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Editors' Note:

There are not many student-run academic journals, so we are obliged to provide a forum for researchers, scholars, policymakers, practitioners, teachers, students, and informed observers in education and related fields in educational settings in the United States and abroad. Now in our second year, it is exciting to see the work that continues to be accomplished when those interested in educational research have a venue to share their contributions.

The Nebraska Educator has four main goals with its published research: 1) to familiarize students with the process of publication, 2) to facilitate dialogue between emerging scholars, educators, and the larger community, 3) to promote collegiality and interdisciplinary awareness, and 4) to establish a mechanism for networking and collaboration.

This publication would not have been possible without the guidance and assistance from Dean Marjorie Kostelnik, Assistant Dean Beth Doll, Dr. Beth Lewis, and Dr. Theresa Catalano to get this idea off the ground. Dr. Wayne Babchuk and Dr. Elaine Chan were vital in the dissemination of materials and production of rubrics, through which we framed our graduate external reviewer training. We are also grateful for the work of Paul Royster at Love Library, who assisted us with the final formatting and online publication of our journal. In addition, we would like to thank the Department of Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education's Graduate Student Association for their financial contributions.

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Kristine Sudbeck
Editor-in-Chief, 2015

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An Analysis of Pictures for Improving Reading Comprehension: A Case Study of *the New Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi*

Fei Yu

Abstract: This study examines pictures from reading comprehension tasks of *the New Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (the New HSK),* also referred to as the New Chinese Proficiency Test, to see (a) what kind of pictures facilitate reading comprehension, (b) if and how pictures in *the New HSK* reading comprehension tasks facilitate test candidates in comprehending the reading text, and (c) what are the effects of pictures on reading comprehension. Based on previous studies (e.g., Levin, 1983; Omaggio, 1979), a picture facilitating reading comprehension is expected to meet four criteria simultaneously: (1) not including too much information about the content of the reading text; (2) depicting information from the beginning paragraph(s) of the text; (3) mirroring language complexity of the text; and (4) depicting information that is invited to be processed in the text. Analyzed through these four criteria, 29 out of 60 pictures were identified as facilitative pictures promoting reading comprehension. The remaining 31 pictures were found to be distracting or superfluous and thus unable to effectively help readers comprehend the text. Suggestions for test designers about how to choose pictures facilitating reading comprehension are also provided.

Key words*: pictures; the New HSK; reading comprehension; reading comprehension tasks*

Introduction

Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK), also referred to as the Chinese Proficiency Test, is a national standardized test in China which tests and assesses Chinese language proficiency of non-native speakers, including foreigners, overseas Chinese, and members of ethnic minorities in China. The first *HSK* test was developed in 1984 by *Beijing Language and Culture University (BLCU)* and was officially made a national standardized test in 1992. In November, 2009, a new version of *HSK* test (*The New HSK*) was launched by *the Chinese National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (Hanban)* in order to better serve Chinese language learners. Since then, *the New HSK* has been regarded as the sole authoritative *HSK* test. According to the statistics report from *Hanban*, by 2012, 532,909 non-native Chinese speakers from all around the world have taken this test[1].

From the old version to the new one, *HSK* has experienced some significant changes, such as the reformation of the ranking system from three proficiency levels to six proficiency levels, and the inclusion of both spoken and written segments in all proficiency levels. Comparing between the test papers of the two versions, one of the noticeable changes is the use of a large amount of pictures in *the New HSK* test papers. Colorful and real-life pictures, which used to only appear in the listening part of the elementary level and intermediate level of the old version, are now also used in reading comprehension tasks of *the New HSK*. Specifically, each reading text is presented with multiple choice questions and a matching picture. By reviewing the thirty sets of sample test papers which were used in previous tests and are now officially published online, it has been found that reading comprehension tasks are only included in the test papers of *the New HSK* proficiency level 5 (Section III of the Reading part) and level 6 (Section IV of the Reading part). Each reading text appears together with

[1] See http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_53e7c11d0101f02j.html

four multiple choice questions and one picture. The use of pictures in reading comprehension tasks is regarded as a new attempt for test designers and a new experience for test takers.

Feedback from test takers who took the old version of *HSK* showed that the difficulty of the test scared away many students and teachers. Some students said that after learning Chinese as a second language for several years in China, they still could not get a satisfactory score in the HSK-Basic Level test. Chinese language teachers indicated that they did not like HSK because the test requirements were too high for their students and that they would not encourage students to take this exam (Research and Development Group, 2009). With feedback and suggestions from different sides, *the New HSK* has been developed to overcome problems arising from the old version. One of the big steps is expanding the three proficiency levels of the test into six levels and relatively reducing the test difficulty for each level. It is said that a relative lowering of test difficulty would make *the New HSK* encouraging instead of daunting, popular instead of appalling, a "springboard" instead of a "block" for learning Chinese (ibid., p.2). For many test takers, the reading comprehension task is one of the most challenging tasks in *HSK* test (Li, 2012). Pictures are then used in order to facilitate candidates' reading comprehension, which would consequently reduce their stresses during the test. Furthermore, according to the Research and Development Group of *the New HSK* (2009), pictures are used in order to make the test more vivid and closer to real life communication and promote Chinese language worldwide.

This paper specifically investigates pictures used in the reading comprehension tasks of *the New HSK* test papers while addressing the following three questions：

(1) What kind of pictures facilitates reading comprehension?

(2) If and how pictures in *the New HSK* reading comprehension tasks facilitate test candidates in comprehending the reading text?

(3) What are the effects of pictures on the reading comprehension of test candidates?

Literature Review

Since the present study is about the reading comprehension task, previous research about this task in *the New HSK* has been reviewed with a particular concern about research conducted after 2009 when the test was launched. Only a few studies have been conducted. Zhang (2012) and Li (2012) analyzed text content, types of questions, and answering skills for the reading comprehension task in *the New HSK*. They found that while this task emphasized testing students' basic knowledge of Chinese, it focused on students' abilities to use Chinese, particularly their ability to communicate effectively with Chinese. Chai (2012a) did an empirical study testing validity of the reading comprehension task in *the New HSK* by focusing on reading texts and multiple choice questions. He found that this task had reliable validity as no special knowledge and additional cognitive learning skills were required from test takers for non-linguistic comprehension when they took the test. In the same year, Chai (2012b) studied the application of the implicational scaling procedure to detect the differential passage difficulty order of the reading comprehension task in *the New HSK*. He found that this task did not give privilege to test takers with a particular professional background as the reading texts did not require any professional knowledge besides language knowledge itself. Miao (2012) compared and contrasted the words and phrases used as cohesive devices in the reading comprehension task of *the New HSK*. He found that lexical cohesion techniques applied in the reading texts helped test takers to fully grasp its meaning as a whole. At the time this paper was written, research has not been located specifically about pictures added into the reading comprehension task of *the New HSK* test papers. The current study attempts to fill, at least partially, this gap by investigating the added pictures and their potential impact on test takers' understanding of reading texts.

Effects of Pictures on Reading Comprehension

Studies concerning the effects of pictures on reading comprehension has also been investigated. A significant body of research (e.g., Alesandrini & Rigney, 1981; Daley, 2003; Eisner, 2002; Evans, 2003; Gambrell & Jawitz, 1993; Reid & Beveridge, 1990; Waddill & McDaniel, 1992) has been found. A general consensus is that pictures play a positive role in helping readers to comprehend a text. Some researchers (Bernhardt, 1991; Gyselinck & Tardieu, 1999; Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson, 2003) believed that pictures provided readers with a new source of information in addition to what they could get from reading the text itself, and that the two sources of information facilitated reading comprehension. However, according to Hadley (1993) "a picture is not always worth ten thousand words……it is certainly possible to construct differentially effective pictures for the same learning task" (p. 274). Therefore, the question concerning how to choose a supplemental picture that can effectively facilitate reading comprehension has come into many people's eyes. Some research has been done on this topic, which can be generally classified into the following four categories.

The Part of Text Depicted by Pictures

Early in 1979, Omaggio first conducted a study with a group of learners of French as a second language to look at their use of a variety of pictures while working on a reading comprehension task. Omaggio (1979) found that all pictures were not equally effective in enhancing comprehension in the second language. Instead, the most effective picture was the one depicting information from the beginning paragraph(s) of the reading text.

Learning Task vs. Picture

In 1983, Levin studied the pictorial strategies employed by students in reading and pointed out that the degree to which a picture facilitated reading comprehension depended on the relationship between the learning task and kinds of pictures provided. For instance, when a reading text requires its readers to understand the complex relationships within the text, a relational picture illustrating the relationship among information from the text, instead of a detailed picture depicting a particular piece of information, is more helpful for reading comprehension. Later, Waddill, McDaniel and Einstein (1988) further confirmed Levin's findings in their study, which showed that a picture effectively increased the recall of information from a reading text only when that information was invited to be processed, that is, when what the picture depicted was directly related to the task content and component processes. To be more specific, the facilitation function of a picture depends on the relationship between the type of the picture and the type of the learning task.

Content and Language vs. Pictures

In 1999, Gyselinck and Tardieu proposed that the effect of pictures on reading comprehension largely depended on the quality of the repetition effect. In this sense, when the information depicted in the picture also appears in the text, it helps to reduce readers' cognitive load. When the picture provides information that is difficult to be understood through the text, it promotes readers' reading comprehension. Therefore, it is argued that pictures should match the reading text to help readers understand both its content and language. Pan and Pan (2009) investigated the reading comprehension learners of English as a foreign language, which further confirmed the proposition of Gyselinck and Tardieu (1999). Pan and Pan (2009) suggested that a picture which closely reflected the structure and complexity of the text had a more facilitative effect. Which means, on

one hand, the information integration between the text and the picture can improve reading performance of readers. On the other hand, the facilitative function of the picture diminishes or disappears when it does not positively match with the linguistic complexities of the reading text.

The Amount of Information

Some researchers (Filippatoua & Pumfreya, 1996; Pan & Pan, 2009) recommended that a picture should not include too much information because it might confuse readers when looking for the useful information. "A simple illustration that serves as an advance organizer makes comprehension of a second-language test less difficult" (Omaggio, 1979, p.115). Based on the literature review, effective pictures that can promote reading comprehension need to meet the following four basic criteria simultaneously:

(1) Not including too much information about the content of the reading text;

(2) Depicting information from the beginning paragraph(s) of the text;

(3) Mirroring language complexity of the text; and

(4) Depicting information invited to be processed in the text.

A picture is expected to meet all the four criteria to be an effective and facilitative picture for readers, especially for second language (L2) readers.

According to Omaggio (1979), L2 learners are usually at a disadvantage position in reading mainly for two reasons. First, they need to recall cues that they are not familiar with or know imperfectly in their native language. Second, they "must simultaneously predict future cues and make associations with past cues" (p.109). Thus, providing facilitative pictures for the reading comprehension task in *the New HSK* has significant meanings for test candidates.

Methodology

Data

Beginning in 2013, *New HSK* test papers were no longer kept confidential and are officially published online one week after the test date. The data source for this study was twelve sets of *New HSK* test papers with reading comprehension tasks (Proficiency Level 5 and Proficiency Level 6), which were used for tests in 2013 and are now accessible through the official website of *Hanban,* <www.chinesetest.cn>**.** The reading comprehension task per test paper includes five reading texts, and each text is assigned with one picture. Thus, the data analyzed in this paper consisted of 60 reading texts and 60 pictures. See Appendix 1 for permission from the Confucius Institute Headquarters/Hanban to use these tests in the current study.

Procedure

The focus of this paper was on the pictures from reading comprehension tasks of *New HSK* test papers. Based on the four criteria, the present study looked for pictures facilitating reading comprehension that met all the four criteria. At first, all 60 pictures were classified into different categories based on the first criteria. For instance, I divided them into two categories: one category with pictures delivering "not too much" information and the other category with pictures delivering "too much" information as elaborated in the Analysis and Results section. Within each category, representative examples of pictures were given and analyzed to see their impact on reading comprehension. Following the analysis with the first criterion, only those pictures met the first criterion continued to be analyzed with the second criterion. The same procedure continued until pictures that met all four criteria were found out, which were regarded as

facilitative pictures delivering effective information that helped to promote readers' comprehension. During the analysis, besides pictures, I also looked at the reading texts appearing together with pictures. The possible effects of different pictures on readers were explored.

Analysis and Results

Data analysis was conducted in four phases. In each phase, pictures were analyzed through one of the four criteria discussed in the Literature Review section. In a linear sequence, only those pictures meeting the first criterion could continue to be analyzed in the next phase with the second criteria. The same went for the third and the fourth criteria. At the end of the analysis, only pictures meeting all the four criteria simultaneously were identified as facilitative pictures for reading comprehension.

Pictures Including "Not Too Much" Information

Based on the first criterion, a facilitative picture for a reading text should not include too much information about the content of the text. The questions then become how to define "not too much" information? How much is "not too much"? According to Miller (1956), there were some limits on the human capacity for processing information. Specifically, Miller (1956) posited that the number of objects an average human could hold in working memory was 7 ± 2. In the context of the present study, the reading comprehension task was taken as a whole, where readers needed to process different sources of information almost at the same time. Since test takers of *the New HSK* test are non-native speakers of Chinese, the information required to be processed in the reading task roughly include four chunks: (1) the content of the text, (2) the language of the text, (3) the multiple choice questions, and (4) the picture. Within the four chunks, informational variation between 4±2 is acceptable based on *Miller's Law* (1956). Specifically, for each reading task, three (the content of the text,

the language of the text, and the multiple choice questions) of the seven chunks have already been occupied. Thereafter, only four chunks are left to be taken up by the picture. Keeping with *Miller's 7 ± 2 law* (1956) and taking the flexible two chunks into consideration, the maximum chunks that can be used by picture turn out to be six, and the minimum is two. From this, I deduce that a picture carrying 2-6 pieces of information is more realistic and acceptable for test takers. Within this range, a picture with the minimum information of two pieces works better for readers who have had some prior knowledge about the topic of a reading task, and a picture with the maximum information of six pieces works better for readers who do not have enough prior knowledge. Out of this range, there is the risk of either not fully using readers' cognitive capacity or overloading it.

By examining all the 60 pictures, in terms of objects depicted by each picture, all pictures were classified into three categories: (1) pictures depicting one object, (2) pictures depicting two to six objects, and (3) pictures depicting more than six objects, as shown in Table 1. The number of pictures under each category is also included in the table. Objects depicted in pictures here are defined as things that have their name in Chinese and can be discretely described if taken out of the picture. In the analysis that follows, pictures from each category are discussed. Since space is limited, only some of the pictures are presented here as examples for each category.

Table 1
Amount of Objects Depicted

	Amount of Objects Depicted by Each Picture		
	1 Object	2-6 Objects	More than 6 Objects
Number of Pictures	26	34	0

As shown in Table 1, 26 out of 60 pictures were classified as pictures depicting one object, accounting for 43% of all pictures. These pictures depict a wide range of objects. Some of them are common to people from

different cultures, and some are specific to Chinese culture. Table 2 presents five examples of one-object pictures from *the New HSK* test papers. Both the Chinese and the English names for each object depicted are provided in the table. Through these examples, each picture depicts one discrete object which can be assigned a name in Chinese.

Table 2

Pictures Depicting One Object

Depicted objects	Pictures
Lion 狮子	
Folding fan 折扇	
Mushroom 蘑菇	
Funnel 漏斗	
Plum Blossom 梅花	

In Table 1, 34 out of 60 pictures depict 2-6 objects simultaneously, accounting for 57% of all pictures. Table 3 shows two example pictures taken from *the New HSK* test papers. The two pictures are regarded as the most "complex" ones among all the 60 pictures, since each of them depicts five objects simultaneously; more objects than any other pictures on the test.

Table 3

Pictures Depicting 2-6 Objects

Depicted objects	山，水，渔船，渔夫，渔网 mountains, river, fishing boat, fisherman, fishing net	城楼，城墙，马，将军，随从 tower, city wall, horse, the general, attendants
Pictures		

Through analysis, all the 60 pictures met the first criterion and could continue to be analyzed with the second criterion. Although 43% of the pictures fell out of the 4±2 range, which are detail pictures with only one discrete pictorial element, they still met the first criterion as they did not provide "too much" information. Moreover, according to Omaggio (1979), a very simple picture could still serve to promote comprehension, especially when it provided information that the reader could not understand through the text. A good example here is a picture depicting a new but key word appearing in the reading text to help promote readers' comprehension.

Depicting Information from the Beginning Paragraph(s)

When considering where the information a picture was trying to capture could fall in a reading text, these 60 pictures continuing to be analyzed were classified into three categories: pictures depicting information from (1) the beginning paragraph(s) of the text, (2) the middle paragraph(s), and (3) not appearing in the reading text. Table 4 shows the three categories, the corresponding examples for each category, and the number of pictures under each category.

