

**British Sikhs in Complementary Schooling: The Role of Heritage Language Proficiency
and ‘Culture Learning’ in Ethnic Identity and Bicultural Adaptation**

Virginia L. Lam^a, Farkhanda R. Chaudry^a, Martin Pinder^b, and Tarlok Sura^c

^aSchool of Psychology, University of East London, United Kingdom

^bNewham Partnership for Complementary Education, Plaistow, London, UK

^cRamgarhia Sikh Gurdwara, Forest Gate, East London, UK.

Corresponding Author:

Dr Virginia L. Lam

School of Psychology

University of East London

Stratford Campus

London E15 4LZ

Email: v.lam@uel.ac.uk

Tel.: (+)44 (0)20 8223 2817

Fax: (+)44 (0)20 8223 4937

Abstract

While the debate regarding bilingual benefits persists within the cognitive sciences, education research has documented various functions that heritage languages (HL) serve their speakers through bicultural adaptation. The present study adopted a mixed-methods approach to gauge HL proficiency and use, cultural participation and ethnic and mainstream identities, and to examine multiple perspectives on HL learning with complementary schooling (CS) among British Sikhs. Seventy-four 6 to 15-year-olds completed scales for perceived oral and literate abilities, language use across contexts, British and Sikh identifications, and participation in cultural activities. Children filled in open-ended items, while parents and teachers discussed in interviews and focus groups, their motivations for HL learning and CS experiences. The majority of children self-reported ‘good’ proficiency, which differed between generations as impacted by home use and was associated with cultural participation and Sikh identification. Most children referred to practical utility while most parents regarded culture retention as the dominant motivation for HL learning. Teachers discussed how teaching beyond the second generation and language shifts presented both challenges and opportunities. Still, all parties corroborated on the pertinence of HL maintenance as facilitated by CS through ‘culture learning’ towards a strong ethnic identity and bicultural adaptation.

Keywords: heritage language; bicultural; complementary school’ British Sikhs; ethnic identity

Introduction

Extant literature within the cognitive sciences has reported various benefits from bilingualism such as enhanced sensory processing and executive functioning (Bialystok 2015; Marian and Shook 2012). Although there is good evidence for the mechanisms, there are also reports of counter-evidence, replication failure and testing inconsistency (Antón et al. 2014; von Bastian, Souza, and Gade 2016), with those benefits remaining an ongoing debate. Also, the exclusive focus on cognitive outcomes means that what ‘being bilingual’ means to and entails of individuals and communities are under-explored. This is the primary focus of the present study, which draws on the perspectives of bilingual children that attend extra heritage language¹ (HL) and culture schooling outside of mainstream education, and those of their parents and teachers, as key players in their language development.

Language teachers tend to agree that a language should be learnt with the consideration of the culture of the community in which it is used (Wu 2006). For many heritage bilinguals, so-called ‘benefits’ of bilingualism concern the ease of access to the two cultural communities or realms of group life that languages afford. Premised on this idea, education and community research has extolled the virtues and even essential functions that bilingual and its associated ‘bicultural’ development serves through the mastery of cultural knowledge and intercultural competences (Caldas, 2008; Phinney and Devich-Navarro 1997; Shi and Lu 2007). Becoming bicultural involves developing a sense of cultural self (i.e. identity) as a member of two groups, and for ethnic minority children, these are typically their ethnic heritage and host country’s dominant culture (e.g. American or British). Accumulated evidence supports a nuanced view of biculturalism, where minority youth who are able to form strong, positive multiple identities report fewer mental health problems and better self-esteem and academic achievement than their peers with singular or ‘mono-cultural’ identities (Marks, Patton, and García Coll 2011, for a review).

The development of cultural identity for many minorities is closely linked to the acculturation process, with different modes of adaptation (Berry, Trimble, and Olmedo 1986). It is generally accepted that bicultural adaptation, as characterised by adapting to the dominant culture while retaining ethnic attachments, is preferable over the assimilation style (associated with cultural genocide and identity crises; Lu 2001). According to social identity theory (Abrams 1992), the salience of group identity may be reinforced if one gains a sense of pride, psychological comfort and self-enhancement by engaging in communal and communicative activities with group members. As such, heritage identity can be affirmed through 'ethnolinguistic vitality' by demonstrating loyalty to its language (see Lu 2001).

Indeed, it is well established that speaking one's heritage language (HL) plays a vital role in the development of cultural identities; besides its symbolic meaning for group membership, it helps to enact and preserve cultural traditions and facilitates cohesion (Shi and Lu 2007). HL maintenance is associated with a positive ethnic identity, which mediates better mental health and academic achievement (reviewed by Li and Wen 2009). The reverse also appears to apply where rapid HL loss has been found to lead to numerous adverse consequences, including communication rifts in the family and alienation from the community, which can exacerbate generation gaps and precipitate a sense of cultural loss, low self-worth or identity crisis (Brown 2009; Liu et al. 2009).

