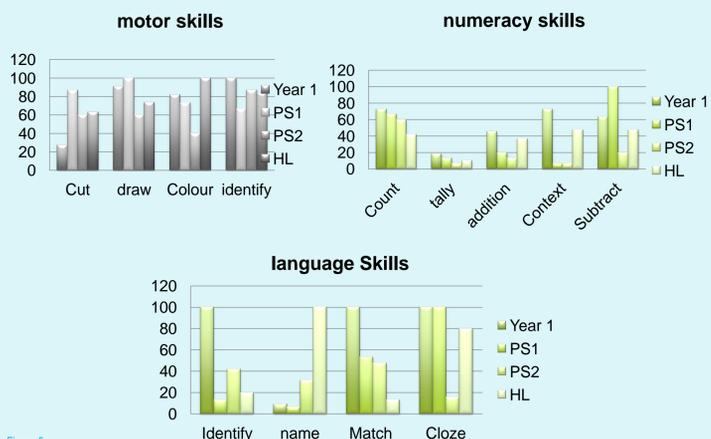


Figure 5

## Experiment 2

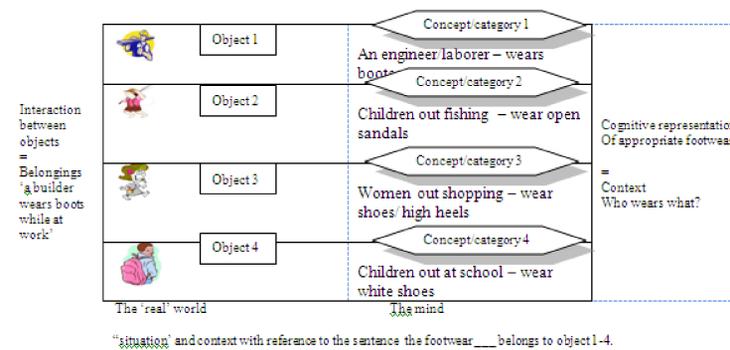
Do learners bring different learning experiences to the classroom?

In this test we addressed two questions.

- Experience: Can students match the footwear with the owner?
- Knowledge: Can students categorize the vegetables and fruits accordingly?

### Question 1

Can students match the footwear with its owner?



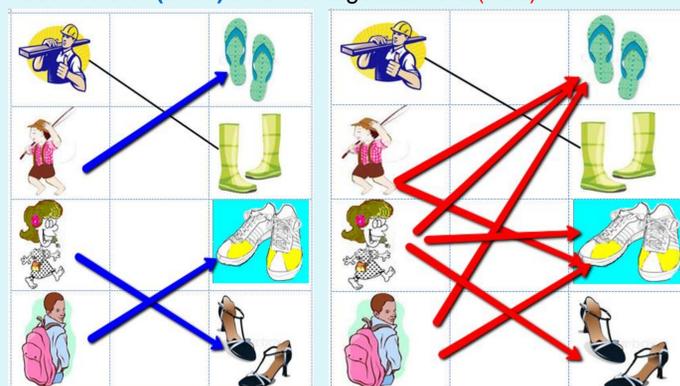
### Question 2

Can students categorize the vegetables and fruits accordingly?

Plant		
<b>Vegetable</b> leafy green stem, root or flowers of a plant) Contains more water than fruits		<b>Fruits</b> Swollen part of a flower Contains less water Naturally acidic
Carrot Lettuce Cabbage Cauliflower		Peach Pear Apple banana
a) Specific attributes 'has some green leaves' 'Generally cooked'	b) Specific attributes Has leaves, roots, stems, stalks	c) Specific attributes 'has color' 'has an acidic taste' 'eater raw'

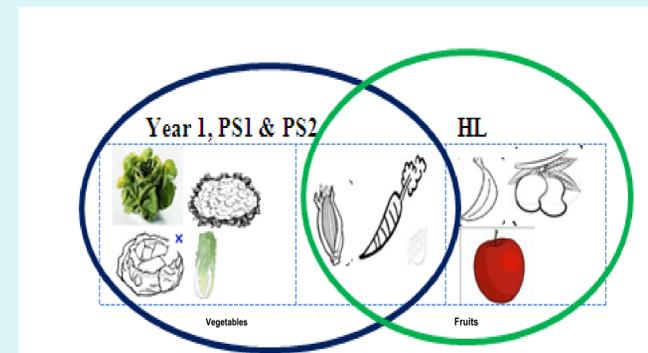
## Results

HL learners view possession and vegetables and fruits differently from other groups. Refer average response of Preschoolers (Blue) and Heritage learners (Red)



## Results : Categorization

80% of the HL learners categorize carrots and corn as a fruit. 100% of the students from the baseline study and national preschools categorized the carrot and corn as a vegetable. I



## Conclusion & future Work

The results from the present study demonstrate that heritage school learners are capable of acquiring age appropriate motor, cognitive and language development skills at the same pace of other preschoolers. In particular their ability to identify objects and construct words is enhanced when their L1 is used. However, there is a difference in the worldview of way HL learners. Teachers need to take these experiences into consideration.