Table 4

Place of Depicted Information in the Text

	Place of Depicted Information in the Text		
	Beginning paragraph(s)	Middle paragraph(s)	Nowhere
Number of Pictures	51	7	2
Examples	 NO.1	 NO.2	 NO.3

From table 4, 51 out of 60 pictures met the second criterion, accounting for 85% of the pictures continuing being analyzed. According to Omaggio (1979), one of the reasons these pictures, which she referred to as "prethematic context pictures" in her study, were most helpful was that they "depict(ed) events from the beginning of the story, thereby aiding the reader in organizing his existing store of knowledge prior to reading the opening paragraph" (p.115).

Picture NO.1 in Table 4 was analyzed here in relation to its reading text to see how it would help comprehension. The picture shows a plate of noodles, and the reading text with this picture is about Shanxi Noodle. The first paragraph of the reading text is as follows:

> Shanxi Noodle has a long history. Its name has been changing with time and place in its long history of 2000 years. During the Eastern Han Dynasty, it was called "Zhu bin"; in Wei and Jin Dynasties, the name was changed to "Tang bin"; in Northern and Southern Dynasties, it was "Shui yin"; and later in Tang Dynasty, it was known as "Leng Tao". As the old saying goes, "The more beloved one gets more beloved names", since Shanxi Noodle is given so many names, this fully explains its importance to Shanxi people.
>
> New HSK test 2013-5 Level6

The text talks about different names used for Shanxi Noodle throughout history, which explains Shanxi people's particular love for noodles. In such a short paragraph, five historical names for Shanxi Noodle and one Chinese old saying are included. These noodle names and the old sayings, which are difficult even for native speakers to understand, may frustrate second language readers. Even worse, it may distract the readers' attention and make them fail to catch key points in the text. Readers of this paragraph may have a feeling that it is about noodles, but may still be confused by all these "elusive" names involved. When this occurs, by looking at picture NO.1, it would help readers to confirm their uncertainty and catch the point from the beginning of their reading. This overarching understanding would also help readers to understand the rest of the text about the noodle culture of Shanxi.

From Table 4, nine out of 60 pictures depict information not from the beginning paragraph(s) of reading texts, accounting for 15% of the pictures continuing to be analyzed. Specifically, seven of them depict information from the middle of reading texts, and two of them depict information that does not appear in reading texts.

Picture NO.2 in Table 4 was analyzed in relation to the reading text which it accompanies. The picture shows a traditional Chinese bow and a bundle of arrows, both of which were used as weapons in wars of ancient China. The following translation is corresponding to the beginning and the middle of the reading text.

> Long time ago, there lived a man, whose name was Guang Yue. Guang had a good friend, who always visited him. When his friend did not come to visit, Guang was so worried about him. He went to the friend's house, and found him sick in bed. When Guang asked the reason, his friend told him as follows, "The last time when I visited you, you invited me to have a drink. I refused your invitation at first because I saw a snake in the wine bowl. Later, you invited me again, for politeness, I accepted your invitation and drank the wine in the bowl. From

> then on, I always feel that there is a snake in my stomach and I cannot eat anything.
> Guang wondered why his friend could see a snake in his wine bowl? After going back home, he walked around the room trying to find out the reason. Suddenly, he saw the bow hanging on the wall. "Is this the reason?" He asked himself. Then, he poured a bowl of wine and put it on the table. By moving the bowl on the table, finally he found the shadow of the bow clearly projected in the bowl. When the bowl moved, it seemed that there was a snake moving in it.
>
> New HSK test 2013-5 Level5

A story episode between Guang and his friend is described in the beginning of the reading text, where neither the bow nor the arrows are mentioned. It is in the middle of the text that a bow hanging on the wall is mentioned, when a large part of the story has already passed. Even though the bow is an important element in the story, if a reader fails to understand the context of the story where the bow needs to be understood, then a picture depicting a bow and arrows would not be beneficial for their overall comprehension. As Omaggio (1979) stated in her study, a picture "provide(s) cues to events occurring late in the story and might therefore have failed to suggest an effective organizational scheme to aid comprehension of the opening paragraphs" (p.115).

Picture NO.3 in Table 4 is from a reading text from *the New HSK* test 2013-5 proficiency level 6, a story about the three visits of Bian Que, a famous doctor in ancient China, to Duke Caihuan, the King of Qi. The two objects depicted in picture NO.3, an ancient Chinese medical book and an herb, are not mentioned in the reading text. There might be "some" relationship between the picture and the text, because Bian Que is always associated with medical books and herbs in Chinese culture. However, even if this is the case and a test taker realizes this relationship, this would not help him/her to understand the story, since the text itself has nothing

to do with things depicted in the picture. On the contrary, this picture may distract or, even worse, mislead readers' comprehension.

Through analysis, the majority of pictures (51 out of 60) used in *the New HSK* test depict information from the beginning paragraph(s) of reading texts, which could assist readers in building up background knowledge necessary for understanding the content of the reading text. However, some pictures depict information appearing in the middle or at the end of the reading texts, which may fail to help readers organize the text information effectively; and some pictures depict information not appearing in the reading text, which may mislead readers. Thus, only the 51 pictures meeting the second criterion, depicting information from the beginning of paragraph(s), continued to be analyzed with the third criterion.

Mirroring Language Complexity of the Text

According to the third criterion, objects and/or content depicted in pictures should reflect the language difficulty of the reading text. All reading comprehension tasks analyzed in this paper are from the test papers of *the New HSK* proficiency level 5 and level 6, who are advanced learners who have already passed *the New HSK* beginner level and intermediate level. Depicted information in pictures is required to correspond to words or phrases that can be found in *the New HSK* vocabulary list of level 5 and level 6 or above the two levels.

To find out whether depicted information in a picture corresponded to words or phrases at or higher than *the New HSK* level 5, two steps were carried out. First, each reading text that appears with a picture was reviewed, during which words and phrases depicted in the picture were located in the text. Second, *the New HSK* vocabulary list was referred to see whether and at which level the depicted words and phrases were on the list. Table 5 shows the two general levels of language depicted in pictures: (1) lower than *the New HSK proficiency* level 5, and (2) equal/higher than

level 5. Number of pictures under each level and examples of pictures are also provided in this table.

Table 5

Language Depicted in Pictures

	Language Depicted in Pictures			
	≧ new HSK level 5		＜ new HSK level 5	
Number of Pictures	41		10	
Examples				
	NO.4	NO.5	NO.6	NO.7

Through Table 5, 41 out of 51 pictures depict language equal to or higher than the vocabulary requirement of *the New HSK* proficiency level 5, accounting for 80% of the pictures continuing being analyzed. Since these pictures depict information from the reading text for test candidates who have already passed *the New HSK* beginner level and intermediate level and are "supposed" to reach the advanced level, the depicted words and phrases equal to or higher than the advanced level (proficiency level 5) would help to facilitate the reading.

The two examples in Table 5, picture NO. 4 and NO.5, were analyzed with the reading text that they accompany respectively to see the language depicted in each picture. Picture NO.4 is about *xi qu* (Chinese traditional opera). The phrase "*xi qu*" appears five times in the reading text, and its synonym, *li yuan* (another name for Chinese traditional opera), fourteen times. In total, the same concept is mentioned nineteen times in the text, specifically, eight times in the first paragraph, five times in the second and third paragraphs respectively, and one time in the last paragraph. Since the concept runs through the whole text, which is actually the topic of the

text, understanding of this concept would greatly improve readers' understanding of the whole text. Moreover, when referring to *the New HSK* test syllabus, I found that both phrases "*xi qu*" and "*li yuan*" are beyond the vocabulary requirement for the current test level and are not required to be mastered by test takers. Hence, a picture depicting the key concept of a reading text corresponding to words or phrases higher than the "supposed" current proficiency of test takers is particularly important.

Picture NO.5 appears together with a reading text about the development of basket in basketball games. From *the New HSK* syllabus, the phrase "*da lan qiu*" (play basketball) is a level 2 phrase, however, the word "*kuang*" (basket) is a word beyond the requirement of the syllabus. Thus, picture NO.5 depicting a basket would mostly promote readers' comprehension of the reading text.

From Table 5, 10 out of 51 pictures depict information corresponding to language lower than *the New HSK* proficiency level 5, accounting for 20% of the pictures continuing to be analyzed. As mentioned before, the reading comprehension task is only included in test papers for *the New HSK* proficiency level 5 and level 6, which are particularly for advanced Chinese learners who have already passed tests for proficiency levels 1, 2, 3 and 4. Therefore, if a picture only depicts information corresponding to language required for *the New HSK* proficiency level 4 or lower, it would be too easy for test takers and not match with the language difficulty of the reading comprehension task. Two examples are given below.

Picture NO.6 in Table 5 shows an egg. The picture appears together with a reading text, a Chinese mythology about the beginning of the world. In the first paragraph of the text, the universe is compared to an egg. Except the first paragraph, the phrase "*ji dan*" (egg) does not appear in the other paragraphs. Referring to *the New HSK* syllabus, "*ji dan*" (egg) is a level 2 phrase. Thus, the "egg" picture is superfluous for the reading text in this specific context for two reasons. First, "*ji dan*" (egg) was not a key concept requiring to be processed in order to understand the text (See the next section for further analysis). Second, as "*ji dan*" (egg) is a beginner

level phrase, and it is not necessary to be depicted for advanced level test takers here.

Picture NO.7 is in the same case, where the depicted word in the picture, "ping" (bottle), is a third-level vocabulary in *the New HSK* syllabus. Although the reading text is about the value of empty bottles, the picture depicts a concept which test takers have already known. Thus, it would not be helpful for the understanding of the text.

By analyzing with the third criterion, a large majority of the pictures (41 out of 51) depict information mirroring the language complexity of the reading text, which correspond to words or phrases from the reading text that are equal to or beyond the "supposed" current language proficiency of test takers. For pictures depicting information corresponding to language lower than the "supposed" current proficiency of the test takers, they are considered to be unnecessary in the text, even though sometimes the depicted information is one of the key concepts. For the analysis in the next section, the remaining 41 pictures which meet the first, second, and the third criteria simultaneously will continue to be analyzed.

Depicting Information to be Processed in the Text

According to the fourth criterion in this paper, pictures should depict information that is invited to be processed in the reading text, meaning that pictures should depict key concepts that are important for understanding of the reading text. Table 6 shows two categories of information processing: depicted information in the picture (1) requires to be processed in the text and (2) does not require to be processed. The number of pictures in each category is provided in Table 6, with one example picture presented for each category.

Table 6

Information Processing

	Information Processing	
	Depicted information required to be processed	Depicted information not required to be processed
Number of Pictures	29	12
Examples	 NO.8	 NO.9

From Table 6, 29 out of 41 pictures depict information required to be processed in the reading text, accounting for 71% of the pictures continuing being analyzed. Picture NO.8 is an example for this category, which depicts a Chinese traditional concept: "*xiang*" (alley). The text appearing together with this picture tells a story about the origin of the concept "*xiang*" in Chinese, and the historical site "Liu Chi Xiang" in China. The whole text is about the concept "*xiang*". Moreover, the concept "*xiang*" is an advanced level vocabulary according to *the New HSK* syllabus. Thus, this picture here definitely depicts information that is invited to be processed in the reading text. If a reader does not process this concept correctly, s/he may not know what the text is about. Thus, the picture provided with the reading text depicting the image of *"xiang"* in Chinese culture would effectively promote readers' information processing concerning this concept, which would consequently improve their comprehension of the text.

Accordingly, 29% of the 41 remaining pictures do not depict information required to be processed in the text. Picture NO.9 in Table 6 provides an example, which shows a flying dragon drifting in the clouds. The text appearing together with this picture is about a painter's story, based

on which the Chinese four-word phrase, "*Hua long dian jing*" was created. The story tells about a painter who painted a dragon without eyes; later, when he added two eyes for the dragon, it came alive and flew away. Based on the story, the word "*jing*" (eyes) instead of "*long*" (dragon) is the focus of the four-word phrase. And the "*jing*" (eyes) part of the story is required to be processed by test takers in order to understand the reading text and work on reading questions. However, the picture only depicts a normal dragon drifting in the clouds, which would easily distract readers' attention from the eyes ("*jing*") of the dragon. Moreover, since the depicted information is not needed to comprehend the reading text, the picture seems unnecessary in this situation.

Through analysis with the fourth criterion, more than half of pictures (29 out of 41) depict information required to be processed in the text. By providing real images for key and difficult concepts in the text, these pictures would help facilitate readers' comprehension. On the other hand, pictures depicting information not necessary to be processed in the text would always seem superfluous, even worse, they may mislead readers sometimes.

Discussion

Why are pictures used with reading texts in *the New HSK*? Through the analysis, we see that pictures are not effectively used in the reading comprehension task of *the New HSK test*. As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, one of the major purposes for using pictures with reading texts is to facilitate test takers' comprehension in reading. However, in the analysis, the author has found pictures with superfluous and distracting information, and even pictures depicting information that could not be found in the corresponding text. The appearance of these pictures in test papers produce the impression that *the New HSK* test designers did not really consider the effect of a picture for comprehension when using it with the reading text. This would consequently reduce the reliability of *the New*

HSK test. According to Hughes (2013), one of the two components of test reliability is that performance of candidates from occasion to occasion should be consistent. Distracting pictures, however, provide an unfavorable factor for test takers to show their real comprehension ability; thereupon, add one more layer of uncertainty leading to a similar performance on different occasions.

Are pictures with culture-specific information helpful for reading comprehension? The answer to this question could be yes and no. In the analysis, the author has found that many pictures about Chinese culture were used together with reading texts. On one hand, since test takers of *the New HSK* are non-native speakers who are not expected to know every aspect of Chinese culture, a picture depicting specific cultural elements, such as a picture of "Liu chi xiang" as analyzed before, would greatly help readers to understand the content of the text. On the other hand, there are still other considerations that should be taken into account in order to choose a picture depicting culture. For example, the depicted cultural aspects need to be processed in the reading text, and the language corresponding to the cultural aspects needs to be equal to or higher than the "supposed" current language proficiency of test takers. Otherwise, the picture would not serve well for promoting comprehension. There are some pictures used in *the New HSK* test showing great Chinese culture, however, the depicted information accounts little of the text content and does not have any impact on test candidates' understanding of the text itself. This unavoidably makes people question the function of these pictures. "Some pictures play an active role in promoting Chinese culture, showing modern China and Chinese spirits " (Zhang, J., Xie, N., Wang, S., Li,Y., & Zhang, T., 2010). While no one would disagree with using culture-specific pictures with reading text, it is important and essential for test designers to look at their functions and carefully consider questions concerning how a picture could facilitate reading comprehension of test takers before making the decision to use pictures.

Conclusion

Based on previous research that has been done about pictures in reading tasks, this paper summarizes four criteria that facilitative pictures for reading comprehension tasks are expected to meet: (1) not including too much information about the content of the reading text, (2) depicting information from the beginning paragraph(s) of the text, (3) mirroring language complexity of the text, and (4) depicting information that is invited to be processed in the text. Through analysis with these four criteria, 29 out of 60 pictures from *the New HSK* reading comprehension tasks were found to meet all simultaneously, accounting for 48% of all pictures analyzed. Specifically, all the 60 pictures met the first criterion. However, through continued analysis with the other three criteria, the amount of pictures decreased after each criterion was applied. Pictures eliminated from the list were found to be distracting, superfluous, or unrelated to reading text. In real testing situations, while it is not easy for each picture to meet all the four criteria, the author suggests that test designers keep these four criteria in mind when choosing or designing pictures for *the New HSK* test papers in order to protect the efficiency of pictures to reach facilitation purpose.

According to the feedback from test takers of the old version of *HSK* test, the test was too hard, which discouraged many people to take the test and even to learn Chinese. *The New HSK* test is designed with adjusted test difficulty to help test takers see their achievement in learning Chinese and encourage more people around the world to learn Chinese. Adjusting test difficulty does not mean to lower the requirements for test takers, but rather to provide them with language learning tools and strategies to perform better on the test. Facilitative pictures added to reading comprehension tasks are regarded as one of these tools. Test designers should do their best and take the responsibility to find effective and facilitative pictures for each reading text.

Limitations

The first limitation of this research is the number of pictures analyzed in this study. Due to the limited availability of data, only 60 pictures were analyzed, which, to some extent, leads to the lack of statistical generalizability of this study. A second limitation is having only one researcher analyze all the data involved. Although I have referred to various sources about *the New HSK* test and have been regularly reflecting on my role as a researcher to avoid potential subjective biases during this study, it would have given more credibility to this study if I had invited research peers to discuss the findings emerging from this study, or more ideally, invited test takers to participate in this study. Therefore, for future research, a larger amount of test data are suggested to be used with the involvement of both test takers and peer researchers to enhance the credibility of such studies.