At the same time, raising bilingual children within a monolingual (in particular, Anglophone) environment is a challenge that necessitates providing them near-constant exposure to the non-dominant minority language (Caldas and Caron-Caldas 2002). The tremendous pressure to conform to a linguistic norm (speaking English), particularly from pre-adolescence, means that even in large, diverse communities where immigrants form the numerical majority (in the US), most of the second generation prefer to speak English and by the third most children are no longer able to speak their HL (reviewed by Li and Wen 2015).

Though there is some evidence of successful acquisition of HL with limited exposure outside the home, mostly involving active parental participation (e.g., Caldas 2007; Riches and Curdt-Christiansen 2010), the most successful cases (in particular those practising bi-literacy; for example, Haneda 2006; Kenner et al. 2004) tend to be supported by the extended family network or a larger cultural community. Many studies documenting cultural knowledge or identities with HL development are set in bilingual programmes (Barratt-Pugh and Rohl 2001), or in what are known as ‘complementary’ (in the UK), or ‘community’ or ‘heritage’, language schools (particularly in the United States or Australia; e.g., Creese 2009; Li 2006; Lytra and Martin 2010).

In the UK, numerous CSs that offer heritage language and culture education were set up by minority communities in response to the ‘failure’ of the mainstream education system to meet the (linguistic and cultural) needs of their children (Li 2006). Unfunded (by local authorities or central government), CSs typically operate at the weekends or after school, on mainstream schools’ rented premises. Many CSs rely on good will in terms of voluntary staff time, and in most cases financial contributions, from the community. As such, most CSs share the feature of limited contact time, curricula and practical resources, and a high turnover of teachers with little training (Wu 2006). Despite these common challenges, a body of work has identified a range of positive results or impacts from the establishments, including creative pedagogies or learner practices, such as multimodal resources, traditional dance (see Lytra and Martin 2010) and codeswitching in a ‘safe’ space away from dominant discourses (Creese and Martin 2006). Success stories of collaboration between mainstream and complementary teachers have been reported where they exchanged strategies from co-learning mutually (Kenner and Ruby 2012). Remaining on the ‘margins’ of education and in alternative (e.g. mixed age) under-resourced settings, CSs continue the inventive use of

cultural capital where effective provisions tend to involve educators, learners and parents (the community) working in a partnership.

Few studies have examined the processes in CSs involving all of pupils, parents and teachers, however. A notable endeavour is the *Culture Project* (Archer, Francis, and Mau 2010; Francis, Archer, and Mau 2009), involving all three parties across six Chinese CSs to consider culture and identity issues. The adults valued the promotion of Chinese culture, featured explicitly in the curricula configured as ‘values’, and some drew implicit boundaries between Chinese and Western cultures producing a sense of distinctiveness or relational ‘othering’. The pupils, half of who felt CSs made them feel more ‘Chinese’ (through being with others and engaging in popular cultural forms) viewed their HL (a key signifier) as identity/culture and its purpose as perpetuating proficiency with instrumental benefits. It is argued that, the centrality of the HL to express identity and generation differences in interpreting culture, common among Chinese (cf. Lam and Tran 2017; Lu 2001), can hold for other established CS communities.

The ethnolinguistic community under current consideration is the Panjabi-speaking Sikhs in the UK. Unlike other visible minorities, ‘Sikhs’—numbered 432,429 at the last Census (ONS 2011)—tend to identify by virtue of religion as being central to their identity (Nesbitt 2011). The Sikh holy book, Guru Granth Sahib, written in the Gurmukhi script, is read in Panjabi which means that Panjabi is the de facto liturgical language. The key means through which the Sikh tradition is transmitted to younger generations is via Panjabi classes in CSs, located primarily in Gurdwaras (Sikh places of worship; Singh 2014).

While there have been no inquiries involving all of Sikh pupils, parents and teachers in the CS context, there has been research on British Sikhs’ identity and the use of literacy in a Sikh CS and the mainstream. The major themes identified include the important role of language in determining ethnicity; children feel a sense of achievement in being able to write in the

Gurmukhi script (Jones 2014) and learning to decode scriptures as an ethnoreligious practice and an identity-affirming process (Rosowsky 2013). The religion has its specific demands: learning the liturgical language is not just a linguistic endeavour endorsed by the community, but initiates one into the religious order (Jaspal 2012). A lack of proficiency goes to impede cultural participation and alienate one from the community that has been associated with a sense of shame, inferiority and identity threat (Jaspal and Coyle 2010). These are particularly poignant issues for second and further generations rendering the generational transmission of Sikh symbols amid a dominant Anglophone culture a community concern (Nesbitt 2011).

