Title: Heritage language research through the lens of psycho-/neurolinguistics and individual differences
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Heritage language research has been extremely productive and is interesting for many reasons (Montrul, 2018). First, there is a highly relevant and growing social population in countries due to migration globally. In Germany, more than 40% of children under the age of 5 have a migration background which could be taken as a proxy for being a heritage speaker (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2019). Similarly in the Netherlands, around 25% of people over 15 speak another language or dialect at home (Centraal Bureau van Statistiek, 2021). These high and increasing numbers of multilingual speakers suggest that monolingualism is no longer the norm in the 21st century. Second, heritage speakers display a highly specific acquisition scenario where as native speakers of a language, they show diverging developments in their language production and comprehension. They also typically display more variation in their language abilities and experience. Therefore, heritage speakers provide an interesting and valuable potential to explore the role of individual differences in language production and comprehension as well as to test and formulate new theories and fundamentally reevaluate the brain's capacity to acquire multiple languages over the lifespan.

More recently, heritage languages have started to be the focus of psycho-/neuro-linguistic research, which so far has predominantly studied monolingual populations (and to some degree adult L2 speakers). This allowed explorations for empirical experimental studies by distinguishing different types of bilingual speakers regarding the nature of bilingualism (Pereira Soares et al., 2022). For example, turning to comprehension capabilities in Turkish heritage speakers, we can investigate how and if this group processes morphosyntactic case-marking cues predictively in a similar way to monolingual speakers of Turkish (Özge et al., 2019). As an additional methodological advance that extends to psycholinguistics generally — beyond heritage language research, current studies try to develop innovative and exploratory ways to capture individual processing abilities in different speakers and the relationship between these and socio-cultural as well as cognitive background factors (Karaca et al., 2023; Özsoy et al., 2023).

Furthering such explorations will undoubtedly allow unique advances in formal linguistic theories (Lohndal et al., 2019) and contribute to our understanding of the ways language is acquired, used and processed in a multilingual mind and to more systematically investigate the role of individual differences. There are also practical applications that are triggered by studies such as Klassert and Gagarina (2010) who discuss the use of the majority language in heritage language families which is a matter of high societal relevance.

Considering the growing use of the psycho-/neuro-linguistic methods in heritage language research and the emerging shift in the field to take an individual differences approach to examine how multilinguals produce and comprehend language, this workshop aims to answer the following and related questions:

1. How can studies employing psycho-/neuro-linguistics methods (e.g., eye-tracking, EEG, MEG, self-paced listening/reading) inform heritage language research?
2. How do individual differences such as in language experience (i.e., input quality, input quantity, timing of the language acquisition, etc.) modulate language processing skills of heritage speakers?
3. How do heritage speakers process both their languages?

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