May Sasabihin ang Kabataan
'The Youth Have Something to Say':
Youth perspectives on language shift and linguistic identity

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This position paper brings youth perspectives to the forefront of academic discourse about language shift and linguistic identity, framed in the larger intersecting conversations about language endangerment, maintenance and revitalization, the breakdown and rebuilding of intergenerational transmission, and the changing late modern landscapes in which youth linguistic identities emerge. At the core of this paper is the question, "What can be done about language shift?" My contribution to the answers is a call for further integration of youth perspectives into these academic discourses, most especially (but not exclusively) perspectives written by young scholars who are speaker-members of communities in which language shift is occurring. Such integration allows us to gain nuanced understandings of youth perceptions about language shift in their communities, the effects on their linguistic identities, and their motivations for reclaiming (or letting go of) their ancestral/heritage languages. This is a work in which I overtly take professional and personal stances, drawing upon my own experiences as a member of a Filipino diaspora in which language shift is currently taking place.

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Itong kasulatang ito ay nagbibigay diin sa perspektibo ng kabataan dito sa pagtalakay ng pang-akademya tungkol sa paglilipat ng wika sa isang henerasyon at sa susunod na henerasyon at tungkol sa pagkakakilanlan ng wika. Nilalagay ko itong kasulatang ito sa loob ng mga mas malalaking pagtalakay ng pang-akademya tungkol sa pagkawala ng wika sa buong daigdig, sa pagpapanatili at pagbabagong-sibol, sa pagkasira at muling pagtataguyod ng pagpapadala ng wika't kultura sa isang henerasyon at sa susunod na henerasyon, at sa pagbabago ng kalagayan ng makabagong daigdig na doon lumalabas ang mga pagkakakilanlan ng wika ng mga kabataan. Nasa pinakapuno ng kasulatan ko ang tanong na, "Ano kaya ang puwedeng gawin tungkol sa paglilipat ng wika sa susunod na mga henerasyon?" Ang sagot ko ay isang anunsyo na dapat magkaroon ng mas maraming pagsasama-sama ng perspektibo ng mga kabataan sa pagtalakay ng pang-akademya, lalo na (subali't hindi eksklusibo) ang mga perspektibong isinulat ng mga batang mag-aaral na sila ay kasapi ng sambayanan na ito ay may paglilipat ng wika, at itong mga mag-aaral na ito ay marunong magsalita ng wika ng sambayanan (o kaya naiintindihan nila ang wika). Sa pagkakasama-sama nito, magiging mas malalim ang pagka-unawa natin tungkol sa pang-unawa ng mga kabataan tungkol sa paglilipat ng wika sa mga sambayanan nila, tungkol sa kalalabsan ng mga pagkakakilanlan nila tungkol sa wika, at tungkol sa pagganyak nila kung bakit gusto nilang ibalik sa mabuting kalagayan (o kaya'y pawalain) ang mga minamana nilang wika. Ginagamit ko ang mga paninindigang propesyonal at pansarili sa kasulatang ito; ginagamit ko ang aking mga karanasan, dahil ako ay kasapi ng sambayanan ng Pinoy na wala sa Pilipinas, at nagbabago ang aming mga wika.

1. INTRODUCTION.[1] This position paper brings youth[2] perspectives to the forefront of academic discourse about language[3] shift and linguistic identity, framed in the larger intersecting conversations about language endangerment (Hale et al. 1992), maintenance and revitalization (Hinton & Hale 2001), the breakdown and rebuilding of intergenerational transmission (Fishman 1991, 2001), and the changing late modern landscapes (Rampton

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[2]I use the term 'youth' in a broad sense to denote individuals who are not yet considered to be adults in their community (viz. infants/toddlers, children, adolescents, young adults in their 20s–30s, etc.), with the caveat that 'youth' and 'adult' are defined differently in different communities. See Suslak 2005 regarding a critical approach to how 'youth' and 'adolescence' are defined, especially in contexts of language shift.