Our future work will involve extending the present methodology to systematically examine motor, cognitive, language and social development skills among heritage language learners in Sarawak. By examining numeracy and literacy skills, we can learn the extent to which difficulties in mainstream curriculum is influenced by the gap in L1 and L2 of heritage language learners. Furthermore, studying the age appropriate development skills of young learners may also illuminate whether school based curriculum are focused on providing a holistic development program for young learners. The study can also be extended to Peninsular Malaysia.

## References

- [1] Lieven, E., Spelmann, J., & Tomasello, M. (2003). Early syntactic creativity: A usage based approach. *Journal of Child Language*, 30, 333-370.
- [2] Flevaris, T. (2011). Nativism in Linguistics: Empirical and theoretical issues. Retrieved 20 Sept., 2012 from [www.linguistics.northwestern.edu/programs/demoz.../Flevaris](http://www.linguistics.northwestern.edu/programs/demoz.../Flevaris).

- [3] Bloch, M.E.F. (1998). *How we think they think: Anthropological Approaches to Cognition, Memory and Literacy*. Westview Press. Oxford.

- [4] Baker, C. (2006). *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. 4th. Ed. Multilingual matters. Ltd. Clevedon.

## Acknowledgement

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### Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

#### Introduction

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#### Poster Basics – Poster Layout

To start using this template you first need to delete most of the contents of this page. Keep the poster title and one of the blue section headers.

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Move the header copies roughly to where you think they need to be on the poster, so you can get a better idea of the overall poster layout. This will help you organize your content. See Figure 2.

You can now start adding your text. To add text use the **text** tool to draw a text box starting from the left edge of a column to the right edge and start typing in your text. You can also paste the text you may have already copied from another source. See Figure 3.

Repeat the process throughout the poster as needed.



Figure 1

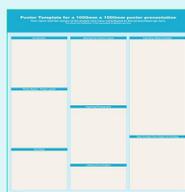


Figure 2

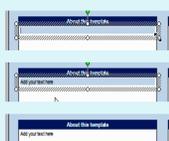


Figure 3

#### Text Sizes

For this poster template the Arial font family is used at several recommended text sizes. You can use any typeface you like and at any size but try to stay close to the suggested limits.

Figure 4 gives a visual reference of what different font sizes look like when printed at 100% and at 200%.

Due to a page size limitation in PowerPoint and unless your poster is going to be less than 56” in length, all the work done on this template is at half the size of the final poster. For example, if you choose a 21 point font for this poster, the actual printed size will appear as 42 points.

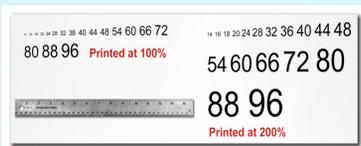


Figure 4

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Depending on your content and how you wish to layout your poster, you may want to change the column layout of your poster. This can be achieved quite simply by selecting one of the three master themes we have included. To select a different layout go to the **DESIGN** tab (Figure 5). Then you can easily select an alternate column layout from the options available.



Figure 5

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If you wish to further customize your poster presentation, this can be done by selecting a preset colour scheme from the colours option under the **DESIGN** tab. If you would like to change the default colors and use your own color scheme, go to the **DESIGN** tab (Figure 6). Then click on the **COLORS** drop-down menu on the right (Figure 7). There, you can try different colour schemes until you find the one you like.



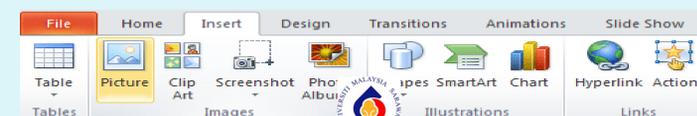
Figure 6



Figure 7

#### Importing Photographs

It is highly recommended to use the largest images you have access to for your poster. Avoid images downloaded from the web and avoid copying and pasting images instead of using the “Insert” command. To insert an image to your poster go to the **INSERT** tab and then click on **PICTURE** (Figure 8).



(Figure 8)

When the only source of a needed photo or graphic is the Web, scaling must be applied with caution. Scaling an image more than three times its original size may introduce pixilation artifacts. Refer to Figure 9 as an example. A simple way to preview the printing quality of an image is to zoom in at 100% or 200%, depending on the final size of the poster. What you’ ll see is likely what you’ ll get at printing time.



Figure 9: Original image at 100%, enlarged 200% and 400%.

#### Labeling Your Headers

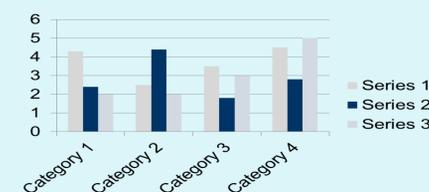
The blue header bars are used to identify and separate the main topics of your presentation. The most commonly used headers in poster presentations are:

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Materials and Methods	References
Results	Acknowledgements

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TABLE SAMPLE		
1998	1999	2000
2001	2002	2003
2004	2005	2006



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