The present research set out to first study how HL proficiency and use, cultural participation and cultural identities are interrelated in British Sikhs at a CS. The role of HL maintenance in developing heritage identities by preserving cultural traditions and enhancing group cohesion (often with adaptation to the mainstream as bicultural adaptation) has been earlier reviewed. There is also recent evidence linking the level of, or change in, ethnic identity to that of HL or additional language proficiency and use as part of learner acculturation (Kmiotek and Boski 2017; Yu 2018). With the progressive HL loss towards later generations and CSs' efforts to bolster HL and heritage culture, it is pertinent to study HL proficiency and use in relation to attendees' cultural participation and identities across generations. As HL (versus English) use can be compartmentalised by context (e.g. school, home; Caldas and Caron-Calda 2002), we studied the level of use in different contexts, drawing on the language socialisation paradigm (LSP; Caldas 2008) that emphasises both home and out-of-home socialisations. Our research questions are: How do British Sikhs from different generations perceive their HL (Panjabi) proficiency and use in different settings? Apart from generation status, do other factors, in particular HL use in certain settings and cultural participation, impact learners' proficiency and identification with the ethnic (Sikh) and mainstream (British) cultures?

We also aim to give a detailed account of the perspectives from the HL-learners and their key facilitators (parents and CS teachers) on HL learning and support to give context to the above mentioned relationships between proficiency and use and cultural participation and identities. As reviewed, these key players' partnership is pivotal to effective CS provisions and in some settings pupils' and adults' perspectives do not necessarily match in terms of purpose (of HL) and function (of CS). Often under-explored is HL teachers' views in relation to parents that can differ due in part to parents not understanding the language model applied in a setting or having different objectives and language ideologies (Schwartz 2013). For their part, teachers are acutely aware of the issues facing learners or challenges of intergenerational transmission and hold their own language attitudes that can impact pedagogic practices and are (Russell and Kuriscak 2015). It is therefore important to represent parents' and teachers' opinions, as well as children's, for a deeper understanding and effective negotiations of those views (Schwartz 2013). The questions of interest to us thus concern: What are the chief motivations of British Sikh pupils of Panjabi and their parents and teachers for their HL learning? What are their experiences of CS—not only in terms of HL tuition, but particularly cultural participation, identity maintenance and perceived issues or challenges?

Our effort to study multiple factors and perspectives also reflects the tenets of the LSP, which invests in the role of language in acculturation; in specific, how through language individuals situate themselves in relation to others and recognise the dynamic relationship between them and the communities within which the language develops. The LSP paradigm is 'eclectic' with regards to research methodology (see Caldas 2008), and a mixed-methods approach was used to address our questions. Quantitative data was surveyed from the CS-attendees on HL proficiency, levels of use across contexts, and strengths of identification with their ethnic and mainstream cultures and participation in cultural (Sikh) activities where (between-generation) comparisons in, and associations among, such constructs can be made.

For the more nuanced issues of motivation, experience and outcomes, qualitative methods (open-ended items, focus groups and interviews) were used so that all key players' views can be captured in detail and analysed in-depth.

Methodology

The School and Sample

In total, 74 (44 female, 30 male) children aged 6 to 15 ($M = 10.19$, $SD = 2.68$) years returned complete data. All lived with both parents, who were in middle to high-income professions. All but 8 (who were born in India) were UK-born. Children were split into three age groups according to their CS class: 6-8, 9-11, 11+ years (see below and Table 1, for demographics). All children were registered as 'Sikhs' tracing family origins to the Punjab region of India.

Parents of participating children were invited to take part in focus groups, and an opportunity sample of 14 (11 mothers, 2 fathers, 1 grandmother) volunteered for three dates (5 parents at two meetings and 5 at one). The ages of children of these parents ranged from 6 to 14 years with length of CS attendance between 1 and 8 years.

Seven (5 teachers, 2 assistants; all female) teaching members were interviewed individually. Introduced by the school management, they were invited to 'share experiences of teaching' in CS settings. All participating staff were Sikhs with Panjabi being their HL. Panjabi-teaching experience varied from 8 to 30 years, and the assistants were alumni who had completed the syllabus within the previous five years.

Over 120 pupils were enrolled at the school in East London near its associated Gurdwara. The school was established 35 years ago when the proprietors converted a four-storey disused warehouse that became the current setting, which contained six classrooms, an ICT suite, the library and an assembly hall. The 1990s saw the peak intakes of over 300, but the numbers

fell gradually since with the more affluent second-generation adults moving to less crowded outer suburbs even though the school maintained that the community remained ‘close knit’.

Table 1. Demographics of the sample.

Age	N	Gender	Birthplace	Parental birthplace*
6-8	25	9M, 16F	22 UK, 3 India	4 both UK, 3 mother UK, 9 father UK, 9 both India
9-11	24	12M, 12F	24 UK, 0 India	4 both UK, 4 mother UK, 8 father UK, 8 both India
11+	25	9M, 16F	20 UK, 5 India	1 both UK, 3 mother UK, 10 father UK, 11 both India
Total	74	30M, 44F	66 UK, 8 India	9 both UK, 10 mother UK, 27 father UK, 28 both India

*Mother UK or father UK: the other parent was born in India.

The school ran 3-hour sessions on Saturdays, starting with an hour’s ethnic music session and religious assembly. The next two hours consisted of language and culture classes when pupils attended one of four groups depending on age and language ability (besides a group preparing for the GCSE, end-of-secondary education qualifications in England and Wales). Parents paid nominal fees that covered materials and uniforms; the Gurdwara congregation and proprietors (who also leased the premises to other CSs) subsidised the running of the school.