[3]I use the term 'language' as a convention that broadly covers all types of speech systems used by communities around the world—languages (both spoken and signed, and including creoles), pidgins, dialects, koinés, communalects, geolects, sociolects, and so forth. The term 'speech system' is a neutral term that denotes a conventionalized semiotic system used for communication, an attempt to avoid the often political nature of distinguishing a 'language' from a 'dialect.'

2006) in which youth linguistic identity emerge (Suslak 2005). At the core of this paper is the question, "What can be done about language shift?" My contribution to the answers is a call for further integration of youth perspectives into these academic discourses, most especially (but not exclusively) perspectives written by young scholars who are speaker-members of communities in which language shift is occurring. Such integration allows us to gain nuanced understandings of youth perceptions about language shift in their communities, the effects on their linguistic identities, and their motivations for reclaiming (or letting go of) their ancestral/heritage languages.[4] I overtly take professional and personal stances in this work, drawing upon my own experiences as a member of a Filipino diaspora in which language shift is currently taking place.

The global conversations about language endangerment in particular tend to focus on the perspectives of either the 'outside' observer/researcher or the community elders; too often, though, the voices of the youth are severely under-represented. From these global discourses emerge various kinds of metaphorical language that are intended to evoke public response (Hill 2002:119). Phrases like "language death" (e.g., Crystal 2000, Hale et al. 1992:7) and "language suicide" (e.g., Beck & Lam 2008, Denison [1977] 2009) evoke visceral images that equate the 'Language' with a living being. Other metaphors such as the 'steamroller' effect of majority world languages overwhelming endangered languages vilify the majority Language X and victimize the minority Language Y (e.g., Crystal 1999). What is troubling is that authors who indulge in such metaphors do not always acknowledge the effects of their rhetoric in the context of the realities of language endangerment.

Most scenarios of language endangerment are a result of the breakdown of the intergenerational transmission of the language: the current generation of adults and elders are members of the last generations of fluent first language (L1) speakers[5] of the family language, whereas their children and grandchildren are not fluent L1 speakers in that language

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[4] I follow Valdés's (2005) definition of 'heritage language': "In recent years, the term *heritage language* has been used broadly to refer to nonsocietal and nonmajority languages spoken by groups often known as linguistic minorities" (411, italics in original). Note that in the foreign language teaching profession within a US context, the term 'heritage student' denotes "a student of language who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken" (412). I use the term 'ancestral language' in a broad sense to denote the languages that communities identify as part of their linguistic/cultural/genealogical ancestry, regardless of whether the languages are currently spoken by members of any given generation in those communities. Even though the terms "ancestral" and "heritage" somewhat overlap in denotation, I do not use them interchangeably, but I do forward slash-combine them.

[5] The terms 'L1' and 'L1 speaker' require clarification. For many, L1 corresponds to the language a child acquires during the critical period (Lenneberg 1967, Penfield & Roberts 1959, *inter alia*). For others, L1 is the language a child encounters first, regardless if it is fully acquired (William O'Grady, pers. comm., 2014). Since comprehension precedes production in processes of language acquisition and learning (Clark 2009:385), a more precise definition of L1 would be the first language in which a child gains some degree of functional ability, be it comprehension or production, and regardless if fully acquired (Kamil Deen, pers. comm., 2014). In many cases, that L1 is also the language one speaks 'the best' (i.e., fluency, dominance, lack of non-native accent, etc.), but this is not necessarily the case—witness the effects of intragenerational language shift (see §2.1) in which language attrition affects the speech of an individual who is no longer proficient in the language that she or he acquired as a child. In this paper, I follow the latter definition, that is, the first language in which one gains some functional ability, regardless if fully acquired. The implication for the definition of "receptive/passive bilingual" (cf. Beardsmore 1986:120; see §2.1) is that for the child who can only understand the heritage language and who can only fluently speak the majority language, her or his heritage language is still considered to be the L1, even though she or he may not be considered to be a 'fluent L1 speaker.' Note that a receptive bilingual can be dominant in the family/heritage language (L1) and only have receptive abilities in the majority language (L2). An 'L1 speaker,' then, is someone who can speak her or his L1, as opposed to an 'L1 understander,' which characterizes most heritage learners of the family language. Also, in this paper, I use the term 'L1 speaker' rather than "native speaker" (Blommaert & Rampton 2009:11–12), particularly since the term 'native' has problematic connotations for diasporic communities that are no longer (physically) part of the 'native' *in situ* community and yet still speak a speech system that is similar—but by no means identical—to the *in situ* speech system.