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Appendix 1

Permission from Confucius Institute Headquarters/Hanban

From: Xiaolong Liu <liuxl@chinesetest.cn>
To: Fei Yu <fayyuzone@gmail,com>
Date: Fri, Dec 26, 2014 at 1:27 AM
Subject: Permission for using the New HSK test data

Dear Fei YU,
Your application for using the New HSK tests published on the Hanban official website (www.chinesetest.cn) is approved. You are only permitted to use the New HSK tests in your research study but not in any other ways. We hope that you can share your research findings with us.

Best Regards,
刘小龙 (LIU XIAO LONG)
Chinese Testing International Co., Ltd
Confucius Institute Headquarters/Hanban
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An Exploration of Voice in Second Language Writing

Dwi Riyanti

Abstract: Writing with strong voice is desirable in the U.S mainstream culture, yet it is not necessarily easy to accomplish it. This is even harder for second language writers who are new to the culture. The different cultural expectation and the knowledge of the language presumably become some of the obstacles for them to write in the expectation of the U.S mainstream. Even the notion of voice in writing itself is often confusing. This paper, focusing on exploring what voice is and how it is manifested in second language writing, reviews related literature on voice and second language writing research as well the author's experience being an international student who has to write for the U.S mainstream audience. The findings show that the concept of voice itself is broadly defined to refer to many things, adding confusion to novice second language writers who are trying to fit to the expectation of the intended audience. Additionally, the struggles that second language writers experience in writing with strong voice are triggered by many factors which are not necessarily lacking of the knowledge of the language. The insight of the challenges that second language writers have may give implications on how second language writing instruction should focus.

Key words: *voice in writing, second language writers, academic writing, second language instruction*

Introduction

For a second language (L2) writer like myself, the term '"voice" as it relates to writing is confusing. As I rarely talk about writing with voice in my first language, I am not accustomed to consider whether I write with voice or not. When I first heard the term "voice" used to describe writing, I immediately assumed it to mean the message that writers want to convey through their written pieces. While it can be partially true, the term, in

fact, can mean more than that. This is partly because voice is often interpreted in various ways. For example it can mean "style, persona, stance or ethos" (Bowden, 1995, p. 173). Additionally, the term "voice" in writing has never been defined clearly, despite its broad use to refer to "authors' writing styles, authorship, language registers, rhetorical stance, written and spoken prosody, the self in the text, and scores of others" (Sperling & Appleman, 2011, p. 70). While the term in the U.S mainstream contexts has been a common topic in writing, the lack of consensus to what it is about, how it is assessed, and by whom it is assessed complicate the notion of voice in writing.

As an international student and a second language (L2) writer myself, I find my writing is different from native-American English writers. Realizing that I write differently makes me wonder if I write with voice. If I refer to Bowden's definition of voice, I feel that I do write with voice because I write with certain styles. Yet, it is not necessarily true that people from the U.S mainstream culture think that I write with strong voice. While none of my professors have ever commented that my writing has voice, I could sense that my writing is very straight forward and lacks details which I think are an indication of weak voice. Additionally, my unfamiliarity with the cultural norms commonly adopted by native speakers of English and my limited English vocabulary may be some of the causes that my writing may not be perceived as having strong voice. This has often led me to conclude that I write with lack of or even no voice at all when I write in my L2. While this can be a generalization to use myself as an example of a struggling L2 writer, lack of clear voice in writing may also be a problem that other L2 writers encounter.

Considering the possible confusion about the notion of voice for L2 writers, this paper is aimed at exploring the concept of voice in writing from various different theoretical perspectives, how it functions in writing, and how it is manifested in L2 writing. This paper will review literature about what has been researched related to the notion of voice. While it is hoped that the exploration can be beneficial for other second language writers who are still struggling to write with clear voice as expected by U.S mainstream culture, this conceptual exploration can also be worthwhile

for writing teachers or educators to get some ideas about the struggle that L2 writers encounter in integrating voice in their writing. Lastly, the implications for teaching writing to L2 learners can also be useful insight for English as second language or English language learning teachers.

Definition of voice

The notion of voice in spoken interaction has been defined as part of people's identity markers in which people's unique voice can differentiate them from others (Bowden, 1995; Ivanic & Camps, 2001). It is considered to be part of a person's identity because people who are familiar with the person can recognize who they are only by hearing their voice. Voice has also been used in specific ways to emphasize the messages people are trying to convey. The different pitches and tones often determine kinds of messages that speakers want to address. Using a soft voice, for example, may indicate powerlessness or helplessness that the speakers have in reacting to particular unexpected situations. On the other hand, using a loud voice may signal anger, suppression or power exertion. A flat voice may signal boredom or the absence of enthusiasm. Therefore, variations in how voice is produced signals differences in the meaning being conveyed.

Unlike the relatively clear role of voice in speaking, voice in writing is more complex as the features of voice identified in spoken interaction are not as clear as in written forms. For example, one of the characteristics of writing is that it does not carry phonetic and prosodic qualities of the identities of the writers (Ivanic & Camps, 2001), recognizing the voice that writers have is not as easy as recognizing it in someone's speech. However, it does not mean that voice does not exist in writing. According to Ivanic and Camps (2001), voice does exist in written language, and it is "the heart of the act of writing" (Kirby, Kirby, & Liner, 2004, p. 76). In a similar vein, Hyland (2002) argues that "writing always has voice in the sense that it conveys a representation of a writer" (p. 5). Synthesizing what have been argued by aforementioned authors, it can be concluded that voice in writing does matter and it tells something about who the writer is.

In line with Ivanic and Camps (2001) and Hyland (2002), Elbow (2007) argues that *voice in writing* refers to the true self and the rhetorical power, and that everyone has capacity to write with power as he or she has voice. Elbow's argument shows that voice does exist in writing and that writing with voice is very important. While Elbow theorizes the notion of voice as individual rhetorical power in writing, other researchers such as Kinloch (2010) and Brooke (2012) use the notion of voice to refer to a broader concept that involves the writers' social contexts. Kinloch (2010), for example, shows in her research with adolescents from Harlem that non-mainstream adolescents were able to participate in community action projects by integrating their voice into their writing. Through their critical narrative writing, the adolescents in Kinloch's study were able to project their strong voice in order to more effectively represent their community. Similarly, Brooke (2012) has also shown that voice in writing really matters, because it can be used to raise community issues related to place based education. While the concept of voice in these two examples of how adolescents write with voice in Kinloch's and Brooke's studies differs from what Elbow (2007) argues, it shows that voice in writing can be social in nature as well as self-representative.

Even though the notion of voice in writing is still under debate (Bowden, 1995), most experts in the field are in agreement that voice is an important component of writing. Additionally, voice is also claimed to have correlation with the quality of writing (Zhao & Llosa, 2008). Similar to the notion of voice in spoken interaction in which it is part of the identity markers of the speakers, voice in writing also serves similar functions related to the identity of the writers. Hyland (2008) argues that "as writers we show who we are by the choices we make in our texts in much the same way that our speech, clothes, and body languages index our social class" (p.6), indicating that voice in writing tells something about the writers. Similarly, Ivanic and Camps (2001) affirm that despite the absence of the phonetic and prosodic quality of speech, the identity of the authors can still be recognized through the lexical, syntactical, and organizational aspects that any authors use in their writing.

Voice in different theoretical perspectives

Unlike voice in spoken interaction which is often identified as one of the features of verbal communication, the notion of voice in writing is often seen metaphorically (Bowden, 1995; Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999; Sperling & Appleman, 2011). Within this perspective, voice can refer to an ideology of worldview in communication that is widely used especially in the U.S mainstream where the notion of voice often refers to the uniqueness of self (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999). With the acknowledgment of self in writing, the authors may use pronoun "I" in their writing as the manifestation of their uniqueness as individuals. Contrary to Ramanathan and Atkinson (1999), Bowden (1995) argues that voice is "simply an analogy, a way of saying that the voice of the writer can be perceived on paper as readily as if the words had been spoken" (p.173). With this notion of voice, a piece of writing can project who the writer is and the stance the writer has. In line with this, voice has also been used metaphorically to denote human agency and identity (Sperling & Appleman, 2011).

While voice has been widely recognized as the identity of the writers, a clear and succinct definition of voice in writing is not found in literature. This is probably because of the differences that people have in understanding the notion of voice. Despite the differences in definition, voice in writing is theoretically divided into two broad categories (Prior, 2001; Sperling & Appleman, 2011). The first one is voice as individual accomplishment, and the other is voice as social/cultural construction. While there seems to be a dichotomy of the notion of voice, according to Prior (2001), voice can be simultaneously personal and social.

Voice as individual representativeness

Within this category, voice has often been associated with ownership (Sperling & Sperman, 2011), true self and rhetorical power (Elbow, 2007). As the manifestation of self-representation in writing, voice has something to do with the style that a writer has as a marker of his or her own identity. Additionally, Sperling and Appleman (2011) argue that "the

connection of voice to the self supports the connection of writing as a kind of identity performance" (p. 72). Within this context, voice can be seen as individual accomplishment in which the writers manifest their true selves through the use of specific linguistic features in their writing. For example, individuals "create their unique voice through selecting and combining the linguistic resources available to them" (Johnstone, 2000, p. 417). Sperling and Appleman (2011) further argue that unlike voice in spoken interaction, where the uniqueness of self is manifested in the use of rhythms, stress, and intonation, voice as individual self in writing is achieved through the use of syntax and punctuation.

Voice as social/cultural construction

In addition to voice as a self-representation, voice is also socially constructed. Voice in this sense is often connected to an ideology in which it relates to social and cultural power (Maranathan & Atkinson, 1999; Sperling & Appleman, 2011). The notion of voice as social and cultural construction is based on the idea that how individuals represent their identities is shaped by their society and their cultures (Sperling & Appelman, 2011). This is even more prominent in academic writing in which the ways individuals write are influenced and situated by the contexts where they have to write and who their audience is (Hyland, 2002). Unlike other types of writing, the notion of voice in academic writing is generally undesirable as readers often look for scientific evidence rather than merely an opinion (Hyland, 2002). However, it does not mean that voice does not exist in academic writing. Hyland (2002) further argues that the idea of voice in academic writing is essentially social than personal in the sense that writers in academic contexts often associate themselves toward particular groups rather than representing themselves as individuals. While it is still possible that the idea of voice as self-representation is manifested in academic writing, students' writing may be constrained by their sociocultural contexts, such as school expectations and the discipline in which they write. For example, the notion of voice in hard sciences and engineering is often manifested in the absence of writers' self-representation as writers

in these disciplines often downplay their personal role in highlighting the issue they are studying. On the other hand, voice in the humanities discipline can be manifested in the use author's personal representation as personal involvement in the issue being studied is common (Hyland, 2002).

Voice as social and cultural construction is also tied to the Bakhtinian perspective in which any utterance is in response to a previous utterance and with anticipation of future utterances (Bakhtin, 1986). In this sense, voice is socially and culturally mediated. Within this context, writers always write in response to other voices. Thus, the voice in writing is not necessarily the voice of the writers themselves; rather, writers can use multiple voices in their writing. In line with sociocultural context of voice perspective, Hillocks (1995, p. xvii) argues that "writing is a recursive process that requires the reconstruction of text already written, so that what we add connects appropriately with what has preceded." This indicates that the act of writing itself is a social act which is done as a response to previous ideas. This affirms the notion of voice in the Bakhtinian perspective. Therefore, the voice that writers project in their writing is, in essence, socially constructed. Additionally, as writers construct their self-representation from drawing on culturally available resources when they write (Hyland, 2002), voice is social and cultural in nature.

The connection of voice and a sense of audience

In line with the idea of voice as individual representation of self and socio-cultural achievement, voice in writing is connected to a sense of audience. According to Kirby, Kirby, and Liner (2004) "writers' choices of voice, language, and content are often influenced by their informed guesses about audience" (p.96). This clearly indicates that in order to write with strong voice, writers need to have a sense of audience or for whom their writing is intended. Additionally, as it is indicated by Sperling and Appleman (2011) that voice can refer to many things such as writing style, language register use, rhetorical stance and other things; therefore, it cannot be expected that writers will write using the same styles for different

audiences. For example, if I were supposed to write about my childhood memory to my professor, I would certainly use different writing style compared to if I were to write it to my close friends. That being said, the type of voice I use in writing is influenced by who the intended audience of the writing is.

Voice in L2 writing

While the existence of voice is unarguably important, voice in L2 writing is not necessarily identified as the representation of the true self. This is specially the case for ESL learners writing in academic discourses and genres expected in U.S mainstream culture. L2 writers may use strong voice that shows authorial and self-representation in their first language (L1), yet the authorial voice may not be clearly present in their L2 writing. While this can mean that L2 writers write in the styles that are different from the expectation of audience in their L2 writing, it can also mean that L2 writers are not familiar with the expectation of their intended audience. In the study of identifying voice in L2 writing, Ivanic and Camps (2001) found that L2 writers use voice by positioning themselves in their writing. The positions that L2 writers choose are generally influenced by many factors resulting in their use of multiple voices in their writing. One of the factors that influence how the L2 writers represent themselves in their writing is the nature of the tasks or assignments they have to write. For example, in school contexts where most writing is produced in response to an assignment (Hillocks, 1995), the ways that L2 writers project their voices are often adjusted to the requirement for the assignments which are mostly for academic purposes. Since academic writing is often associated with anonymity of the writers, it is common that L2 writers avoid using the first person pronoun in their writing. This lack of first pronoun use may be seen as an indicator of lack of sense of self in the U.S mainstream contexts.

In the experience as an L2 writer myself, prior to coming to the U.S, I was taught that I had to distance myself from the object being described to write academically sound. This results in my reluctance to

write using the pronoun "I" even when I was prompted towards creative writing. While the ways L2 writers were taught affects how they write in their L2, the types of writing learned and taught shape how L2 writers write. For example, L2 learners who wish to continue their education in U.S universities tend to write in particular styles which do not necessarily fulfill the general expectation of U.S mainstream audiences. For international students who have to take standardized English entrance exams (e.g., TOEFL test) or other requirements for university entries, the type of writing they learned most of the time is to pass the TOEFL test and to get admission to the universities. This eventually shapes how they later write in their academic lives. Even though L2 students are also prepared to be able to write for participating in university study, the writing focus is usually adjusted to particular disciplines which have their own styles of writing. With this in mind, when L2 writers come to a country like the United States where the notion of voice as a representation of self in writing is pervasive, L2 writers often need to make adjustments to fulfill the expectation of the U.S mainstream culture. This often creates difficulties for L2 writers. For example, the use of pronoun "I" that is pervasively used both in creative writing and academic writing in U.S mainstream culture can be surprising for L2 writers coming from collective societies where the use pronoun "I" is rarely used in writing as indicated in Shen's (1989) study.

Furthermore, L2 writers who come to the U.S for continuing their study at the university level are usually prepared to write in a neutral way. Thus, it is often difficult for them to write with a particular stance as their American counterparts often do. While this particularly refers to my own experience as a L2 writer, the study by Ivanic and Camps (2001) seems to confirm the idea that L2 writers tend to avoid the use of first person singular pronoun in their writing. Their study that focuses on investigating voice in six Mexican students studying in British universities shows a similar pattern in which the Mexican students feel reluctant to use first person singular pronoun in academic writing. While this is partly because they were taught not to use "I" in writing academic genres prior to their study in British universities, this is also because their supervisors want them to write it that way. While there might be different expectations between

American and British universities, this shows that the contexts influence the writing styles which inadvertently shape the voice that is reflected in L2 writing.

However, since the use of pronoun "I" is not the only predicator of using voice in writing, voice in writing can be identified by the use of other means, such as the use of other lexical choices, and how writers position themselves (Ivanic & Camps, 2001; Sperling & Appleman, 2011). While the use of the first person singular pronoun indicates the writer's own voice, other voice indicators such as how writers position themselves in their writing can be used to indicate the writers' stance which indirectly refers to the notion of voice in writing. Hyland (2002) argues that in order to capture the idea of voice in academic writing, ones should consider the voice as social rather than a personal representation. Thus, it makes sense that when Ivanic and Camps (2001) analyzed the use of voice in L2 academic writing, they identify three different types of writers' positionings.

Among the three positioning types, Ivanic and Camps (2001) argue that *ideational positioning* is the most commonly used by L2 writers. Within this type of positioning, voice can be identified by the use of specific lexical choices in their writing. For example, as L2 writers in their study write in response to the assignments, they focus their interests on particular topics and use lexical choices related to the topics. While the notion of voice as the writers' own authorship is hardly identified from this type of positioning, the writers align themselves as a group of people who are interested in the topics being written. Within this context, the notion of voice in L2 writing can be considered to be a social process in which writers write in response to or align themselves to be part of the society. In addition to the lexical choice as representation of ideational positioning, voice in L2 writing is also manifested in the syntactic choices. For example, the use of nominalization, and impersonal ways when referring to people in their writing (Ivanic & Camps, 2001).