The Approach and Materials

A mixed-methods study was aligned purposively with our objectives to explore: (a) children’s levels of HL proficiency and use, cultural participation and cultural identities—bearing in mind relevant factors such as age and generation status; and, (b) children’s, their parents and teachers’ perspectives on HL learning, particularly in relation to the CS experience. For (a), a set of reliable structured quantitative measures was used as that can be given to a wide range of ages, despite individual differences including verbal skills,

personality, etc.. A set of open-ended items were included to enable children to respond from their perspectives pertaining to (b) in a less constrained manner.

Besides practicalities (sample size and time), focus groups were conducted with parents on the premise that parents who would come forward to share their views would be willing to explore these in detail with other parents on a topic that clearly involved common interests (their children's Panjabi learning and complementary schooling). Experiences might differ among families, however, where focus groups enable researchers to probe for diversities and discussion of the reasoning behind such diversities.

Though all the teachers taught from the same syllabus gradually matching the Panjabi GCSE, they were responsible for different classes and had had different teaching experiences. Semi-structured interviews were used to capture the potential diversity of perspectives—that might not be possible in a focus group due to the tendency for 'groupthink' between those from the same team or workplace (Rushkoff 2005). Interviewing afforded each teacher more time to explore their views and ideas, and that was deemed useful due to their key role in CS settings with direct regular contact with the children.

Measures of children's perceived language proficiency and home use first comprised Marian, Blumenfeld, and Kaushanskaya's (2007) Language Experience and Proficiency questionnaire (LEAP-Q). Simplifying the form, our proficiency scales contained four items focusing on the understanding and speaking of Panjabi, and reading and writing of the Gurmukhi script, with children rating their skills 'compared to other Punjabi children of their age in the UK'. Home use was based on the frequency with which they used Panjabi within the nuclear family, and contextual use items adapted from Berry et al.'s (1986) acculturation scale, in eight contexts from home and friends to media (broadcast and online). Identities, in relation to ethnic (Sikh) and mainstream (British) cultures, were gauged by Barrett's (2007) Strength of Identification scale (SoIS) measuring: degree of identification with Sikh/ British,

pride, feeling (happy-sad), importance, and belonging with group members. Items returned high reliabilities (Cronbach α >.85) and so were combined to form a unified score for each identity. For consistency, all children's items were administered in English, their primary language in the mainstream.

In open-ended survey items, focus groups and interviews, key questions covered reasons for HL learning and experiences of CS, with follow-up questions/prompts for explanation. Older pupils who self-reported were asked to detail in writing, while pupils who were individually seen and adults were probed to expand on the salient aspects.

Fieldwork and Data Analysis

Participation data was collected over three months in the summer term. Before that, archival and administrative records were gathered by a Panjabi-speaking fieldworker (second author) who visited regularly for observations (on another study). Parents of pupils below the GCSE level received invitations in this period; 75 per cent consented on their children's behalf.

All of the oldest (11+ years) children could complete self-reporting independently, and many of the 9-11-year-olds managed with minimum support, but most of the youngest (6-8 years) required to be seen individually by the fieldworker or her assistants, who read out questions and recorded all responses.

Parents and staff were seen, separately, on other Saturdays, with all meetings (lasting 25-45 minutes) audio-recorded. English was the medium of choice in one parent focus group, and Panjabi in the other two. The five teachers were interviewed in Panjabi and their assistants in English. The Panjabi recordings were translated into English transcripts, and an independent bilingual speaker performed a check by reading the transcripts and listening to the recordings. Variations in interpretation were discussed with the researcher before versions

were finalised, but agreement was generally very high. English recordings were transcribed verbatim.

The quantitative data was statistically analysed for sample trends, between-groups (e.g., age group, generational status) differences and between-measures relationships (e.g., proficiency and use). Meaningful relationships were examined further for potential ‘predictors’ (e.g. age, generation status) of the key constructs (proficiency and Sikh identification). Of the 74 pupils that completed quantitative measures, 47 (24 11+ years and 23 6-11 years) answered at least one open-ended question with sufficient contents that could contribute towards analysis. The responses were summarised as codes to abstract their meaning before thematic analysis (TA; Braun and Clarke 2006).

After reading and initial coding, parents and teachers’ data were also thematically analysed. As TA (unlike phenomenological methods; Harper and Thompson 2012; for instance) does not place any specific focus on linguistic or discursive features for interpretation (and participants here used different languages where those features varied), it was chosen as the most flexible method that can uncover common patterns by categorising the contents into recurrent themes (Braun and Clarke 2006). Themes were identified within each group of participants depending upon the salient issues expressed or what ‘mattered’ the most among them. Then, definitions of themes evolved from further detailed reading between themes, codes and data, considering similarities in content as well as divergent expressions.