but rather L1 speakers of another language; when those youths eventually become adults and enter into parenthood, the ancestral/heritage language will not likely be learned by their children—the language only 'lives' as an everyday means of communication with members of the older generations, who eventually pass away (Krauss 1998, Schmidt 1990, *inter alia*).[6]

One cannot, however, gain a nuanced understanding of language shift and endangerment when one engages in certain kinds of academic rhetoric. If a speech community is described as committing 'language suicide,' then it follows that—at least for individuals who take a strong personal stance that language is an essential component in the construction of the self—the members of the community are 'killing themselves' (Denison [1977] 2009).[7] If endangered languages are being 'steamrolled' by majority languages (Crystal 1999), then it follows that the drivers of the steamrollers include the young adults who choose to speak a majority world language as their L1 rather than maintain the ability to speak their heritage language. As a member of the generation of US-born children of Filipino immigrants—a generation in which I already witness the effects of language shift from Tagalog[8] to English—I take personal offense at this kind of rhetoric, primarily for the implications that the writers of such rhetoric leave to the wind. How easy it is for academics to talk about indigenous peoples and minority groups who 'abandon' their languages and cultures, and yet rarely do those same academics openly consider in their publications the negative effects their rhetoric has on the people they talk or write about, especially young adults who are finding their own voices in the academic discourse.

For a person who is implicitly labeled by someone else—an outsider to the community, no less—as a 'killer,' a 'committer of suicide,' or a 'driver of a steamroller' that is flattening the speech community, such discourse is hurtful and can lead to deeply negative and fatalistic reactions. On the other hand, such kinds of labeling can force members of the community to see the realities of their linguistic situation for what it is and—more importantly—incite them to take action. I make this point not in the sense of avoiding 'hurting someone's feelings,' but rather to emphasize authors' accountability; as Hill (2002:119) asserts, "linguists and anthropologists may unwittingly undermine their own vigorous advocacy of endangered languages by a failure to think carefully about the multiple audiences who may hear and read advocacy rhetoric." Throughout this position paper, I emphasize that the youth who are to become the parents of the next generation of children in commu-

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[6]I do not wish to ignore the work done in the context of language documentation, especially "salvage linguistic fieldwork" (Maxwell 2010:257), whereby the documentary record of a language whose extinction is imminent remains a source of information that can be mobilized to 'reawaken' the language via heritage learners. To echo what continues to be emphasized in the literature on language acquisition and revitalization, the strongest chances for languages to survive is when they are transmitted intergenerationally in home domains as meaningful modes of interaction throughout childhood and beyond. The mere fact that a comprehensive record of a speech system exists in an archive does not directly contribute to its use in the home and by the family, at least not without initial mobilization or reclamation/repatriation of older archives. The use of anthropomorphic metaphors of language as 'living beings' are not without criticism (e.g., Denison [1977] 2009); however, to continue the metaphor here, a language only truly 'lives' when it is actively used as a meaningful mode of communication.

[7]An anonymous reviewer takes the perspective that 'language suicide' implies the language killing itself, but again, to return to the criticisms of anthropomorphic metaphors about language (e.g., Denison [1977] 2009), such a perspective reflects ideologies that languages exist separately from the people who speak them. In the perspectives of those who are witnessing language shift at a personal level—those who struggle to encourage family and cohorts to continue speaking the language—such an ideology does not resonate with the everyday realities of language shift.