Another type of positioning that helps explain how voice is manifested in L2 writing is the use of *interpersonal positioning* (Ivanic & Camps, 2001). Within this context, the writer's notion of voice as the writer's authority and certainty is manifested in how writers use particular

tenses and modality. While this is certainly context bound, the use of tense and modality can show whether the writers are fully confident with what they write or not. The writers' confidence is often associated with strong voice for it shows the authority that the writers have in their writing. To show their confidence, for example, writers often use present tense and limit the use of modals that show uncertainty (Ivanic & Camps, 2001). Consequently, the frequent use of modals as markers of certainties (e.g., may and could) are indicative to the weak voice in L2 academic writing.

The other positioning that L2 writers are inclined to do is the use *textual positioning* (Ivanic & Camps, 2001). This positioning, which is indicated by preferences on the use of particular modes of communication is one of the salient features found in L2 writing. In the study by Ivanic and Camps (2001), for example, L2 writers tend to express their ideas in long and complex sentences to associate themselves with academic literacy voice. Other forms of textual positioning are manifested in the preferences of L2 writers to use particular semiotic modes, such as the use of mathematic symbols and different font sizes to put emphasis. While the preferences of using certain modes of communication in writing do not exclusively characterize L2 writing, it could be an indication that L2 writers align themselves to particular ways of writing to create their identities as writers.

The challenges that L2 writers face when including voice in their writing

In line with the different styles that L2 writers use in their writing compared to U.S mainstream people, focusing on analyzing voice in L2 writing has been criticized for the possible biases that researchers may have. Stapleton (2002), for example, argues that how researchers view the struggle that L2 writers experience in writing with voice is misleading because many researchers tend to analyze the notion of voice by detaching it from the contexts. He further argues that the mismatches between the contexts and how their writing is assessed is one of the factors that leads to the misconception that L2 writers write with no voice. For example,

most L2 writers who come to the U.S write in the context of academic writing, yet the assessment of voice is done based on how voice is commonly viewed by people from American mainstream culture who are accustomed to write creatively.

Apart from whether research on the notion of voice in L2 writing is misleading, it is still important for educators (i.e., writing instructors in particular) to get insights about the struggle that L2 writers experience in including the notion of voice in their writing. Since the issue of voice in the U.S mainstream is often related to authorial identity, or authorial presence (Ramanathan, & Kaplan, 1996; Stapleton, 2002), voice is often overlooked as individual accomplishment rather than as social/cultural accomplishment in Sperling and Appleman's (2011) term. This apparently results in the sense of lacking clear voice in L2 academic writing. Additionally, since that notion of voice in writing is also connected to the intended audience (Kirby, et al., 2004; Ramanathan, & Kaplan, 1996), L2 writers often have limited knowledge about the expectation of their intended writing audience. This is especially the case when the writers and their intended writing audience do not share a similar cultural understanding. Ramanathan and Kaplan (1996) argue that "audience and voice are largely culturally constrained notions, relatively inaccessible to students who are not full participants in the culture within which they are asked to write" (p. 22). This implies that the challenges that L2 writers face in writing with clear voice in the U.S mainstream can be due to their unfamiliarity with the audience and the expectation of how a piece of writing should be presented based on the commonality of U.S mainstream expectation. Additionally, the contradiction between how self-representation is manifested in L2 writing and in the U.S mainstream can be one of the contributing factors that make L2 writing lack a sense of voice when analyzed by people from the U.S mainstream culture. For example, self-representation in the U.S mainstream culture is indicated by the use of pronoun "I", whereas, in academic writing, English as a second Language (ESL) writers show their self-representativeness through different types of positionings such as ideational, interpersonal, and textual positionings as indicated in the study by Ivanic and Camps (2001).

While the different ways of representing self in written forms seems to be in line with Stapleton's (2002) critique, the concerns of voice for L2 writers can go beyond the use of pronouns and lexical choices. According to Ramanathan and Kaplan (1996), the different ways that L2 writers organize their thoughts and the differences in cultural values as well as the limited knowledge in their L2 possibly become the obstacles for L2 writers in writing with clear voice. With this in mind, it is not only about the use of pronoun "I" and lexical choices that hinder L2 writers to write with clear voice. A study by Hirvela and Belcher (2001), for example, confirms that the notion of voice among L2 writers is complicated as it also refers to the L2 writers' background knowledge about the concept of voice. From their study, they found that the notion of voice for mature and established L2 writers was problematic as it often conflicts with the existing voice that the writers have in their L1.

From studying three graduate students who returned to the U.S for their doctoral study, Hirvela and Belcher (2001) identify that their difficulties writing with voice in English as part of the requirements in their degree are triggered by their already established position in their home countries. As all of the participants in their study already published articles in their home countries, they had already established voice in their writing. Yet, the different demand and expectation as well as their status in a new country made it difficult for them to align themselves in their L2 writing. For most of them, finding a new voice that suits their needs was more important than just adopting the notion of voice as a representative of true self, given the fact that they already have sense of who they are. Within this context, the difficulties of writing with strong voice as expected in the U.S mainstream culture is also triggered by cultural backgrounds of the writers that are incongruent with the U.S mainstream culture expectation.

Unlike the notion of voice in mature L2 writing, writing with voice for immature L2 writers such as high school and college students can even be more challenging. This is especially the case when the writers come from a culture that is different from the U.S mainstream. Ramanathan and Kaplan (1996) argue that since audience and voice are interconnected, it can be challenging for writers coming from non-mainstream culture to

write with strong voice as they may not be familiar with the culture of the audience. Additionally, the notion of self-representation in non-U.S mainstream cultures may also hinder L2 writers to write with individual voice. For example, within the U.S mainstream, it is generally acceptable to use pronoun "I" to show authorship, but it is not necessarily the case for L2 writers who come from collective societies such as China and Japan. While it is certainly a generalization to argue that all L2 writers from collective societies do not write using pronoun "I", the insight on how individualism is viewed in such societies explains the challenges that L2 writers who come from those countries face in using "I" in their writing (Matsuda, 2001; Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999).

Shen (1989) for example, describes his struggle to write with individual voice in his composition class years ago when he was a student in a U.S university. For him, writing with authorial voice meant renegotiating his identity. Coming from China where collective societies view individualism as a kind of rebellion, Shen (1989) found it hard to write using the pronoun "I". As the use of pronoun "I" is considered to be subordinate to "we" in his L1, it took time for Shen to adjust to U.S mainstream writing norms where it is preferable to show the concept of "self" in writing. The case of Shen can be used as an example of the challenge that L2 writers experience in writing with authorial voice due to different cultural backgrounds.

Similar to Shen (1989), Matsuda (2001) also recalls his own experience when he was an international undergraduate student in the U.S. He found it challenging to project the notion of self in his writing as being himself in this context did not necessarily match who he was when he was in his Japanese society. For him, finding his own voice was not about discovering the true self; rather it was the process of negotiating his socially and discursively constructed identity with the expectation of the readers of his writing. Within these contexts, it is clear that the concept of voice is connected to the intended audience of his writing. While this was Matsuda's case, it can also be the challenge that other L2 learners face when writing to a U.S audience in which the expectation is different from their L1 writing audience. Additionally, from his research about Japanese

writing, Matsuda (2001) concludes that Japanese writers do write with voice, yet it is not always transferable to the U.S mainstream contexts. Further, he gives an example that the way Japanese use the first personal pronoun is different from the use of the English first personal pronoun. From his research, Matsuda (2001) concludes that the difficulties that Japanese students encounter in writing with clear voice in English is triggered by the fact that they lack familiarity with discursive options and discourse availability in constructing voice in their writing, rather than the incompatibility of the notion of voice with their cultural orientation toward self and society.

The implication for L2 writing instruction in the U.S contexts

As has been pointed out by many researchers, L2 writers write differently; therefore, it is important for writing teachers to help L2 writers develop the notion of voice in their writing. Additionally, since the problems related to voice in L2 writing are connected to many aspects such as different cultural expectations, contexts, and writing audience as pointed out by several researchers (Matsuda, 2001; Ramanathan & Akitson, 1996; Shen, 1989), L2 writing instruction should then be directed to increase students' awareness about different cultural expectation in terms of who the audience of the writing is, what the purpose of the writing is, and the contexts where written forms are produced. For example, in order to address the differences of how L2 writers from collective societies such as from Japan, China, and other countries associated with collective societies write, writing teachers either in high school or university contexts need to teach students what to expect when the audience include people from the U.S mainstream culture. As has been pointed out by Matsuda (2001), the notion of voice for Japanese writers is manifested in many different ways, and it is not always transferable to English. Educators need to be aware that L2 writers may need adjustment and explicit instruction in order to write with voice in their L2 writing.

While there are certainly no easy strategies to teach L2 writers especially the beginner writers about the cultural expectation in U.S mainstream culture, I find that Kirby and his colleagues (2004) offer some useful teaching strategies to improve students' awareness about the importance of voice in writing. For example, as beginner L2 writers usually struggle with the concepts of audience for their writing, activities related to building awareness about writing for a different audiences, could be used to scaffold instruction about the notion of voice in writing. For instance, before students practice writing with clear voice, I think it is useful for students to practice writing to different intended audiences. This can also be used as a bridge to understand cultural expectations that many L2 writers including myself, find challenging. The discussion about what to expect to write when the intended writing audience is from the U.S mainstream culture, for example, can give L2 writers some insight on how to write to a particular audience. As an L2 learner myself, the concept of audience is easier to understand than the concept of voice in writing. Accordingly, by scaffolding writing instruction with what students already know and moving toward more challenging activities, one can help students to learn within their zone of proximal development in Vygotsky's term (Vygotsky, 1978) and as discussed by Hillocks (1995).

With regard to scaffolding instruction to help L2 learners become aware of the concept of audience, some of the activities that Kirby and his colleagues (2004) offer in their book can be very helpful. The activities related to anticipating audience response, personalizing audience, and audience adaptation are some of the activities that can be used to increase L2 writers' awareness about the audience in writing. Activities related to "anticipating audience response" (Kirby et al., 2004, p. 96), for example, allow beginning writers to predict how their intended audience will respond to their writing. This activity can also be connected to the notion of voice through the Bakhtinian perspective, in which writers respond to previous utterances and anticipate future utterances. With this in mind, writers can carefully select appropriate lexical choices and voice in order to persuade their intended audience. While these activities are not necessarily easy for beginner L2 writers from non-mainstream cultures, such

writing exercises can be used to help them write with strong voice. Similarly, activities related to "personalizing audience," according to Kirby et al. (2004, p. 97), can help beginning writers to adjust their writing to suit their intended audience's interests and needs. In a similar vein, activities related to "audience adaptation" (Kirby et al., 2004, p. 99) can also be used to help beginning writers practice writing with clear voice. As different audiences require different writing styles in terms of the degree of formality and word choices, activities related to audience adaptation help writers to adjust themselves to write with different voices.

While the activities related to building students' awareness about the sense of audience proposed by Kirby et al. (2004) are intended for general writers, in my view, their ideas can be adjusted to suit L2 writers' needs in relation to writing for the audience. For example, in response to L2 writers' difficulties to write to the intended audience from the U.S mainstream culture, writing teachers can provide insights about what audiences from mainstream U.S culture expect in a piece of writing. While there are certainly variations in the expectations of audience, the ideas of how to direct students to have awareness about the sense of audience in writing suggested by Kirby et al (2004) can be helpful for writing teachers including L2 writing teachers.

Additionally, since the concept of voice in writing is manifested differently in different types of writing (Hyland, 2002), writing instruction concerning the use of voice should be focused on the expectation of related disciplines where writers have to write in particular discourses and genres (Ramanathan & Akitson, 1996). While this is particularly the case of academic writing, I think increasing L2 writers' awareness about the expectations of audience in particular contexts is very important in L2 writing instruction. For example, Hyland (2002) suggests, particular disciplines such as arts and humanities have different concepts of voice from other disciplines such as physical science and engineering; therefore, teaching students to write in accordance with the disciplines they are in is more helpful than just focusing on teaching voice as an authorial voice. Helms-Park and Stapleton (2003) purport that "it may be enlightening to uncover the multiple functions of linguistic features, together with their possible

contributions to voice, in a genre-specific manner" (p, 256), indicating that voice in academic related writing may be manifested differently in different writing genres.

Additionally, Stapleton (2002) argues that focusing too much on voice may hinder L2 writers from writing a strong argument and put less concern on the content. Because of this, writing teachers need to consider the unique needs of their students. While ideally, L2 writers are knowledgeable on how to write with voice in various differing contexts, writing teachers ought to consider that it takes time for L2 writers to adjust themselves to the U.S mainstream culture. As indicated by Shen (1989) and Matsuda (2001), opting to write in accordance with the expectation of the U.S mainstream culture involves conflicting ideologies and identities for them. As a result, writing teachers need to take their process of adjustment into consideration when teaching writing to L2 writers.

In response to the problematic notion of voice for different levels of L2 writers (Helms-Park and Stapleton, 2003; Hirvela & Belcher, 2001), it is important that writing instruction related to the notion of voice is adjusted to the need of the students. For example, in the case of mature L2 writers where their problems are centered on developing their already developed sense of voice (Hirvela & Belcher, 2001), the writing instruction for these particular students' needs is certainly different from novice L2 writers. For mature writers, such as those identified as doctoral students in the study by Hirvela and Belcher (2001), for example, suitable writing instruction could direct them to transfer their writing ability to fit the intended audience of their writing. In contrast, more explicit writing instruction concerning the identification of voice in writing and how to write with strong voice can be very useful for novice L2 writers who are just beginning their undergraduate study (Helm-Park & Stapleton, 2003).

While writing instruction for mature L2 writers can be very specific to their disciplines and future writing, some strategies that Kirby et al. (2004) offer related to teaching voice can also be very useful for immature L2 writers. For example, activities related to "trying on other voice" (Kirby et al., 2004, p. 85) can be used to help students practice writing

with voice. In these activities, students can use their favorite authors' writing styles as models for them to write with voice. Even though copying someone's writing style may not be good for the development of a writers' unique voice, it can help beginning writers to have a sense of voice in writing and how expert writers put their voice into writing. Another activity that I think can be useful to practice writing with voice is "getting into another speaker activity" (Kirby et al, 2004, p. 86). In this activity, students are required to interview someone and write a monologue about his/her personality, and students learn to write with voice in order to capture the person's personality in their writing. Again, while activities offered by Kirby et al. (2004) are not specifically for L2 beginner writers, I think the activities can be modified to suit the need of L2 writers related to improving L2 writers' ability to write with clear voice.

In sum, voice in writing does matter and it is manifested in various ways. While the concept of writing with voice is important for both U.S mainstream writers and L2 writers, the notion of voice is manifested differently in L1 and L2 writing depending on the sociocultural contexts of the intended audience. For example, when writing is intended for the U.S mainstream audience, L2 writers who are not familiar with the U.S mainstream culture possibly have difficulties in meeting the expectations of their writing audience. The reverse situation may also happen. While lacking of voice in L2 writing can be a sign of weakness of L2 writers in their written language, it does not mean that L2 writers write in their L1 with no voice. Many researchers have shown that the problems with the lack of voice in L2 writing are mostly triggered by different cultural expectations and the contexts where L2 writers have to write. Therefore, it can be said that voice in writing is context bound.

In response to the challenges that L2 writers face in writing with voice, there are some implications for writing instruction to improve L2 writers' ability to write with voice. While activities taken from the book by Kirby et al. (2004) can be useful in improving L2 writers' ability to write with voice, the strategies used in teaching writing to L2 writers really depend on the characteristics of the learners and the problems they encounter. Thus, focusing only on particular activities cannot guarantee

the successfulness of writing instruction. As teaching is a reflective practice (Hillocks, 1995), having different approaches for writing instruction is certainly more important than to just follow particular strategies that have been claimed to be useful. In a similar vein, teaching voice to L2 writers should also be reflective and directed to help students improve their writing by applying a variety of possible strategies. Furthermore, since voice is one of the elements of good writing, it should be one of the primary focuses in ESL or English language learning classrooms where the students are expected to write for U.S mainstream audiences.

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Learning Vocabulary with Apps: From Theory to Practice

Qizhen Deng and Guy Trainin

Abstract: English vocabulary acquisition is a major challenge for English as a second or foreign language learners to become proficient in English. It is also a major challenge for English speakers who are at risk. With the increasing use of various mobile devices (e.g., iPad) for educational purposes we have a new opportunity to support vocabulary learning. Mobile devices have considerable potential for enhancing vocabulary acquisition and English learning among English learners. This article focuses on how mobile devices can be used to facilitate vocabulary learning for English learners. While there is a paucity of research on mobile platforms that enhance learning, we believe that a theoretical approach coupled with studies in vocabulary acquisition can point to relevant practices for all teachers and students. Based on these theories, we discuss how various mobile apps can be used to enhance vocabulary acquisition with four research-based vocabulary learning strategies: dictionary use, phonological analysis (i.e., learning words by analyzing the sound parts), morphological analysis (i.e., learning word meanings by analyzing the componential word parts), and contextual analysis (i.e., learning word meanings by referring to learning context).