Results

For the quantitative measures, each was subjected to between-groups analyses. Neither age in years nor gender exerted significant effects, but generation status (parental birthplace) effects were regularly found. For succinctness, this first part lists only the significant results that are meaningful to HL proficiency and use, and cultural participation and identities.

Perceived Proficiency and Use, Cultural Participation and Sikh/British Identification

The majority (above three-quarters) of children reported their speaking and understanding as 'quite' or 'very' good compared with other Punjabi children of their age (Table 1). Perceived proficiency differed across the four areas ($F(3,219) = 8.82, p < .001$), with understanding better than reading and writing ($ps < .001$), and speaking better than reading ($p = .008$). Associations between them were significant, if weak ($rs < .40, ps < .05$), except for reading-writing ($r = .51, p < .01$). Weak associations were also found between proficiencies and age in months ($rs = .30-.34, ps < .01$), except for writing (non-significant).

Parental birthplace had a significant effect on speaking ($F(3,70) = 3.24, p = .03$). Post hoc tests showed that children with both Indian-born parents ($M = 4.36, SD = .73$) rated their speaking as better than how those with both UK-born parents ($M = 3.44, SD = 1.01$) rated theirs ($p = .05$).

There were significant variations in HL use with different members of the nuclear family ($F(2,144) = 64.55, p < .001$). Over three-quarters reported that they used it with mother 'most' or 'all' the time versus just under one-third with siblings (Table 3). Post hoc tests confirmed use with mothers as higher than fathers or siblings ($ps < .01$), and use with fathers also higher than siblings ($p < .001$). However, use with mother was associated with use with father ($r = .45, p < .001$) and siblings ($r = .31, p = .004$), and father with siblings ($r = .49, p < .01$).

Parental birthplace had an effect on overall home use ($F(3,70) = 4.16-13.40, ps < .01$). Post hoc tests found that children with both Indian-born parents used more (mother $M = 4.57, SD = .69$; father $M = 4.54, SD = .74$; siblings $M = 3.33, SD = 1.29$) than those with both UK-born parents (mother $M = 3.33, SD = .50$; father $M = 3.33, SD = .44$; siblings $M = 2.44, SD = .63$; $ps < .01$). Home use was correlated with average proficiency ($r = .30, p = .005$), and oral

proficiencies (speaking and understanding) were correlated with use with mother ($ps < .01$) and father ($ps < .05$).

Children reported the degree of Panjabi versus English use across contexts. The contexts with the most co-use (English/ Panjabi ‘equally’) were home and broadcast media (TV, radio) and those using most English were friendship and online media (computer, phone). Children also reported more English use for general ‘thinking’ than speaking (Table 4). Parental birthplace had a significant effect on ‘at home’ ($F(3,73) = 4.54, p = .006$); again children with both Indian-born parents used more Panjabi than those with born UK-born parents ($p < .005$) at home.

Table 2. Perceived mother-tongue proficiency in four aspects.

	Mean Score (St. Dev.) 1 (very poor) - 5 (very good)	Percentage of ‘quite’ to ‘very’ good (split percentages in brackets)
Speaking	3.99 (.93)	76 (QG 45; VG 31)
Understanding	4.22 (.80)	80 (QG 37; VG 43)
Reading	3.66 (.96)	61 (QG 42; VG 19)
Writing	3.78 (.80)	67 (QG 49; VG 18)

Table 3. Mother-tongue use in the nuclear family.

	Mean Score (St. Dev.) 1 (never) - 5 (all the time)	Percentage of ‘most of’ to ‘all’ the time (split percentages in brackets)
Mother	4.20 (.79)	77 (HL 34; AT 43)
Father	3.74 (1.11)	56 (HL 24; AT 32)
Siblings*	2.71 (1.26)	31 (HL 20; AT 11)

*Brothers or sisters—means did not differ and some children had only one type—scores averaged as ‘siblings’.

Table 4. Use of English versus Panjabi across contexts (sample percentages and means).

	At home	With friends	Broadcast media	Online media	General speaking	General thinking
% more English (1)	16	70	22	70	23	54
% both equally (2)	64	30	68	30	70	38
% more Panjabi (3)	20	0	12	0	7	8
Mean, scale 1-3	2.04	1.30	1.89	1.30	1.84	1.54
(St Dev)	(.61) ^a	(.46) ^b	(.56) ^a	(.46) ^b	(.52) ^c	(.65) ^d

a > b; c > d ($ps < .01$; 2-tailed)

For cultural participation, children listed the activities they regularly engaged in (Gurdwara, Panjabi print-media, films, music and other own nominated items such as dance). All children participated in at least one and up to five (18%). A scale-item (1-5) was devised as ‘cultural participation’ ($M = 3.70$; $SD = .92$) that was weakly associated with proficiency ($r = .22$, $p = .04$).