[8]Although the endonym of the national *lingua franca* of the Philippines is 'Filipino,' the language upon which it is primarily based is Tagalog. I self-identify with the language name 'Tagalog' rather than 'Filipino,' based on the language name ideologies developed in my family domains.

nities in which language shift is occurring are indeed members of these multiple audiences. My paper examines the interconnected issues of linguistic identity and agency, the active role of the youth in processes of intergenerational transmission and their awareness of its effects, and the audacity of youth in reclaiming and transforming language. These topics emerge in a variety of contexts, but they tend to be under-represented in some areas of the academic discourse about language shift and endangerment. In §2, I provide a review of the literature on language shift, loss and gain, and language endangerment, whereby I address matters that are sometimes overlooked in mainstream discourses on these topics. In §3, I then turn to 'youth linguistic identity,' with an emphasis on the value of investigating such a topic in the broader discourses. In §4, I further explicate my call to encourage other researchers—regardless of whether they are community 'insiders' or 'outsiders,' fluent speakers or beginning learners of the language being investigated, or a member of an older or a younger generation—to continue exploring the youth-oriented issues I raise. I especially encourage young scholars who are experiencing language shift in their own lives to speak up about issues that are relevant to their everyday journeys of situating themselves in rapidly changing linguascapes. I provide closing remarks in §5.

I draw upon autoethnographic (Ellis et al. 2011) reflections of my own experiences witnessing language shift affect my generational cohort in my family—young adults who were born in the 1980s and 1990s to Filipino immigrants in the US—as well as my own personal journey in the reclamation of my Tagalog language.[9] I hope that my discussions inspire youth from any speech community to take action and engage in open conversations with each other in their cohort, with their families, and with others who wish to learn about their perspectives regarding the issues I explore in this paper.

2. THE DISCOURSES ON LANGUAGE SHIFT, LOSS AND GAIN, AND ENDANGERMENT. I provide a brief overview of the discourses around language shift, loss, gain, and endangerment, whereby I address matters that are sometimes overlooked in mainstream discourses on these topics. In these discussions, I draw upon my own family experiences to illustrate that abstract sociolinguistic phenomena are realized in very personal ways.

2.1 LANGUAGE SHIFT. Language shift manifests in at least two dimensions: "intragenerational language shift" (de Vries 1994:62)—also known as 'attrition' (Seliger & Vago 1991)—and 'intergenerational language shift' (Fishman 1991). Regarding the former, I can draw on the experiences of some of my elders (the parental generation) in my family. As children growing up in the rural Bukidnon Province of Mindanao Island in the Philippines, those family members acquired Cebuano as their L1, the language of the wider community. When they later moved to the city of San Jose in Occidental Mindoro, they were immersed in a primarily Tagalog-speaking context. Over time and through changing circumstances—including marrying non-Cebuano-speaking individuals as well as moving to the US and interacting with other members of the Filipino diaspora—those family members became increasingly exposed to Tagalog on a regular basis, such that Tagalog has become the in-

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[9] I was born in 1983 in Virginia to Filipino immigrants: my mother is an L1 speaker of Ilokano, and my father an L1 speaker of Cebuano. Their language of interaction is Tagalog, their L2. I consider Tagalog to be my L1 (i.e., the first language in which I gained comprehension skills). I experienced a shift to English early on, such that it became my dominant code of interaction while I maintained passive/receptive listening comprehension in Tagalog. When I was 18, I began my journey of reclaiming the ability to speak Tagalog—a journey that continues to this day (see §4 and Odango in press for further discussion).

stinctual mode of communication among themselves, even though they had spoken to each other in Cebuano during their childhood.