Keywords*: affordance, apps, English learners, technology, vocabulary strategies, ipad, EFL, ELL, digital, learning, mobile*

Introduction

"The future is increasingly mobile, and it behooves us to reflect this in our teaching practice." (Hockly, 2013, p.83)

Vocabulary learning is an essential part of acquiring a second language as words are the building blocks of a language (Francis & Simpson, 2009; Nation, 2001). In fact, vocabulary knowledge is a major determinant

of reading comprehension and language achievement for all learners (Kieffer & Lesaux; Nagy & Scott, 2001; Nation, 2001). The awareness of the vital role of vocabulary knowledge has led to a theoretical foundation followed by empirical studies focusing on effective vocabulary acquisition in both first and second language (Hairrell, Rupley, & Simmons, 2011; Nagy & Scott, 2001). One of the major obstacles to vocabulary acquisition is the individual nature of growing one's personal lexicon through personal reading. English presents a unique challenge because of its' polyglotic origin and wealth of vocabulary. In this paper, we suggest that mobile technology integration can provide such individualized learning accessible to all.

Mobile devices with robust Internet connections have proliferated in educational use since the advent of the iPad in 2010. The new mobile device ecosystems led to the rise of thousands of free or almost free applications (apps), which refer to compute programs designed to run exclusively on mobile devices. For instance, more than 775,000 apps were available as of January 2013 (Pure Oxygen Labs, 2013) that have the potential to help learners individualize immediate learning in ways that have never happened before. For example, empirical studies reported that iPad apps support the development of speaking, reading, and writing skills (Harmon, 2012; Lys, 2013; McClanahan, Williams, Kennedy, & Tate, 2012) and the enhancement of learning motivation (Kinash, Brand, & Mathew, 2012). Along with the potential, however, the burden of selecting apps that can actually support learning can bring confusion to students and teachers. In this paper we present the rationale for selecting apps that support vocabulary learning and select some examples that enhance such learning. We believe that many apps can afford innovative opportunities for vocabulary learning, not always the ones that are labeled for vocabulary learning; nevertheless, theory from the field of vocabulary acquisition research combined with affordances of the technology must be used to determine which apps have the potential to impact vocabulary acquisition among English learners.

This article is a preliminary attempt to identify and describe theory-based vocabulary learning mobile apps that will support English vocabulary acquisition in and out of the classroom. In addition, we

describe how the apps can be optimally used to enhance vocabulary learning with the guidance of four research-based vocabulary learning strategies.

Literature Review

Incidental and Intentional Learning

Incidental vocabulary learning refers to acquiring new words from various contexts without explicit instruction (Schmidt, 1994). The learning is incremental as learners use accumulated occurrences and contexts to form a more complete sense of word meanings. There is a consensus among researchers that once basic proficiency is established, most vocabulary is learned incidentally through reading and digital media and that fewer words are learned through intentional instruction. The sheer size of the vocabulary learning task (English has 400,000-600,000 words) leads to the realization that most words learned are a byproduct of authentic reading, listening, speaking, and writing activities (Hulstijin, 2001; Nagy & Herman, 1987; Schmitt, 2008; Shu, Anderson, & Zhang, 1995). Even for English learners, the number of words acquired by learners for proficient language use is greater than those that are explicitly taught in the classroom (Hirsh & Nation, 1992). In all likelihood, language instructors are able to teach only a small fraction of expected words in class and the rest need to be learned through exposure to language experiences outside the classroom.

Incidental vocabulary learning is highly individualized and depends on the language opportunities that individuals engage with. These experiences with language have been transformed in the digital age with increased access to print, audio, and multimedia products in English across the world. English learners today have access to a rich array of literary texts (e.g. project Gutenberg), personal texts (e.g. blogs), free access to news in English (e.g. CNN, BBC), and access to movies and video in English (e.g. YouTube). These new opportunities increase the chances to learn

English from varied and often authentic materials. These increased opportunities allow learners to follow their own interests but at the same time make vocabulary learning highly individualized. As a result, teachers that want to support these new opportunities must include a strategic approach to learning new vocabulary.

Intentional vocabulary learning, on the other hand, involves any activities aimed directly at acquiring new words by committing lexical information to memory, such as referring to a dictionary to learning a list of new words in a matching activity (Hulstijin, 2001). Intentional vocabulary learning is a must for a better chance of retention and mastery of specific vocabulary, with incidental learning being complementary (Laufer, 2005). Research has shown that both incidental and intentional learning are necessary for academic success.

Affordances of Mobile Devices

The concept of affordance was originally introduced by Gibson (1977) to explain the connection between perceiving and knowing. Gibson (1977) defined affordances as all "action possibilities" latent in the environment, independent of an individual's ability to recognize them. Later, Norman (1988) revised the definition of affordance in the context of human-machine interaction as "the perceived and actual properties of the thing, primarily those fundamental properties that determine just how the thing could possibly be used" (p. 9). For instance, a chair affords support and, therefore, affords sitting; it also affords stepping on to reach something. Likewise, mobile devices afford multiple modes of interaction (touch, voice, sight, sound) and a vast array of apps that can be used in multiple ways including learning. We claim that these affordances provide opportunities for students to learn vocabulary through multimodal interaction with apps.

With the understanding that technology can provide learning affordances (Norman, 1988), Klopfer and Squire (2008) discussed five advancements including: (1) *portability*—mobile devices can be easily carried and used anywhere, (2) *social interactivity*—mobile devices can be

used for collaborative work, (3) *context sensitivity*—mobile devices affords authentic contexts, (4) *connectivity*— mobile devices are connected to other devices through an array of local and cellular networks, and (5) *individualizing instruction*—apps on personal devices can provide user-specific scaffolding based on individual preferences and personal learning progress. These qualities open new opportunities for individualized learning and practice. There is a fit between the affordances of mobile devices and the needs of vocabulary learners. However, the acknowledgement of a fit is not enough; instructors must scaffold the use of mobile devices in order for language learners to maximize the benefits.

Affordances of Mobile Devices for Vocabulary Learning

Affordances can explain how students interact and learn with mobile devices during vocabulary learning. Learning with devices is at times different from the traditional vocabulary learning strategies and at other times complements or enhances such strategies. In order to learn with a mobile device, both students and teachers must first perceive the device as a learning tool. Many instructors and students view mobile devices as primarily social devices (in the case of phones) or gaming devices (in the case of iPads). For students to realize the affordances of mobile devices, they need to see its' potential to assist learning. Take the *Dictionary.com* app for example, learners must be familiar with it to know it provides a recording of a word that one can hear what it sounds like. The learner must also be aware of its function an English dictionary and thesaurus app that provides trusted definitions and origins with examples as well as smart control of learned vocabulary.

Clark (2013) conducted a experimental study to examine the effect of using one iPad application (i.e., *Vocabulary Builder*) on the vocabulary acquisition of elementary English learners. The control group completed a teacher-created worksheet whereas the experiment group used the iPad app. Results suggested the iPad app can support vocabulary acquisition. The visual and audio exposure provided by the iPad app increased vocabulary acquisition as English learners were both visually exposed by

graphics and auditorily stimulated by the sounds of words. Students who used iPad also showed a higher level of engagement and motivation in acquiring vocabulary. Similarly, Wang et al. (2015) investigated the effect of iPad apps on vocabulary acquisition and motivation of English learners at college level. Students in experimental group learned English vocabulary through the *Learn British English WordPower* app whereas students in control group learned English vocabulary through the semantic-map method. The authors suggested students using the iPad app performed better in vocabulary knowledge and reported higher engagement and motivation to learn vocabulary than those students in control group.

The use of mobile devices affords authentic and rich context for incidental and intentional vocabulary learning. For beginner students, teachers can choose apps that focus on constructive learning activities for individualized practice, such as using the app *Dragon Dictation* for pronunciation practice and *index card* apps for spelling practice. Advanced learners can not only use various dictionary apps to learn word meanings, but also acquire new words incidentally through listening to authentic stories or reading timely news report for content knowledge (e.g., the apps of *NPR News*, *This American Life, OverDrive*). A list of sample apps across platforms and their correspondent vocabulary learning strategies are presented in Table 1.

Vocabulary Learning Strategies and Related Apps

In this section we juxtapose research-validated approaches to vocabulary learning with the affordances of mobile apps.

Table 1

Apps Availability on Tablet Platforms and Related Vocabulary Leanings Strategies

Apps	Tablet Platforms				Vocabulary Learning Strategies			
	iOS	Android	Surface App	Web Based	Dictionary Use	Phonological Analysis	Morphological Analysis	Contextual Analysis
Merriam-Webster Dictionary	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Dictionary.com	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
The Free Dictionary	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Dragon Dictation	X	X	X[1]			X		
Hearbuilder Phonological Awareness	X					X		
Vocabulary practice: Greek and Latin	X						X	
Roots to Words	X						X	
Tangled Roots	X						X	
USA TODAY	X	X	X	X			X	X
NPR News	X	X	X	X			X	X
Kindle	X	X	X				X	X

Note. [1] All apps are free except the price for Dragon Diction on Surface platform is $19.99.

Dictionary use

According to Nation (2001), dictionaries serve three purposes: 1) comprehension – look up unknown words or confirm word deduced from context during listening, reading, or translating; 2) production – look up unknown words or word parts needed for speaking, writing, and translating; 3) learning – enrich knowledge of known words, such as etymology or different contextual usages.

Paul Nation (2001) also suggests that advanced English learners use dictionaries very well in receptive and productive ways (see also Jian, Sandnes, Law, & Huang, 2009). In receptive ways, learners are able to get information from the context where the word occurs, choose the right entry or sub-entry, relate the meaning to the context, and decide if it fits. In productive ways, they are able to find the wanted word forms, check that there are no unwanted constraints on the use of the word, work out the grammar and collocations of the word, and check the spelling or pronunciation of the word before using it. Empirical research confirms the importance of dictionary use by indicating that learners with a dictionary learned more words in both immediate and delayed tests than those without access to a dictionary (Macaro, 2005; Nist & Olejnik, 1995).

Before the proliferation of online dictionaries some researchers discouraged the practice of dictionary use and encouraged more contextual analysis to uncover the meaning of unknown words (Nesi & Haill, 2002). They advise students to use the dictionary as a tool of last resort, because looking up words creates a cognitive load that frequently interferes with short-term memory disrupting the process of reading comprehension. Many English as a foreign-language learners, however, rely heavily on dictionary use when they face new words while reading. This is because students find it hard to learn new words since they lack the large amount of comprehensible input needed to learn a word implicitly (Nagy & Herman, 1987). In addition, the meaning of new words cannot always be uncovered through contextual clues (Gonzalez & Gonzales, 1999; Laufer, 2003). In this case, it is crucial for English learners to resort to dictionary themselves.

Digital dictionaries solve the problem of cognitive load, allowing students to quickly and efficiently find a definition, etymology, use example and even audio of pronunciation. In some apps (e.g., *Kindle, iBooks*) the access occurs with a single touch of a finger over the word without even needing to lift the eyes away from the reading text. Taken together, digital dictionary use combines robust information (old affordance) with ease of access (digital affordance), a promising strategy for both incidental and intentional vocabulary learning.

Mobile Apps for Dictionary Use

Three popular and free English-English dictionaries are readily used: *Dictionary.com*, *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, and *The Free Dictionary*. All three apps provide an English dictionary and thesaurus with extensive definitions, pronunciations, and etymologies; all three apps feature fresh daily contents (e.g., Word of the Day, News of the Day), and word origin. In addition, the app of *Dictionary.com* features voice search, multiple specialty dictionaries, audio pronunciations, and favorite words. *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* also provides voice search, example sentences, and audio pronunciation. *The Free Dictionary* features advanced search options, multiple encyclopedias, multiple specialty dictionaries, American and British audio pronunciations, plus the possibility of creating unlimited bookmarks of favorite words and encyclopedia entries, playing games, and sharing via social networks.

These dictionary apps afford learners the choices to look up definitions, pronunciations, etymology and synonyms or antonyms of words. If learners encounter unknown words when they are listening or reading for comprehension, they can look up the words or confirm guessed word meanings by referring to any of the dictionary apps at hand. In addition, they can check the etymology, pronunciations, or example sentences to facilitate reading comprehension. This is especially useful when many of the unknown words cannot be guessed through contextual clues (Nagy & Herman, 1987). *The Free Dictionary* also allows learners to enrich their understanding of word meanings at a deeper level by referring to authentic

sample sentences. These sample sentences are from the "reference" function that lists any available examples of how the words or phrases are used in works of classical literature as well as encyclopedia and Wikipedia. The full text of the relevant work is accessible by just clicking "view in context". If we want learners to write and communicate in English, these dictionaries afford them a handy accessory to find wanted words with appropriate use in terms of context and grammatical forms. An example activity for second language learners is to compare the usage of these synonymous words: *dictate, decree, ordain, prescribe,* and *impose*, in order to decide which word to use for the context of "a certain country *imposes* a fine for text messaging while driving". These electronic dictionaries also save users time compared to traditional dictionaries and, more importantly, save working-memory for comprehension processing rather than being disrupted by taking much time finding words in traditional dictionaries. In fact, both authors of this paper are English learners (albeit somewhat veteran) and still rely on the *Dictionary.com* app quite often.

Phonological Analysis

Phonological analysis in vocabulary learning refers to the translation of the graphemes in a word broken down into a sequence of sounds or phonemes (De Jong, Seveke, & Van Veen, 2000). When reading new words, students with high phonological sensitivity are more likely to store unfamiliar sound patterns in long-term memory (Baddeley, Gathercole, & Papagno, 1998; De Jong et al., 2000). The concept of the phonological loop supports the importance of phonological analysis as a vocabulary learning strategy (Walter, 2008). Phonological loop is part of information processing, and consists of two parts: a short-term phonological store and an articulatory rehearsal component (Baddeley, 1986). The short-term phonological store has auditory memory traces that are subject to decay over short periods of time, while the articulatory rehearsal component can reactivate the memory traces. Unfamiliar sound patterns of the words are encoded and decoded from long-term memory through phonological loop

in working memory (Baddeley et al., 1998). In a word, phonological analysis is an important strategy for English learners to strengthen their knowledge of sound patterns of new words and subsequently facilitate the storage of new words in long-term memory.

English learners have a considerable task encoding and decoding sounds in English. This difficulty is two fold. The first difficulty is that sound systems are not common in all languages. As a result learners of a new language are unaccustomed to the phonology of the new language and often cannot hear or produce some of the sounds clearly. For example speakers of Hebrew are not familiar with the /th/ sound. The second difficulty arises from the fact that English has a deep orthography and similar graphemes can be read differently in different words (e.g. gh in rough and dough), while different graphemes can have the same sound (e.g. rough and ruff). Access to mobile apps can allow learners to test or acquire new knowledge in an individualized way- increasing the odds that encoding of phonological information in long term memory will happen- and thus the personal lexicon will grow.

Mobile Apps for Phonological Analysis

We introduce five free apps for vocabulary learning using the strategy of phonological analysis: *Hearbuilder Phonological Awareness*, *Dragon Dictation*, as well as three dictionary apps including *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, *The Free Dictionary,* and *Dictionary.com* that were previously introduced. When facing a new word, learners can use these dictionaries to examine its pronunciation and listen to the sound in conventional English. These apps provide morpheme-grapheme correspondence, which helps students learn through articulatory rehearsal that reactivates the auditory memory traces. These traces lead to storage in long-term memory (Baddeley et al., 1998).

The app *Hearbuilder Phonological Awareness* offers activities to improve phonological awareness, such as segmenting or blending syllables and phonemes. It features a multi-level program with gradually increased difficulty. This app can be used either by learners to improve phonological

awareness with frequent built-in feedbacks or by teachers to teach or monitor students at all levels of phonological knowledge.

The app *Dragon Dictation* features voice-to-text transcriptions with convenient editing functions that provide a list of suggested words or phrases. The transcriptions can be saved or sent to other apps (e.g., message, email, Facebook, Twitter). English learners can use this app as a tool to practice and check their oral pronunciations by transcribing conversational voice to text. If the pronunciation or spoken language is not transcribed correctly, learners can refer to the feedback and transcribe the same content again to monitor the progress of oral pronunciations. Learners can save the transcription or send it to other platforms (e.g., Email or blogs) to record their learning process.

Morphological Analysis

In linguistics, a morpheme refers to a meaningful word part that cannot be divided into smaller meaningful parts (Aronoff & Fudeman, 2011). A morpheme may consist of a word, such as *land*, or a meaningful part of a word, such as *multi-*, *facet*, and *-ed* in the word *multifaceted*. Morphological analysis involves using morphological cues to break down a word in order to understand the meaning (Tong, Deacon, Kirby, Cain, & Parrila, 2011). The strategies of morphology analysis include detecting relationships between words from the same word family, breaking words into smaller meaningful parts, or detecting the grammatical role of a word from syntactic context (Nagy & Scott, 2001; Tong, et al., 2011). Morphological analysis emphasizes the awareness of the morphemic structure of words as well as the "ability to reflect on and manipulate the structure" (Carlisle, 1995, p. 194). It emphasizes active learning, which is a step beyond the concept of morphological awareness.