For identities, children first chose among a range of labels (including Sikh, Punjabis², Indian, British and compound terms with ‘British’ such as ‘British Asian’) all those ‘*they would call themselves*’. ‘British Sikh’ (chosen by 80%) was more popular than any other key categories (Friedman $\chi^2 = 127.87$, $p < .001$), such as Sikh (62%), Punjabis (44%), British Punjabis (37%) or British Indian (32%; $ps < .001$). The strength of Sikh identification (SoIS; $M = 4.84$, $SD = .24$) was higher than that of British ($M = 4.03$, $SD = .79$), but the two were positively correlated with each other ($r = .19$, $p = .05$). Sikh identification was further correlated with Panjabi proficiency ($r = .22$, $p = .03$), home use ($r = .33$, $p = .002$) and cultural participation ($r = .21$, $p = .04$).

Two multiple regressions were conducted, first for Panjabi proficiency and the other for Sikh identification, as the outcome (dependent variable), to examine the contributions

towards HL proficiency and ethnic identity by the factors that correlated with them. The first involved age in months (controlled for), parental birthplace, home use and cultural participation, and the other latter with home use, proficiency, cultural participation and British identification, as the predictor/independent variables. Age explained 15% of the HL proficiency variance ($R = .15$; $F(1,72) = 12.42$, $p = .001$), while the additional predictors added 12% ($R = .52$; $F(4,69) = 6.26$, $p < .001$; F change $p = .015$). Apart from age ($B = .39$, $t = 3.71$, $p < .001$), only home use ($B = .30$, $t = 2.64$, $p = .01$) emerged as a statistically unique predictor in this model. The model for Sikh identification explained 20% of its variance ($R = .45$; $F(4,69) = 4.42$, $p = .003$), with home use ($B = .32$, $t = 2.81$, $p = .006$) and British identification ($B = .25$, $t = 2.28$, $p = .03$) as unique predictors.

Heritage Language and Complementary School: Children, Parents and Teachers' Views

This part describes the key themes emerging across the three sets of key players' perspectives focusing on the motivations for HL learning on the one hand and, on the other, experiences of complementary schooling. Particular 'sub-themes', which emerged from respondents' further comments as salient and accounted for the key themes, are explained.

Learning the HL: Beyond the language

While all children agreed that learning the HL was 'important' and 'useful', the reasons they gave varied in content as well as detail (perhaps in part attributable to age or writing skills). Still, answers pointing to the opportunities to use the language in 'practical' spheres (around three-quarters of 11+ year-olds and a third of younger children) dominated. They referred to its use in future careers, education and travels (such as '*It will help you when it is written on your CV*', '*It helps you get into universities as it is a complex language*' or '*If I go to India, I can ask where things are*'). The second theme, reflected in the answers of a quarter older and half of younger children, referred to 'communication'—either in the wider Punjabis network

or that which bridges the gap from this network to the English-speaking mainstream (such as *'You can translate for someone who doesn't understand English'*, *'It helps you communicate with others who speak Panjabi'*).

The final theme, reflected by a third of the older and a quarter younger children's responses, shows an awareness of the need for the HL to access (particularly religious) elements of their heritage or propagate it as a legacy (such as *'If you wanted to read the Guru Granth Sahib, you would need Panjabi'* and *'I could pass on my knowledge to my children or other kids'*). Thus most children were apt at recognising the 'utility' of the HL as part of their skillset for future prospects and bridging their own with other communities, while some also saw it as a means of continuing their ethnic heritage.

The key theme from parents' initial answers also referred to the function of 'communication' (such as *'being able to communicate with the elders'* and *'using the language back in India'*), but they were invariably nuanced by a broader set of purposes. These most frequently centred round exposure to other Sikh children and cultural customs (such as *'I wanted my children to learn reading and writing. It helps them study, meet other children and learn about functions (cultural)'* or *'to improve all three disciplines of reading, writing and speaking and socialise with fellow Sikh children, and learn about Sikhism'*). Compared to the children's, this theme portrays a more 'holistic' motivation for HL learning, from literacy skills through ethnic in-group socialisation to culture retention. These appeared to underpin the intentions for sending the children to a CS setting; several parents specifically referred to the school's links with the Gurdwara or (unlike their own CSs in the past) its cultural curriculum based on Sikh 'values and practices' that included scriptures and prayers.

From the teaching staff's perspectives, reasoning for HL learning tended to revolve around expectations as educators. All seven referred to how children enjoyed learning if staff ensured teaching was well received (with good attendance and participation in activities) and tailored

the syllabus to needs. Class teachers, in particular, regarded the CS *setting* as helping children ‘feel close’ to the Punjabi culture or Sikh religion, while the assistants recalled (as ex-pupils) the cultural aspects of CS (events and activities such as festivals, hymns and dance) aiming to build children’s confidence for filling in more ‘mature’ roles in life or the community.