Regarding the latter, I observe in my family that intergenerational language shift has occurred at least twice in the span of three generations. My elders who were raised in Bukidnon were exposed to Kinaray-a, a minority language of the region in comparison to the majority *lingua franca* of Cebuano. While their elders (my grandparents) spoke their L1 of Kinaray-a amongst themselves, their children acquired Cebuano. Those children became adults and then parents who use Tagalog on an everyday basis with each other, but not as a language of interaction with their children (that is, the generation of Filipino children born in the US in the 1980s and 1990s, of which I am a member). Rather, it is English—the third language (L3) of those elders—that they used as the language of interaction with their young children, who subsequently acquired that L3 as the dominant code of interaction (see the discussion of 'passive/receptive bilingual' below). The description of the shifts in my own family's ancestral and heritage languages parallel those reported for immigrant communities throughout the US and around the world (cf. Fishman 1966, Hinton 2009, *inter alia*).

For my generation, the confluence of both kinds of shift has resulted in a group of 'passive' or 'receptive' bilinguals (Beardsmore 1986:120): members of my generational cohort are able to understand their parents' Tagalog speech, but reply accordingly in English.[10] This situation is a classic example of subtractive bi/multilingualism—that is, the loss of the ability to speak more than one language between generations (Lambert 1977, Wright et al. 2000, *inter alia*)—in contrast to additive bi/multilingualism, which is the maintenance of bilingualism in general (Genesee et al. 1995, Volterra & Taeschner 1978, *inter alia*).[11] For most immigrant Filipino families, one of the primary factors for such patterns of subtractive bi/multilingualism is the concerted effort by my parents' generation to use English as the code of interaction with my generation. On the one hand, here were no overtly negative attitudes toward Tagalog or other Philippine languages.[12] On the other hand, my parents told me that when they were raising my generation, there was a widespread perception among their cohort that speaking to children in more than one language will be detrimental to their language development (i.e., the children will speak a 'broken' version of either language).[13] Even though such perspectives are not as prevalent today given the development of research and educational efforts to support bilingualism in early childhood, the effects are nevertheless present in my generation—realized not only as the lack of the ability to fluently speak

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[10] Note that the broad definition of 'passive/receptive bilingualism' also applies to individuals who can speak fluently in their L1 family/heritage language but only have receptive abilities in the L2 majority language, such new adult immigrants to the US with limited command of English.

[11] Witness most examples from the Filipino diaspora in the US, in which the parental generation consists of individuals who are functionally fluent in at least three languages: (1) a regional language such as Ilokano, Cebuano, Pangasinan, Waray-Waray, and many others as the L1; (2) the national language of Tagalog/Filipino as the L2; and (3) English as the L3. In contrast, the overwhelming majority of members of the child generation born in the US are receptive bilinguals who understand the heritage Philippine language(s) spoken in the family but only speak English (and other languages learned in academic/professional settings). See García (2009:141–145) regarding the challenges with using the terms 'additive' and 'subtractive' bilingualism.

[12] The development of passive/receptive bilingualism in my generation is a testament to my parents' generation's willingness to allow my generation to be exposed to Tagalog on a regular basis, such that some degrees of linguistic competency emerge.

[13] One of my cousins recently told me an anecdote that is perhaps widely shared by many others. As a young child, she spoke some Tagalog at home, and she would occasionally use Tagalog in her preschool classes. When she was older, she was told by her parents that her preschool teacher recommended to them that they not speak to her in Tagalog at home, so that she would not use Tagalog in the classroom. My cousin lost her ability to speak Tagalog early in life, but she retains listening comprehension.

or understand the family language of Tagalog, but also as corresponding disinterest in issues often discussed in that code, such as matters regarding family who live in the Philippines (e.g., remittances, land ownership, emigration, etc.); such effects continue into the newest generation, as my elders choose to speak to their new grandchildren in English.