The value of morphological analysis lies in the fact that many unknown words can be learned through examining the morphemic parts, such as prefixes, suffixes, compounds, and word roots (Carlisle, 1995; Nagy & Scott, 2001; Nation, 2001). Morphological analysis explains in part the

rapid vocabulary growth observed in skilled first and second language English learners (Graves, 2009). Accumulated evidence shows students learn vocabulary faster when they can generalize morphological knowledge to derive and learn the meaning of new words (Goodwin & Ahn, 2010; Kieffer & Box, 2013). Nagy and Anderson (1984) estimated that for every word known by a learner, another one to three words are understandable by learners through morphological analysis.

French, Latin, and Greek roots are found to account for a large portion of English words. Nagy and Anderson (1984) reported that over 30% of written words have either inflected or derivational affixes and that the majority of these words are predictable based on the meanings of their word roots. Of the recently developed Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000), more than 82% of the entries are of Greek or Latin origin. Because of the dominance of Latin and Greek roots in English vocabulary, being familiar with common word roots provides a useful basis for English learners to use the strategy of morphological analysis when dealing with morphologically complex words. This basis will further facilitate increasing the vocabulary size of learners. Indeed, students with better morphologic knowledge are able to recognize more words in reading contexts and, in general, are more accomplished in reading comprehension (Carlisle, 1995; Kieffer & Lesaux, 2012; Nagy, Berninger, & Abbott, 2006). Speakers of Romanesque (Latin based) languages such as Spanish or French can use the parallel root system (cognates) to quickly acquire meanings for morphological families.

Mobile Apps for Morphological Analysis

We provide three examples of mobile apps for students to enhance morphological knowledge: *Tangled Roots*, *Vocabulary Practice: Greek and Latin*, and *Roots to Words*. The app *Tangled Roots* presents a root, prefix, or suffix along with its meaning and the number of common American English words that are derived from it. Over six hundred of word roots and affixes are included in this app. The learner must guess and recall as many derived words as possible to finish the task. If the learner cannot

recall, he or she can check the answer to learn what the list of words are that share the same root or affix. The second app, *Vocabulary Practice: Greek and Latin*, is a game that allows learners to practice the questions on over 250 Greek and Latin roots that are embedded in either words or sentences. This app features smart learning with progressively harder levels. Learners earn points as they learn, which motivate the learning. The app *Roots to Words* provides several focused tasks for learners to explicitly learn the meanings of word roots, build up new words by using various morphemes, and practice morphological knowledge through engaging games. Word roots are divided into fifteen categories to facilitate learning (e.g., numbers, quantity, shapes). This app helps students understand how words are made up of root(s) as well as significantly increase the foundational knowledge of English word roots. Based on specific student need and learning objectives, teachers might use the apps in classroom to teach word roots of various categories or to increase students' awareness of metacognitive morphological knowledge in English through engaging individualized practices outside of classroom.

These apps are excellent for English as a foreign language learners to systematically evaluate and increase their morphological knowledge about most of the common American English words to prepare vocabulary for tests such as the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) or GRE (Graduate Record Examinations). These apps can also be used by K-12 teachers in the classroom to instruct and evaluate morphological knowledge of English learners at different proficiency levels.

Besides the three apps mentioned above, we emphasize on intentional vocabulary learning through morphological analysis by using a dictionary source, such as the three dictionary apps discussed above (i.e., *Dicitonary.com*, *The Free Dictionary*, and *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*). We recommend learners to pay close attention to word origin or history when they look up unknown words through the dictionary apps. For instance, the origin of the word "zoology" comes from Greek to Latin (*Zoologia)* to English (zoo- + - logie/-logy). Further examination indicates that the morpheme zoo- means *living being* or *animal*. At this point, learners can break down the word, *zoology*, into two morphemes. This

knowledge of the internal structure of words allows students to understand new words that share the morpheme, for example, *zoologist* and *zoometry*. If students see an unfamiliar word (e.g., *zooplankton*) in reading context, they are likely to guess this word has something to do with the word root *zoo-*. To sum up, the merit of emphasizing word origins is that learning word roots will not only enlarge the breadth of vocabulary size but also the depth of vocabulary knowledge (Graves, 2009; Nagy & Scott, 2001).

With metacognitive morphological knowledge, English learners can learn unknown or unfamiliar words that are morphologically complex by using the strategy of morphological analysis while reading through various apps (e.g., *USA TODAY*, *NPR News*, *iBooks*, and *Kindle*). These apps provide a large amount of authentic reading contexts for English learners to enlarge their content knowledge (Klopfer & Squire, 2005). In addition, English learners are likely to pick up new vocabulary and technical terms that are morphologically complex, which becomes an incidental by-product because learners' primary objective is to read (Laufer, 2003; Shu, Anderson, & Zhang, 1995).

Contextual Analysis

Students use context clues to understand word meanings by scrutinizing surrounding text, including preceding or succeeding phrases and sentences that provide syntactic and semantic cues (Nagy & Scott, 2001). Contextual analysis is not always effective in the natural reading context in the short run. Some researchers (Nagy et al., 1987; Nagy & Scott, 2001; Schatz & Baldwin, 1986) pointed out that it is rare to learn a low-frequency word from a single encounter in a natural occurring context. Nevertheless, the use of context clues has been shown to improve learners' ability to infer vocabulary meanings of uninstructed words and performance in reading comprehension (Nagy & Scott, 2001). Contextual analysis helps vocabulary learning in reading (Nagy & Scott, 2001), especially when students are

exposed to a considerable amount of written texts, as what commonly happens in college (Nagy et al., 2006; Nist & Olejnik, 1995). The types of common context clues include: 1) a direct definition of an unfamiliar word provided by author, 2) an appositive definition of an unfamiliar word where the new word is defined by a word or phrase that comes before the new word, 3) synonym or antonym of an unfamiliar word, 4) examples of an unfamiliar word, and 5) nonspecific clues to the meaning of an unfamiliar word that often spread over several sentences (Diamond, & Gutlohn, 2006).

Mobile Apps for Contextual Analysis

We discuss a sample of three apps (e.g., *USA TODAY* , *NPR News*, and *Kindle*) that can assist practicing vocabulary learning through contextual analysis. The app *USA TODAY* provides the latest news in a simple and clear interface with the option of "list" or "grid" headlines view. It features eight topics such as latest news in various content areas with a weather forecast grid, sports news and scores, latest technology updates, and travel information. What's more, it allows users to customize the panel to fit their interests and save stories for later access. The app *NPR News* presents a mix of audio, text, and images, which provides broad and timely content through various programs such as Arts & Life, All Things Considered, and Fresh Air. For these two apps, language learners can read or listen to hundreds of authentic and informative stories. Whenever language learners see unfamiliar words, they could focus on the text and detect context clues for possible meanings. An example sentence is "After a week at CES – I'm totally ragged. Twenty-hour work days, combined with Las Vegas – and I look and feel like I've aged about ten years" (Jolly, 2014). If a reader does not know the word "ragged", the reader can examine closely the preceding and following sentences indicating its definition and explanation and, probably, will guess the word "ragged" might mean "very tired" or "worn out" (Diamond & Gutlohn, 2006).

The app *Kindle* affords an easy-to-use interface for reading books. Users have access to over a million books in the *Kindle* store plus hundreds

of newspapers and magazines, through which they can get certain free books or free samples. Amazon automatically syncs the last activity of users, so that users can pick up the reading where they left off on any linked device. Users can customize their own reading experience by choosing margin size, line spacing, background color, font size and style, and portrait or landscape format. When language learners read, they can easily highlight a word for definition through dictionary; they can revisit a different chapter or section by using the "go to" function. After reading, they can use the Notebook to review bookmarks, highlights, and notes. When reading, if a new or unfamiliar word influences learners' comprehension, they can use context clues to guess the word's function or meaning. If learners decide an unfamiliar word is important for learning, they can even highlight the new word or the sentence(s) that include this word. When the contextual sentence(s) are crucial for understanding the word, it is useful for learners to highlight the sentence(s) and, later, review the word that is embedded in the sentence(s).

Conclusion

The primary impetus for this article has been our observation that, although existing research shows much evidence that the use of mobile devices (especially iPads) has been increasingly used in educational settings and was found prominent to help users to become more effective learners, new apps often bring uncertainty to students and teachers of English learners as to how to use it to support language development. As Blanchard and Farstrup (2011) observed, teachers are struggling to keep pace with the speed of technological development and demand. Nevertheless, learners and educators should endeavor to explore and integrate new technology into teaching and learning, rather than sitting on the sidelines and watching as educational technology changes. We believe that the discussion of this article is beneficial for language learners and teachers to have a glimpse of the opportunities for vocabulary learning that comes with the affordances of the iPad and mobile technology in general.

Implications for Educators

Educators working with English learners are concerned with students acquiring vocabulary efficiently and quickly. The use of mobile devices that are often already in the hands of students can foster deep and individualized vocabulary learning that attends to surface and strategic approaches to increasing students' active lexicon. The affordances of mobile devices and the apps that can be used on them are not automatic. For students to maximize the affordances, educators must understand the theories and guidelines in content knowledge, the affordances of apps on mobile devices, and how to guide students through ways to actively engage in learning. Educators must start with modeling effective use of the apps and the metacognition that must occur for the learning to transfer beyond the classroom and beyond the specific words learnt.

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Educational Language Planning and Policy in Nebraska: An Historical Overview

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Abstract: Historically, educational language policies have been utilized in order to eradicate, subjugate, and marginalize certain language varieties. Therefore, they have become "instruments of power that influence access to educational and economic resources" (Johnson, 2013, p. 54). More recently, educational language policies have also been used to "develop, maintain, and promote" minoritized languages (p. 54). The role of language policy and planning within educational settings, therefore, should be critically examined. This manuscript features two key components. First, the term language planning and policy will be (re)conceptualized as both a field of inquiry and a social practice involving three core activities (i.e., status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning). Next, these concepts will be applied to one context, educational language policies within the state of Nebraska. The historical sociopolitical context of anti-German sentiment will be revealed, featuring a vignette about one German immigrant's story in particular. Then, Nebraska's implementation of an English-Only law in 1919 will be discussed, as well as the subsequent Federal Supreme Court Case *Meyer v. Nebraska* in 1923. Finally, current trends regarding Indigenous, colonial and immigrant heritage languages will be explored, accompanied by a reflection on areas for future research.

Key Words: *language planning and policy, Nebraska schools, Meyer v. Nebraska, minoritized languages*

Introduction

There continues to be a dichotomy within the discourse on linguistic diversity in the U.S., with supporters for English-Only in schools on the one hand and advocates who wish to embrace multilingualism on the other (Ovando, 2003). Nebraska is one state where this contentious issue has played a large role several times throughout history. This manuscript is organized into two key components. First, the term language planning and policy will be (re)conceptualized as both a field of inquiry and a social practice involving three core activities (i.e., status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning). Next, these concepts will be applied to one specific context, Nebraska's educational language policies. The historical sociopolitical context of anti-German sentiment will be revealed, featuring a vignette about one German immigrant's lived experience. Then, Nebraska's implementation of an English-Only law in 1919, as well as the subsequent U.S. Supreme Court Case *Meyer v. Nebraska* in 1923, will be discussed. Finally, current trends regarding Indigenous, colonial and immigrant heritage languages will be explored, accompanied by a reflection on areas for future research.

Language Planning and Policy: In Search of a Definition

To better understand the concept of language planning and policy, it is critical to review the definitions that have already been developed. Einer Haugen (1959) was the first to introduce the term *language planning* into the scholarly literature, though he also gives credit to Uriel Weinrich who initially used the term during a 1957 seminar at Columbia University (1965, p. 188). In its first appearance in publication, Haugen defined language planning as *"the activity of preparing a normative orthography, grammar, and dictionary for the guidance of writers and speakers in a non-homogenous speech community"* (1959, p. 8). Later, Haugen perceived these activities as the direct outcomes of language planners (Haugen, 1966), assuming a causal relationship between language

planning and language policies. However, Spolsky (2012) offered the analogy, "…just as speed limits do not guarantee that all cars abide by them, so a language law does not guarantee observance" (Spolsky, 2012, p. 5). There may exist unofficial, covert, de facto and implicit mechanisms that circumvent the official policy in place. In addition, the proceeding definition describes language planning as an activity, a noun, which has a beginning and an end. It does not take into account that language planning is a process. Further, this definition of language planning depicts it as occurring individually without considering the codependent nature of language planning and policy.

After reviewing and critiquing a series of twelve definitions of language policy, Cooper (1989) offered his own: *"Language planning refers to deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes"* (p. 45). Others before him had considered it as a mechanism for problem-solving, which he critiqued as misleading by deflecting attention from the underlying motivation. Instead, he argued that language planning should be conceptualized as the "efforts to influence language behavior" (p. 35). His use of the term 'influence' rather than 'change' illustrates how Cooper (1989) considered multiple outcomes of language planning, including the preservation or maintenance of current practices. However, it is worth noting that not all policies are intentional or carefully planned (Johnson, 2013), as Cooper's inclusion of "deliberate efforts" suggests. Even when a language policy hasn't been established formally by authority, it may be inferred through the ideologies, linguistic practices and beliefs of the people. Therefore, one might critique Haugen's (1969) and Cooper's (1989) definitions as insufficient, since there is no definitive causal relationship between policy and outcome, nor is the cohesive nature of language planning and language policy mentioned.

In 1991, Tollefson combined the terms *language planning and policy* (LPP) and critically conceptualized it as the *"institutionalization of language as a basis for distinctions among social groups (classes). That is, language policy is one mechanism for locating language within social structure so that language determines who has access to political power*

and economic resources. Language policy is one mechanism by which dominant groups establish hegemony in language use" (p. 16). Through the explicit mention of power in the role of language policy, Tollefson (1991) emphasizes how language policies (re)create systems of inequality. This system of linguistic oppression is referred to as *linguicism*, or the "ideologies, structures and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources (material and immaterial) between groups which are defined on the basis of language" (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996, p. 437). In a later publication, Tollefson (2013b) also understood the capability of language policies in "resisting systems of inequality" (p. 27), thereby acknowledging the role of agency as well as the fact that not all policies are made by authoritative bodies. This is supported by others who have documented a series of bottom-up movements and grassroots organizations (Johnson, 2013; McCarty, 2011a; Menken & García, 2010).

The term was reconceptualized in 2011, when Teresa McCarty characterized language policy as *"a complex sociocultural process: modes of human interaction, negotiation, and production mediated by relations of power. The 'policy' in these processes resides in their language-regulating power; that is, the ways in which they express normative claims about legitimate and illegitimate language forms and uses, thereby governing language statuses and uses"* (2011b, p. 8). In this definition, McCarty brings awareness to the complexity of language policy as a sociocultural process and how it is situated within a specific context. Here, language policy is recognized as something which is "processual, dynamic and in motion" (p. 2). Citing Heath, Street and Mill's (2008) discussion of "culture as a verb", McCarty (2011b) agrees that policy too is best understood as a verb; policy "never just 'is,' but rather 'does'" (Levinson, Sutton & Winstead, 2009, p. 771).

Language ideologies, or the significant values assigned to particular language varieties by members of the speech community (Gal & Irvine, 1995; see also Silverstein, 1979; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994), are mentioned here through the social construction of deeming language forms

and uses as legitimate and illegitimate. This linguistic hierarchy is influenced by orientations to language (i.e., language as a problem, language as a right, language as a resource, language as a commodity) (Ricento, 2005; Ruiz, 1984). In addition, McCarty (2011) uses the phrases 'negotiation' and 'mediated by relations of power', evoking the agency of multiple actors in the multi-layered language policy process. McCarty's definition mentions the concept of language policy overtly and only discusses the planning processes implicitly, rather than considering the holistic combination of language planning and policy.

To further understand the complexity of language policies, Johnson (2013) organized a table examining where the policy originates, how the means and goals are expressed, if the policy is documented, and whether it is policy by law or through practice (See Appendix A). Johnson (2013) further encompasses all of the complexities mentioned in this table through the following definition: *"A language policy is a policy mechanism that impacts the structure, function, use, or acquisition of language and includes:*

(1) *Official regulations- often enacted in the form of written documents, intended to effect some change in the form, function, use, or acquisition of language- which can influence economic, political and educational opportunity;*
(2) *Unofficial, covert, de facto, and implicit mechanisms, connected to language beliefs and practices, that have regulating powers over language use and interaction within communities, workplaces, and schools;*
(3) *Not just products but processes- "policy" as a verb, not a noun- that are driving by a diversity of language policy agents across multiple layers of policy creation, interpretation, appropriation and instantiation;*
(4) *Policy texts and discourses across multiple contexts and layers of policy activity, which are influenced by the ideologies and discourses unique to that context"* (Johnson, 2013, p. 9).