Complementary Schooling: Teaching to Resourcing, Community to Identity, and Challenges

Children, parents and teachers were asked about their experiences, as learners and facilitators of learners, of complementary schooling and in particular the current CS, as part of the focus on their prominent evaluations. Around three-quarters of children’s answers pertained to the key theme of ‘teaching’ as a benefit in terms of ‘good’ curricula, pedagogy or staff (such as ‘*They are teachers that can teach*’ and ‘*You can learn lots of things about your culture like Paath*’). A minority (a quarter older and a few younger children) appraised their school as a good ‘space’ in terms of physical facility (referring to the Gurdwara or library, for instance) as well as cultural terms around a felt sense of ‘community’ (e.g. ‘*It is disciplined, friendly, makes it feel like family*’, ‘*The staff support, my friends and the Sikh community...*’). Several voiced for ‘*things that can be better*’ that surrounded resourcing the facility (e.g. ‘*They could renew a few things*’ or specific repairs) with many offers to help with improvements (such as decorating classrooms with materials ‘about Punjab’ or organising school trips).

Parents’ answers corroborated with children’s on teaching and facility (such as the ‘purpose-built’ school or ‘extremely committed staff’). Elaborating on complementary schooling, they reiterated the learning of ‘respect’ and ‘discipline’ (such as ‘*They’ve learnt discipline...good behaviour and respect for all religions and people*’, ‘*Yes...learn respect for adults and good behaviour, search for our culture on the Internet, learn more Paath, the discipline*’). Respect tended to refer to that for adults in their community and beyond, and discipline was reflected by behaviour showing the community in a good light or taking an

active interest in the culture (*'more inquisitive towards our language and religion'*). Such 'culture learning' was deemed paramount to their sense of identity, emphasising how the children were 'prouder to be Sikh' or 'connected more' with Sikhism since attending CS, as they were expected to *'understand the Western culture as well as embrace the Indian culture'*. To this end, the ease with which they socialised across communities (having *'friends in this (CS) and the other (mainstream) schools'*) was used as evidence of the children's bicultural adaptation.

While very few parents articulated definite areas for improvement (centred on extracurricular activities, noting that these might require their extra participation), the teachers spoke about how children intimated to them that 'more information' about their culture was learnt in CS than at home. This implies the CS's role as going beyond supporting HL towards substituting home learning. In fact, 'conversing with family members' was a key 'challenge' voiced by all teachers referring to the under-use of Panjabi by certain (beyond second-generation) families (*'Sometimes the children find it hard to adapt to a language that is not even spoken by their parents except luckily if they have grandparents speaking it'*). Amid this, the language itself and its mode of use were also seen as shifting with changes in technology and media, where Panjabi was introduced to *'more of a virtual platform or social media'* and its pronunciation had changed 'a lot' (with words taught in the past no longer being used). The shifts were seen also as potential 'opportunities', however, for more use of 'modern technology' (the Internet, in particular) in pedagogy *'in line with the generation today'*. This potential was appraised as particularly useful where the Punjabi population worldwide was growing (referring to the US, Canada and Europe) and one might network to 'keep up' with events in India as well as other Sikh communities, the kinds of community-bridging to which children and parents alluded earlier as one of the key motivations for learning the HL.

Discussion

This study combined measures that quantified HL proficiency and use, cultural participation and strength of identities, to gauge their interrelationships and generation-status differences, with qualitative accounts of children, parents and teachers on HL learning and CS experience to make sense of those relationships and differences. This section incorporates the results to build up a coherent narrative from which conclusions can be drawn.

The majority of children saw their HL (particularly oral) proficiency as ‘good’, but that was impacted strongly by home use, as related to generation status, and in specific ways (through cultural participation) by the CS. The importance of home use to proficiency is validated by, besides the regressions, results of HL use across contexts; home and broadcast media (often convened at home) were highly bilingual (versus contexts in which English dominated such as friendship, in line with existing research; Caldas and Caron-Caldas 2002). It is likely that generation effects were borne out by the association between oral proficiencies and home use (with parents, in particular), which differed between generations. The particular difference—between children with both Indian-born parents and those with both UK-born parents (taking into account the smaller subsamples)—was consistently found perhaps due to the two groups being the most contrasting in terms of direct links to the HL and where it originated, through the family’s native speakers. The ‘third’ generation most removed from India may have the most limited opportunities, while the other groups retained at least one parent as a direct link. This is corroborated by the challenge that teachers faced teaching children whose parents did not speak Panjabi, with the CS substituting rather than complementing learning, and is in line with reports showing HL attrition being most progressive from the second to third generation (Li and Wen 2015).

The combined findings further highlight the relevance of motivations for HL learning to its proficiency and concomitant outcomes. While the clear influence of home use on proficiency corresponds with research locating the home context as central for language maintenance in children (Riches and Curdt-Christiansen 2010), this does not take away how CS complements HL learning in a culturally impactful environment. Apart from concurring that CS facilitated HL learning, children, parents and teachers pointed to some form of ‘culture learning’ as an underlying motivation (expressed as heritage legacy, culture retention and role-building in the community) or an outcome from attending CS (expressed as sense of community, discipline, respect, pride and community-bridging). Although the parents desired culture retention more strongly than most children, who focused on HL’s practical utility (cf. instrumental benefits; Francis et al. 2009), older children, like their teachers, recognised the HL proficiency needed to access the relevant knowledge (scriptures) and participate in the relevant cultural activities (hymns and prayers that require literacy; cf. Jaspal and Coyle 2010; Rosowsky 2013). These findings further bear out the associations between proficiency, cultural participation and Sikh identification, corresponding with recent evidence linking HL proficiency and ethnic identity (Yu 2018) and highlighting the connections between heritage language, culture, and identity as part-and-parcel of the acculturation process.