Researchers identify at least two kinds of intergenerational language shift: forced (involuntary) and voluntary (Otsuka 2007:448). Regarding the former, one must recognize that in many cases, the entities that control power in which Language Y is the primary (or sole) mode of communication do not necessarily target Language X with repressive policies, although that is certainly the case in oppressive colonial contexts. Rather, it is the control of other aspects of the minority communities' lives—natural resources, local economies, religious expression, and so forth—that lead to perception that minority Language X is no longer valued because the contexts in which it was valued have been subverted (448).[14] Voluntary language shift, on the other hand, "occurs when members of a language of a language community come to perceive that they would be better off speaking the dominant language than speaking their own" (Otsuka 2007:448). These kinds of shift characterize the loss of immigrant languages in the diaspora as well as in *in situ* minority language communities. Errington (2003:725), however, calls into question the assumptions of this kind of shift:

> [L]anguage shift…[is] the sort of cumulative process of language change that results from the self-interested, rational decisions that individuals make in the course of their lives, which happen to include choices between and transmission of one language rather than another. These arguments, founded on the premise that speakers are autonomous, knowledgable (sic) social agents, can in turn be rebutted by calling into question easy distinctions between self-interested "choice" and institutional "coercion," especially in circumstances of rapid sociolinguistic change (e.g., Dorian 1993:575–579; Maffi 1999:37).[15]

Ostuka (2007:448) states that "[i]t is often difficult to distinguish forced and voluntary language shift," using as an example the ban of *'Ōlelo Hawai'i* 'language of Hawai'i (i.e., Hawaiian)' in Hawai'i schools in 1896 by the passage of School Law 1896, Section 30; the law only banned the use of the language in education domains, and it does not state anything about the use of the language outside of such domains (contrary to popular belief). Nothing in the law specifically forbids the use of *'Ōlelo Hawai'i* in the home domain.[16] However, because speakers of *'Ōlelo Hawai'i* perceived that "English was key to socioeconomic success" (449) in light of such laws and the confluence of other sociocultural factors, the parental generation decided that English[17] was the desirable mode of interaction to be used with their children. Similarly, for immigrant diasporas around the world, the confluence of both kinds of shift continues to affect the intergenerational transmission of their heritage languages (e.g., Fishman 1966, Hinton 2009, *inter alia*). Nevertheless, as

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[14]Nettle & Romaine (2000:91) observe that "it is policies directed at the economic roles available to indigenous people—and not policies directed straight at the language—which kill minority languages."

[15]This quote from Errington (2003:725) is in the context of his claim that various observers of language endangerment "argue that 'language death' is a misnomer for what is actually 'language shift'," which Errington defines in the manner quoted above. That is, Errington (2003) does not distinguish between forced (involuntary) and voluntary language shift in the particular context from which I take this quote.

[16]A member of the audience of my February 24, 2014 presentation on this topic pointed out to me that teachers actually visited family homes and told parents not to speak *'Ōlelo Hawai'i* with their children.

[17]There was also the growing use of Hawai'i Pidgin English—the precursor to Hawai'i Creole English (Sakoda & Siegel 2003:9–10)—in communities throughout Hawai'i during that time.

Alexander Mawyer (pers. comm., 2014) has brought to my attention, this 'neat' division in agency between voluntary and involuntary shift does not truly address the nuanced, real-world examples in which personal choice and (un)spoken coercion are intertwined.

2.2 LOSS AND GAIN. Language 'loss'—both attrition in the lifetime of an individual and subtractive bi/multilingualism across generations—can certainly be quantified (O'Grady & Hattori 2013). Losing the ability to understand and speak a language fluently can then lead to changes in culture that impact the wider community, most usually cast in negative ways (e.g., Fishman's (1991:16) example of the effects of the loss of the ability to speak Hebrew on Jewish culture). Social effects are especially powerful in the home domain; children who cannot speak the language of their elders can lose interest in their linguistic and cultural heritage, which leads to not only interpersonal distance between generations but also youth 'identity crises,' which can have profound impacts on youth mental and social health (Guerrero et al. 2006, Guerrero et al. 2010) and the development of one's self-esteem (Rumbaut 1994).