One conceptual distinction that he makes is between the terms appropriation and implementation. The author critiques the use of the term *implementation* as it conceptualizes a top-down process, only following the intentions of policymakers. This perspective fails to acknowledge any bottom-up policy formation. Johnson (2013) argues that the term implementation creates the assumption that "… the intentions of the policymakers are knowable, and renders powerless those who are meant to put the policy into action since they are portrayed simply as 'implementers' of a policy over which they have no control" (p. 96). Therefore, he draws on the work of Levinson and Sutton (2001) who introduced the term *appropriation* to emphasize the important role of multiple actors across a variety of contexts appropriate the meanings of the policy.

Like McCarty (2011b), Johnson (2013) also discusses the multiple layers involved in the LPP process. This perspective is similar to the argument posed by Ricento and Hornberger (1996), who introduced the metaphor of an onion to elicit an understanding of the multiple layers through which language policy develops. Expanding on this onion metaphor, Hornberger and Johnson (2007) purported that the "choices of educators may well be constrained by language policies, which tend to set boundaries on what is allowed and/or what is considered 'normal', but the line of power does not flow linearly from the pen of the policy's signer to the choices of the teacher" (as cited in Johnson, 2013, p. 97). Negotiation takes place at each institutional level, leaving opportunities for reinterpretations and reconstruction of how policy is performed.

While Johnson (2013) offers a comprehensive list of what LPP entails, the explicit mention of power is missing. In addition, he simplifies his definition to language policy, rather than encompassing the more comprehensive term of LPP. He does mention, however, that he adopted the term language policy within his book for terminological simplicity, and because there is an "assumption that some agent(s) make a plan intended to influence language forms or functions" (p. 3).

Based on the critique of the previous five definitions, I offer my own reconceptualization.

Language planning and policy (LPP): the complex sociocultural processes which influence the function, use, structure, and/or acquisition of language varieties.

This encompasses all three core LPP activities (i.e. status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning) through a variety of ways: top-down and bottom-up, overt and covert, explicit and implicit, as well as de jure and de facto. Policies here are considered a verb, thereby involving the agency of multiple actors at multiple levels through the creation, interpretation, appropriation and instantiation processes. And, to reiterate the significance of linguicism as a system of oppression across societies, it is important to note the role LPP plays as a mechanism for dominant groups to establish a hegemonic language hierarchy, as well as a system through which agency can allow an individual/group to break away from these hegemonic structures. This is further supported by the use of the term 'language varieties', which removes any language as the ideal standard with other dialects subordinate to it.

Three LPP Activities

In addition to formulating a working definition of LPP, it is also important to examine the three core types of language planning activities: status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning (Cooper, 1989; Johnson, 2013; Kloss, 1969). One can consider *status planning* as the allocated functions of languages/literacies within a speech community (Cooper, 1989; Hornberger, 2006). Drawing on the work of Stewart (1968), Cooper (1989) discussed a list of ten functions that serve as targets for status planning:

(1)	Official	(6)	Group
(2)	Provincial	(7)	Educational
(3)	"Wider" communication	(8)	School Subject
(4)	International	(9)	Literary
(5)	Capital	(10)	Religious

Status planning impacts each of these targets in a slightly different manner. Officialization, for example, extends beyond where governing bodies simply declare languages as 'official' by nationwide law. That is, in addition to statutory functions, officialization may also serve working and symbolic language purposes. As Cooper (1989) points out, "[m]any countries, including [...] the United States, have no statutory official language" (p. 101); however, English serves as the *de facto* symbolic and working official language of this country. That is, Cooper recognizes that a language may be considered official in any or all of these ways.

Another example is within the schooling system, in which there are two primary targets: educational and school subject. The educational function of language concerns the medium of instruction (i.e. the primary language in which students receive instruction); whereas, the school subject regards the teaching and learning of an additional language as a subject within school. In comparing these two functional targets, Cooper (1989) notes that "[w]hile political pressure is far less likely to be exerted for or against the teaching of a language as a subject, as compared to its use as a medium of instruction, educational policy-makers are often sensitive to the demands of parents and students with respect to which languages should be taught as subjects" (p. 114). The extent to which students develop literacy in the additional language at school depends not solely on this status planning (e.g., medium of instruction or school subject), but also on the length, quality and depth of instruction.

It is important to note that in principal, status planning can focus on any of these aforementioned communicative functions; however, it seems to be much different in practice. Cooper (1989) recognized the practical role of status planning in tending to "aim at those functions which enable elites to maintain or extend their power, or which give counterelites an opportunity to seize power for themselves" (p. 120). That is to say, status planning is typically invoked when elites feel threatened or the counterelites (i.e. the oppressed) express their desires for change.

Whereas status planning pertains to the functions of a language, corpus planning deals with the form in which it is to be employed. *Corpus*

planning includes the efforts directed towards the adequacy of the structure of linguistic norms and forms (Cooper, 1989; Hornberger, 2006; Kloss, 1969; McCarty & Warhol, 2011). Examples of this include:

- Graphization: creating or adapting a writing system;
- Standardization: establishing a norm which overrides regional and social varieties (which includes codification, or the explicit written rules of norms);
- Modernization: developing intertranslatability with other languages in order to become an appropriate medium for modern topics and forms of discourse; and
- Renovation: making efforts to change an already developed code, which may reflect perceived efficiency, aesthetics or national and political ideologies.

Eliciting the notion of power once again, language hierarchies may develop through the process of standardization. Within this corpus planning activity, Milroy and Milroy (1985) explain that the term "ideology of standardization" promotes the perception that there is in fact "a correct way of using the language and that all people *ought* to use it this way" (as cited in Cooper, 1989, emphasis in the original). Schools assist in the (re)production of this social structure, as do those who accept the model as ideal but are not able to use it in the 'correct' manner. This has the potential to legitimize one's own subordination. Elites, on the other hand, view this ideal standard as "evidence of their superiority" (Kroch, 1978), justifying their position of privilege.

Stemming from these aforementioned LPP activities is *acquisition planning,* which encompasses the efforts to influence the distribution of language varieties and the allocation of its users (Cooper, 1989; Hornberger, 2006; Johnson, 2013; McCarty & Warhol, 2011). With regard to the distribution of language, acquisition planning usually considers three overt goals: (1) acquisition of the additional language; (2) reacquisition of the language by populations for whom it was once either a vernacular or

of specialized function; and (3) language maintenance for the next generation. There are three methods employed to attain these goals: opportunity, incentive, or simultaneous opportunity and incentive.

In sum, the LPP activities of status, corpus and acquisition planning are not discrete acts. Rather, they are "mutually constitutive, interdependent, and co-occurring sociocultural processes" (McCarty & Warhol, 2011). Working organically with one another, McCarty (2004) points out that these "modes of human interaction, negotiation, and production" are mediated by "relations of power". This was supported by Kloss (1969) when he made the distinction of *who* influences these processes. Corpus planning is performed by specialists, chiefly linguists and writers, who are "called upon to form an academy, commission or some other official or semiofficial body within the framework of which they are expected to do some long-range teamwork" (p. 81). These specialists are typically not active participants during status planning activities, however, as this is usually carried out by "statesmen or bureaucrats as part of their routine work" described as having "some legal but with very little sociolinguistic background" (Kloss, 1969, p. 81). This power dynamic lingers within the realm of LPP core activities. It is important to note, however, that Kloss' (1969) perspective does not account for agency from those participating in bottom-up and grassroots initiatives.

Application of LPP to One Context

After having reviewed and reconceptualized the term language planning and policy, and examining three core LPP activities, it is helpful to examine these concepts in one particular context. The bulk of U.S. language policy research has taken place in California, New York, Florida, Arizona, and Texas (Johnson, 2013), with the state of Nebraska remaining faint in the LPP literature (Sudbeck, 2013; 2014). Therefore, in the pages that follow, *de jure* educational language policies will be examined within the state of Nebraska. First, educational language policies will be examined through a critical lens as sites for sociopolitical reproduction. Next,

the historical anti-German sentiment will be explored, featuring a vignette of one German-American's experience. Stemming from this anti-German sentiment, a historical overview of the English-Only movement in Nebraska will be revealed.

Schools as Sites for Reproducing Language Ideologies

Language policies are said to be a reproduction and reflection of the distribution of power within the larger society (McCarty, 2004). With these ideological constructs in mind, it is advised to view language policies as a sociocultural process (McCarty, 2004). Even though the United States has never declared an official language, the medium of instruction policies do reveal to us this sociocultural context. "Schools are among the most dominating discursive sites in which both official and unofficial language policies are produced and legitimated" (McCarty, 2004, p. 72). As noted earlier, at the precipice of the newly founded United States, linguistic diversity flourished; however, the socialization process towards language ideologies changed. The Founding Fathers, under the influence of English colonial attitudes, rejected this idea of a multicultural society and promoted the creation of a unified American, English-speaking culture (Spring, 2013). The common-school movement during the 1830s and 1840s is noted as one of the driving forces to halt this drift towards a multicultural society (Labaree, 2010; Spring, 2013). Joel Spring (2013) notes the process of "deculturalization" that took place for many minority groups within U.S. society, which is the educational process of destroying a people's culture and replacing it with a new culture. Language is intrinsically linked to culture; therefore, "[b]elieving that Anglo-American culture was the superior culture and the only culture that would support republican and democratic institutions, educators forbade the speaking of non-English languages… and forced students to learn an Anglo-American-centered curriculum" (Spring, 2013, p. 9). This process of deculturalization can be illustrated through an example of anti-German sentiment within the state of Nebraska.

Anti-German Sentiment

Before the latter half of the 19th century, immigrants from Germany who came to the United States aroused little hostility (Leibowitz, 1971). They had proved themselves to be aggressive patriots, even as early as the Revolutionary War (Leibowitz, 1971). People of German descent were well represented in the Continental Army as well as at the Philadelphia conventions of 1774 and 1775 (Faust, 1969, as cited in Leibowitz, 1971). Because of this highly engaged involvement, the Continental Congress even printed a number of documents in German, including the Articles of Confederation (Kloss, 1970, as cited in Leibowitz, 1971). Even as early as the 1700s, school instruction was given in German throughout Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina and North Carolina, often times at the exclusion of English (Leibowitz, 1971).

From 1817-1835, the number of immigrants from Germany increased greatly; unlike those who immigrated during the 18th century, "these were refugees from political—not religious—oppression" (Leibowitz, 1971). Many of these newcomers joined ethnic enclaves in farming districts where land was cheap and readily available. Within these rural areas, "the Germans initially had no teachers at their disposal who were familiar with English and, in any event, there was little need for a command of English during those early settlement years (Faust, 1969, p. 204, as cited in Leibowitz, 1971, p. 7). It should also be noted that Germans were "practically the sole immigrants of any significant number during the first half of the nineteenth century" (Leibowitz, 1971, p. 9). German immigrants settled in fairly unpopulated regions of the frontier; therefore, their presence was relatively unnoticed. In addition, Germans were in the majority within the regions they inhabited. This gave German-speakers a political and social advantage within their regions that was not available to many other groups at the time (Leibowitz, 1971).

The sentiment about people of German descent shifted when the United States joined the Great War on April 6, 1917 (Leibowitz, 1971; McCarty, 2004; Rodgers, 1958; Ross, 2008). It was noted that following

this involvement, "a wave of intolerance of anything and everything German swept over the country" (Rodgers, 1958, p. 1). The common assumption was "that an organized conspiracy was under way against the American government and American ideals" (Rodgers, 1958, p. 2). Therefore, people of German descent, both citizens and immigrants, were subject to the process of "Americanization," an assimilation process whereby members of any subordinate group were influenced to adopt the dominant practices of White Protestant Americans, which included the use of the English language (Ross, 2008; Spring, 2013). Wiley (2002) reports that Germans experienced beatings, humiliation through being tarred and feathered, and having their German books burned (as cited in McCarty, 2004). Thousands of Germans were even fined for "language violations" (Wiley, 1998, p. 223, as cited in McCarty, 2004). It was believed that German-Americans had been attempting to make German language compulsory in the public schools, for the primary purpose of "poisoning the minds of second generation German-Americans" (Rodgers, 1958, p.3).

Jack Rodgers (1958) also identified two main reasons for anti-German sentiment within the United States at this time. He states, "…prior to the entrance of the United States into the war on April 6, 1917, a number of persons of German origin had openly expressed their opposition to the Allied cause and to the United States' joining in the fight against the Fatherland" (p. 5). The large population of German immigrants was also seen as an intimidating stance. According to the Census of 1920, there were 149,652 foreign-born whites in the state of Nebraska, 27.4% of which came from Germany (Rodgers, 1958, p. 5). At least forty German-language newspapers existed throughout the state, and the German language was used extensively in churches and many parochial schools (Rodgers, 1958).

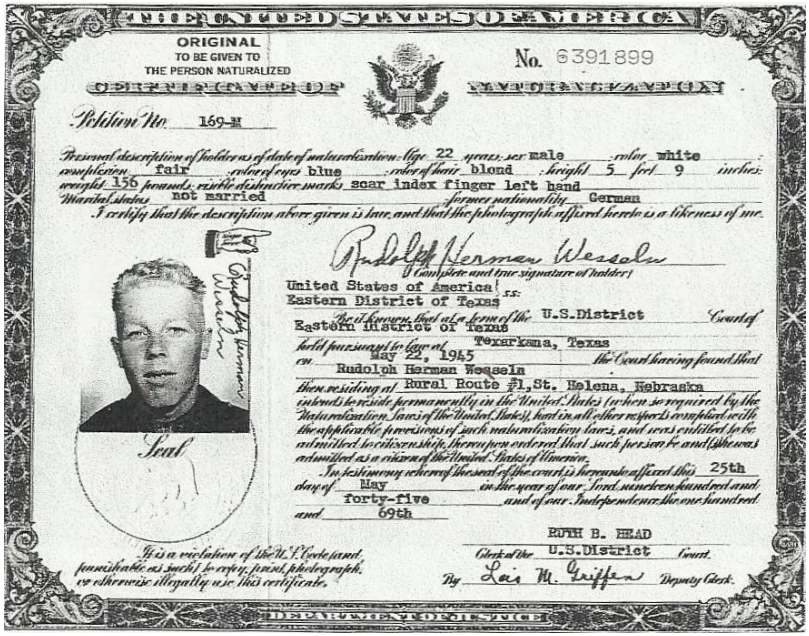
Large numbers of Germans were concentrated in Midwestern states like Nebraska, but this anti-immigrant sentiment was not localized only in these regions; rather, anti-immigrant sentiment towards those with German ancestry was a national phenomenon. The vignette below features a story of one immigrant from Germany, Rudy Wesseln, who arrived when he was two years old. Revealed within this story is the anti-

immigrant sentiment he and his parents experienced upon moving to the United States.

****

Rudolph (Rudy) Herman Wesseln was born July 11, 1923 in Lingen, Germany to parents Rudolf and Maria. The family of three obtained their passports and visas, and then departed on the ship Columbus *on July 30, 1925 to come to the United States (Sudbeck, 2005). The family of three (with a baby on the way) moved to a rural area in northeast Nebraska, located near the villages of Menominee and St. Helena. Maria's aunt and uncle were currently living in this region, and served as Rudolph and Maria's sponsors in order to move to the United States. The rest of Rudolph and Maria's immediate family members either died in the First World War or remained in Germany.*

After living in the United States for 20 years, Rudy joined the U.S. Army on January 23, 1945 and was enlisted in the state of Kansas two months later (Sudbeck, 2005). In his terms of enlistment, he was to remain a soldier in the Army for the duration of the war or other emergency, plus an additional six months. He served as a Tech 5th Class in the Army and was sent to Okinawa as a radio repair operator and lineman (Sudbeck, 2005). He was discharged from the Army in December 1946, after the war was over. It is important to note that it wasn't until after Rudy enlisted in the U.S. Army that he and both of his parents were granted access to citizenship through the naturalization process, twenty-one years after their arrival in the United States. Below is a copy of Rudy's certificate of naturalization which is dated May 22, 1945.



ORIGINAL
TO BE GIVEN TO
THE PERSON NATURALIZED

No. 6391899

Petition No. 169-M

Personal description of holder as of date of naturalization: Age 22 years; sex male; color white; complexion fair; color of eyes blue; color of hair blond; height 5 feet 9 inches; weight 156 pounds; visible distinctive marks scar index finger left hand; Married; states not married; former nationality German.

I certify that the description above given is true, and that the photograph affixed hereto is a likeness of me.