The findings surrounding identities reflect elements of bicultural adaptation described in the introduction. The initial indicators are the children’s preference for a bicultural label (British Sikh) and the *positive* contribution of British identification towards Sikh identification (in the regression results). Although Sikh identity was stronger, fitting with the integrated bicultural model (Phinney and Devich-Navarro 1997), the model denotes that ethnic and mainstream identities are likely independent of one another. Here, they appeared to *augment* each other. The open-ended data indicates how some children viewed themselves as (bilingual/bicultural) individuals that can aptly bridge the communities (cf. brokers in

other research; Barratt-Pugh and Rohl 2001; Haneda 2006). This is corroborated by parents' observation of the ease with which their children socialised in and accepted both cultures, and that was seen as fitting with their cultural tenet of 'respect' for all. This corresponds with existing research that has found those who manage to form strong, positive multiple identities (being bicultural) to have better psychological adjustment and social support (Liu et al. 2009; Marks et al. 2011).

The final theme identified that HL learning in CS was not without its issues. Apart from lack of home use among the third generation, the teachers regarded changes in language use and in the language itself (cf. Jaspal and Coyle 2010) as challenging for teaching, similar to existing studies of other HL teachers (e.g. Russell and Kuriscak 2015). Yet they also saw opportunities from those changes for promoting more 'modern' pedagogies (using online media). This can be a fruitful avenue given that, relative to other contexts, their pupils used Panjabi least when online and with friends. That friendships (even with other Punjabis/Sikh children) are mostly enacted in English corresponds with existing findings of other second-generation minorities (Caldas and Caron-Caldas 2002). Considering the ubiquity of online media in young people's lives nowadays, teaching on a virtual platform can pave the way towards more engagement by, and between, children similar to multimodal teaching practices previously documented in other CS settings (Lytra and Martin 2010). Apart from recognising the timeliness of this idea, as in line with the current generation, the teachers also regarded this platform as more suited to 'bridging communities' (here the worldwide Sikh diasporas), which is also one of the key motivations for HL learning from children's and parents' perspectives.

There are definite limitations to this study. Sample representativeness and generalisability is one, even though our aim was not to generalise our findings to all HL communities or CSs. The current setting was also in some ways not 'typical' in that the school operated on its own

premises, even if resourcing was comparable to others (cf. Li 2006; Lytra and Martin 2010; Wu 2006). Distinct findings, or rather the *absence* of previous trends such as age variations in HL use (cf. Caldas and Caron-Caldas 2002), dissenting voices about school ethos by pupils (cf. Archer et al. 2009) and parent-teacher divergence in expectations (cf. Schwartz 2013), might belie the ‘close-knit’ nature of the community. This means that it is not appropriate to produce generalised conclusions even for CSs catering to other British Sikhs, considering the diaspora and its institutions are far from homogeneous (Nesbitt 2011; Singh 2014). Through incorporating the sets of findings, multiple perspectives, and existing literature, we may draw inferences about interactions in the CS ‘context’, such as how language, culture and learners’ identity are inexplicably intertwined, what multifaceted motivations can be borne out by key players’ participation, and how outcomes can go beyond the measurable (such as proficiency) to shared and felt experiences (such as a sense of community). Future research could explore how such rich processes unfold as children grow (cf., Caldas 2007) or communities evolve (Singh 2014), incorporating intricate tools for recording language use (e.g. Caldas and Caron-Caldas 2002) or involving multiple CS settings (cf. Francis et al. 2009).

In sum, our findings from young Panjabi-speaking British Sikhs indicate that, even within a sample attending the same CS establishment with good facilities, pupils’ proficiency can vary depending upon home use, which differs across generations, and their ethnic and mainstream identities may augment each other. Although the dominant motivation for HL maintenance differs between children and adults, all parties recognise that it is facilitated by CS, through culture learning in particular, that the young become individuals with a strong ethnic identity that can adapt biculturally and bridge communities.

Notes

1. The term refers to a (typically minority) language spoken by its speakers at home or with those of their heritage culture. In many contexts, it is also the ‘mother tongue’ to which the speakers have been exposed since birth as the first language. In this study, where speakers attend a CS to support their learning and proficiency varies, the term ‘heritage language’ is deemed more fitting (see Polinsky & Kagan 2007).
2. While we acknowledge that it is more commonly written as ‘Punjabi’ in other works, we use the term that named the current school and was preferred by its community.
3. The term denotes people (Sikhs and non-Sikhs) from the Punjab region who speak Panjabi and, like the other terms in this measure, was heard in the school and used by the children.

Declaration of Interest

No potential conflict of interest has arisen from this research.

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