Rudolph Herman Wesseln
(Complete and true signature of holder)

United States of America } ss:
Eastern District of Texas

Be it Remembered, that at a term of the U.S.District Court of Eastern District of Texas held pursuant to law at Texarkana, Texas on May 22, 1945 the Court having found that Rudolph Herman Wesseln then residing at Rural Route #1, St. Helena, Nebraska entitled to reside permanently in the United States (when so required by the Naturalization laws of the United States), had in all other respects complied with the applicable provisions of such naturalization laws, and was entitled to be admitted to citizenship, thereupon ordered that such person be and she was admitted as a citizen of the United States of America.

In testimony whereof the seal of the court is hereunto affixed this 25th day of May in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and forty-five and of our Independence the one hundred and 69th

RUTH B. HEAD
Clerk of the U.S.District Court.
By Lois M. Griffen Deputy Clerk.

Seal

It is a violation of the U.S. Code (and) punishable as such) to copy, print, photograph, or otherwise illegally use this certificate.

Rudy had spent almost his entire life in the United States at this point, having arrived by ship when he was two years old. The only things he remembered about Germany were told to him by his parents. Despite this, all families of German descent were brought under suspicion solely because of their country of origin. Anyone who had ties to Germany was considered a "threat," and because of this Rudy's parents tried to assimilate quickly and not speak German outside of the home.
****

This vignette features my Great Uncle, Rudy Wesseln, who was also my neighbor while I was growing up. I remember him most for his joy of farming, his popcorn balls he served every Halloween, and his best friend- his dog Pepper. Upon arriving in the United States, he and his parents (my great-grandparents) lived and farmed near a community where many of the people had descended from Germany and were predominantly Catholic. This high concentration of German Catholics is much like what was discussed earlier, being seen as a "threat" to the American culture.

Many schools in the area had previously offered instruction in both German and English. This was especially prevalent since there were a number of private Catholic schools in the region to serve the population living there.

English-Only Movement in Nebraska

Provided this sociopolitical context, some of the first legal actions taken against German immigrants was in the year 1917 when the State Council of Defense was formed by the Legislature, the same year that the United States joined the Great War (Rodgers, 1958). In the following year, the governors of the states met in Washington, D.C. with the Council of National Defense, conversing about the "German language press, the use of German in schools and churches, and the need for Americanization" (Rodgers, 1958, p. 3). One private organization that was urging for Americanization was the National Security League, which formed in 1914 to "promote 100 percent patriotism" stating that "every citizen must think, talk, and act American" (National Security League, 1919, p. 10, as cited in Rodgers, 1958, p. 3). The Nebraska State Council of Defense passed the following resolution in order to "deal with the situation wisely":

> *WHEREAS, from investigations which have been conducted by the Nebraska State Council of Defense, it has become very apparent that the teaching of German in some of the private and denominational schools of the State has had an influence which is not conducive to a proper and full appreciation of American citizenship; therefore,*
> *BE IT RESOLVED, that the Nebraska State Council of Defense earnestly requests that no foreign language shall be taught in any of the private or denominational schools of Nebraska and that all instruction, whether secular or religious, shall be given in the English language. And, the Council earnestly asks the cordial cooperation of all private and denominational school authorities in Nebraska in putting into effect this request; and we*

> *again urge that the public school authorities of Nebraska see to it that no foreign language shall be taught in any of the grade schools of the State.*
>
> (Report of the Nebraska State Council of Defense, 1918, p. 16)

This statement by the Nebraska State Council of Defense was in direct opposition to the Mockett Law which had been enacted in 1913. The Mockett Law declared that "every high school, city school or metropolitan school was required to give instruction in grades above the fourth in those modern European languages which were requested in writing by the parents or guardians of at least fifty pupils in grades above the fourth attending such schools" (Laws of Nebraska, 1913, Ch. 13, p. 107, as cited in Rodgers, 1958, p. 8). In addition, the Mockett Law provided that "not more than five hours per week nor less than one period each day was devoted to the teaching of these languages when requested" (Rodgers, 1958, p. 8). Those who spoke German were one of the greatest beneficiaries from this law. A bill to repeal the Mockett Law passed the House unanimously approving the demands of the State Council of Defense that foreign languages not be taught in elementary grades (Laws of Nebraska, 1913, Ch. 31, p. 180, as cited in Rodgers, 1958, p. 8). In the end, the Senate virtually passed the same resolution by a vote of 18 to 14 (Laws of Nebraska, 1913, Ch. 31, p. 91, as cited in Rodgers, 1958).

After the Mockett Law had been overturned, the Nebraska State Legislature also enacted the Siman Act on April 9, 1919. This act "prohibited instruction in any foreign language in any public, private, or parochial school except for foreign languages taught as academic subjects to students who had passed the eighth grade" (Ross, 2008). It is important to note that many students at this time, especially those living in rural areas, ended their education at the eighth grade and did not go on to high school. Those who chose to disregard the Siman Act and continue teaching foreign languages would be forced to pay a fine of $25-$100 or serve no more than 100 days in jail (Ross, 2008).

In response to this English-Only movement, many immigrant groups as well as religiously affiliated schools felt under attack. Parents of

Bohemian, Danish, German and Polish descent took an appeal to the state supreme court, arguing that the Siman Act "violated property rights under the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution by diminishing the value of parochial schools and interfering with the vocations of teachers" (Ross, 2008, p. 274). For example, in May 1918, the Cedar County Council of Defense commanded a Roman Catholic priest immediately to cease from any use of a foreign language in instruction or public worship, except for the Latin Mass (Ross, 2008). These plaintiffs felt as though the Siman Act was violating their religious liberty. In the final week of 1919, the Nebraska Supreme Court remained unwilling to budge and decided that foreign language instruction would only be permitted during times that did not interfere with instruction under the state's mandatory education law (Ross, 2008).

Following the Nebraska Supreme Court's ruling, parochial schools throughout the state began to provide their foreign language instruction during recess, though this was not without criticism from the Siman Act advocates (Ross, 2008). Two schools operated by Zion, in particular, extended their midday recess periods by 30 additional minutes in order to provide longer foreign language instruction. English-only supporters expressed their displeasure in these actions by "blast[ing] out the windows of one of the schools with shotguns and destroy[ing] all German-language books except the Bible" (Ross, 2008, p. 275). In an apparent attempt to counteract these discrete foreign language lessons within school parameters, on May 25, 1920 the county attorney, Frank E. Edgerton arrived at the school. Upon hearing of the county attorney's arrival, one teacher omitted his usual German language lesson during recess, though the other did not.

Robert T. Meyer, "a mild-mannered forty-two-year-old father of six, continued to speak in German" despite the county attorney's presence in his classroom (Ross, 2008, p. 276). Meyer was quoted saying,

> *"I had my choice. I knew that, if I changed into English, he would say nothing. If I went on in German, he would arrest me. I told myself that I must not flinch. And I did not flinch. I went on in German… It*

> *was my duty to uphold my religion by teaching the children the religion of their parents in the language of their parents"* (Ross, 2008, p. 276).

Meyer was charged and convicted of violating the statute in Hamilton County Court and forced to pay a fine of $25, which at the time was equivalent to one month's salary (Ross, 2008). Zion's pastor, Brommer, testified during a hearing to appeal Meyer's conviction stating, "the ultimate and only object we had in view of teaching German was to enable children to worship at home and at church with their German-speaking parents" (Ross, 2008, p. 276). That is, language was to be understood as a religious tool that students used for worship.

Meyer's appeal was then taken by the U.S. Supreme Court, whereby the Court "declared the law to be an unconstitutional interference with the right of a foreign language teacher to teach and of parents to engage him so to instruct their children" (*Meyer v. Nebraska*, 1923). These rights were among those protected by the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (*Meyer v. Nebraska*, 1923). The Court further stated that "[m]ere knowledge of the German language could not be regarded as harmful" (Rodgers, 1958, p. 18). The ruling of *Meyer v. Nebraska* simultaneously invalidated other similar laws in the states of Iowa and Ohio (Rodgers, 1958). It is also important to note that derived from this ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court recognized the constitutional right to speak one's mother tongue (McCarty, 2004). This was the first U.S. Supreme Court decision concerning the challenge of one's language rights (McCarty, 2004).

Looking Back, Moving Forward

Now, almost one century since the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the English-only legislation in the state of Nebraska, questions surrounding language planning and policy remain. The Nebraska Department of Education (2014) reported 103 languages other than English being utilized

by students in Nebraska K-12 schools. Though not exhaustive, some examples of the language varieties spoken in the home of Nebraska students and their families include: Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, Karen, Somali, Nuer, Dinka, French, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Omaha, Ho-Chunk, Korean, Japanese, Russian, Ukrainian, and Dakota (NDE, 2014; Sudbeck, 2014). Drawing on Fishman's (2014) three categories of heritage languages (i.e. indigenous, colonial, and immigrant languages), each level should be examined more thoroughly within the context of Nebraska educational language policies.

Indigenous Languages in Nebraska

Much like the rest of the United States, Indigenous languages in what is now considered Nebraska (e.g. Dakota, Ho-Chunk, Lakota, Omaha, Pawnee, and Ponca) have historically experienced linguicide after years of colonization and boarding schools (Spring, 2013). In post-colonial years, language policies regarding Indigenous languages have varied. In the midst of other global recognition for minority language rights, Congress passed the Native American Languages Act (NALA, 1990/1992). In 1991, the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic Minorities, Article 4 stated, "States should take appropriate measures so that, whenever possible, persons belonging to National or Ethnic minorities may have adequate opportunities to learn their mother tongue or to have instruction in their mother tongue" (as cited in Spring, 2000, p. 31). NALA was a policy "unprecedented" for a variety of reasons (Warhol, 2012). First, much of the previous federal LPP had attempted to eradicate these same languages; second, it affirmed "the connection between language and education achievement and established an official, explicit federal stance on language" (Warhol, 2012, p. 236). This legislation was amended in 1992 to encompass a larger spectrum of Native American LPP activities, including provisions for community language programs, training programs, material development and language documentation (NALA, 1990/1992). Overturning more than two centuries of

Native American LPP in the U.S., NALA established the federal role in preserving and protecting Indigenous languages. In 1996, federal legislation extended to include Native American language survival schools and language nests as well as other language restoration programs (Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act, 2006).

More recently, the Native American Languages Reauthorization Act and the Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act have been brought to vote in Congress. Both were unanimously approved by the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on June 18, 2014, and these pieces of legislation have "gained bipartisan support in both houses of Congress" (Linguistic Society of America, 2014). It is important to note, however, that the state of Nebraska has limited policies that recognize the status or protection of Indigenous languages. That is, the state of Nebraska is one of seven states to offer alternative certification for teachers of Native languages (Nebraska Revised Statute, 1999; Zinth, 2006). No other known state language policies specifically regarding Indigenous languages exist in Nebraska.

Colonial Languages in Nebraska

Colonizers inhabited different regions of the land which now makes up the United States, so it is important that each is explored through its own sociopolitical context. Historically, Spaniards colonized much of what is now the southwestern United States (Potowski, 2014), a small group of which later came to Nebraska during The Villasur Expedition in the 1700s by way of New Mexico (Hickey, Wunder & Wunder, 2007). Early French colonial settlers inhabited regions predominantly in Maine and Louisiana (Ross & Jaumont, 2014). German was considered a colonial language in northeastern states such as Pennsylvania (Fishman, 2014; Leibowitz, 1971; Ludanyi, 2014). However, English is the primary colonial language that became dominant across much of U.S. society, and arguably the only colonial language in the state of Nebraska (Leibowitz, 1971; Rodgers, 1958; Ross, 2008). Historically and recently, there have been several English-only movements at both the national and state levels,

therefore the monolingual English ideology remains for many in the state (Sudbeck, 2013; 2014).

Immigrant Languages in Nebraska

The languages of immigrants have had a varied history in Nebraska. For example, the state of Nebraska passed legislation to outlaw the teaching of foreign languages in the 1920s, impacting an array of immigrant language varieties of the time including Danish, German, Polish, and Czech (Ross, 2008; Sudbeck, 2013). Spanish has also had a long history within the state of Nebraska, first being introduced as an immigrant language in the early 1900s with the migration of Mexicans for agricultural labor (Sudbeck, 2012). Spanish has experienced varied recognition throughout the state. It is important to note that there are currently eight dual language schools, seven of which are located in the Omaha metropolitan area and one in the community of Lexington (CAL, 2012). All eight of these schools provide instruction in English and Spanish. In addition, Nebraska serves as a refugee resettlement location; therefore, the state has also experienced more diversity in the languages spoken in recent years (e.g. Vietnamese, Arabic, Nuer, Dinka, Karen, etc.) (Pipher, 2002; Sudbeck, 2014).

The Appropriation of Language Policies

How language policies are appropriated within Nebraska schools may be a reflection of federal and supranational policies. For example at the supranational level, the United Nations General Assembly officially recognized the universal linguistic human rights of the world's 370 million Indigenous peoples in 2007. However, two of the Assembly's "most powerful member states, Canada and the United States- both with abysmal records of treatment of indigenous peoples- rejected the Declaration" (McCarty, 2012, p. 544). At the national level, federal legislation such as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act has had a negative impact on languages other than English, replacing the emphasis on bilingual education

to English language deficit models through which English Language Learner (ELL) programs are developed and implemented (Wilson, 2014). For example, Wilson (2014) recognizes the negative impact NCLB has had on indigenous languages by noting how "NCLB recognizes the right of Puerto Rico to use Spanish as an official language of education, but does not recognize the right of states, territories, or Native American governments to declare Native American languages official and use them in education" (p. 226). This federal legislation is relevant for other minoritized language groups within the state of Nebraska as well, as the focus remains on developing English literacy skills.

At the state level, other than the accommodations made within schools to learn English (NDE, 2013b), there are limited policies recognizing any other language than the dominant Standard American English (Sudbeck, 2013). For example, Rule 10 of the Nebraska Department of Education's (2012a) Rules and Regulations is a world language requirement which governs the accreditation of schools (Sudbeck, 2013). This requires students to receive 20 instructional units or two years of daily classes in a world language, with curriculum to include "reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills for communicating in one or more languages other than English, knowledge and understanding of other cultures, and developing insight into the nature of language and culture" (NDE, 2012a). In addition, there is a current petition led by the Nebraska International Languages Association to promote a program for the seal of biliteracy for high school graduates who meet a list of state generated requirements (NILA, 2015). The term "world language" here encompasses any language other than English taught in Nebraska schools, which may pertain to an array of Indigenous, colonial or immigrant language varieties.

Conclusion

After (re)conceptualizing the term language planning and policy as the complex sociocultural processes that have the ability to influence the function, use, structure, and/or acquisition of language varieties, this

manuscript has demonstrated the application of this concept to one context in particular—the state of Nebraska. While the bulk of this manuscript focuses primarily on overt status planning from the top-down, it is clear that language policies in Nebraska have been influenced by dynamic and complex sociopolitical contexts. More research needs to be done to illuminate all three core LPP activities (i.e. acquisition planning, corpus planning and status planning) while also recognizing these complex sociocultural processes that occur in its midst. That is, top-down official policies are not the only legitimate language policies. On the contrary, as previously noted LPP processes can also take place from the grassroots level going from the bottom-up (Menken & García, 2010). In addition, unofficial, covert, *de facto* and implicit mechanisms may exist that circumvent the official policy in place (See Appendix A; Johnson, 2013).

While the scope of this manuscript was narrowed to explore the historical sociopolitical context of educational language policies within the state (including the vignette of one man's experience with anti-German sentiment), future studies should more closely examine current trends with particular interest in minoritized language communities. Who holds power and privilege among language groups? Why does this power dynamic continue to exist? This is especially urgent in light of Flores and Rosa's (2015) recent call for reframing language diversity in education, by "combining a heteroglossic perspective with critical language awareness" to open up "space for unmasking racism inherent in dominant approaches to language education" (p. 154). A statewide survey examining the type of language instruction offered across K-12 schools may expose the perpetuation of linguicism through educational institutions. Further studies could illuminate the agency of multiple actors at various levels of the LPP processes in Nebraska by seeking out voices of language teachers, learners and their families. A more thorough examination of current educational language policies and practices across Nebraska, therefore, is critical to understand long-term effects for minoritized students, their families, their schools, and communities.

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Appendix A- Language Policy Types

Genesis	*Top-down* Macro-level policy developed by some governing or authoritative body or person	*Bottom-up* Micro-level or grass-roots generated policy for and by the community that it impacts
Means and Goals	*Overt* Overtly expressed in written or spoken policy texts	*Covert* Intentionally concealed at the macro-level (collusive) or at the micro-level (subversive)
Documentation	Explicit Officially documented in written or spoken policy text	Implicit Occurring without or in spite of official policy texts
In law and in practice	*De jure* Policy "in law"; officially documented in writing	*De facto* Policy "in practice"; refers to both locally produced policies that arise without or in spite of de jure policies and local language practices that differ from de jure policies; de facto policies can reflect (or not) de facto policies

(from Johnson, 2013, Table 1.1, p. 10)