Conversely, social change is also seen in a positive light in terms of the benefits that immigrant families observe over time for the child generation that are facilitated by proficiency in the majority language (e.g., educational and professional opportunities, ease of access to medical and financial aid, etc.). These realizations are often made in comparison to what life would be like if the children were to have been raised in the homeland. Language shift is therefore a casualty of the search for a better life as defined by the parental generation—not an inevitable casualty, but one that many families nevertheless experience. Rather than the development of overtly negative attitudes toward the family's language, the majority language is instead seen as the most relevant vessel to transmit practical knowledge to children, especially when the circumstances in which they are being raised are very different from the ones in which the parents were raised.[18] As Fishman (1991:16) asserts, "[l]anguage shift generally and basically involves culture change as well." When linguists write about the 'unfortunate effects' of voluntary language shift, they do not always openly investigate the positive (non-linguistic) outcomes that accompany (and/or cause) the shift, and for understandable reasons: any kind of admission that language shift is not inherently 'bad' undermines the discourses of both language endangerment and language maintenance/revitalization, which are driven by powerful agendas at multiple levels, including those of academia and of the speech community (Dobrin et al. 2007, Hill 2002).

The word 'loss,' however—denoting that what was once there no longer exists—has value connotations: loss is 'bad,' whereas maintenance and gain/reclamation are 'good.' The rhetoric used by many (but not all) writers imply value judgments,[19] framed in ideologies of linguistic and cultural pluralism from an academic/scientific perspective: it is 'bad' that the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world decreases with every language that becomes extinct due to the cessation of intergenerational transmission of that language. Cameron (2007:269) observes that, "the 'crisis' of language endangerment is generally presented in emotive and moralistic terms." The scientific view of loss is often translated into humanistic terms so as to appeal to the wider public, such as Hinton's claim that "the world

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[18]I would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for the suggestion that I clarify this point.

[19]Consider but a few examples: adverbs such as "sadly" describe the state of affairs when children cannot produce complex grammatical patterns (O'Grady & Hattori 2013:n.p.), adjectives such as "devastating" describe cultural change and shift of the new generation as perceived by the older generation (Fishman 1991:16), and verbs such as "abandon" describe the action of indigenous peoples who are supposed to be stewards of their languages, cultures, and traditions (UNESCO Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages 2003:2).

stands to lose an important part of the sum of human knowledge whenever a language stops being used" (2001:5); Errington (2003:726) analyzes Hinton's quote as a type of "rhetoric [that] can be seen as mobilizing universal claims about the value of languages in general to license claims of access to languages in particular, not just for the sake of their speakers but for 'us', 'the world', or 'humanity' at large."

I raise these matters not to reject them, because as a linguist, I, too, share in those values. Rather, my goal is unpack these assumptions that often go unnoticed since they are parts of the larger discourses into which novice scholars and young people enter. I draw upon alternate discourses: what some call 'loss,' others will call 'change,' 'transformation,' or the development of something 'new.'[20] The challenge, then, for researchers is to momentarily set aside assumptions of 'pathology' when dealing with language shift. While it may be easy to focus (or perhaps dwell) on examples of loss in a speech community, it is also the responsibility of researchers in various documentary fields of social science to acknowledge the concurrent transformations, especially those that develop in youth generations.[21] As Hoëm (2010:65) states in the context of the interactions between Tokelauan and English—resulting in, among other phenomena, the creation of new genres in the Tokelauan language but based on English text types, albeit amidst the loss of other older Tokelauan genres—"[t]he question of gain is perhaps not so easily answered as it always must be seen in relation to the issue of loss." Such a challenge must be taken on in earnest in the context of looking at what those 'losses' and 'gains' mean to a youth in a community undergoing language shift.

2.3 LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT. Language endangerment is almost always caused by language shift;[22] language shift, however, does not always lead to language endangerment. At the local level, a community can experience language shift, and yet the language remains safe at the global level. The most familiar examples are perhaps the heritage languages of diasporic immigrant groups. A language like Tagalog is no longer spoken by the thousands of Filipino children born in places like the US, and yet Tagalog continues to be spoken by millions of people as an L1/2/3 in the *in situ* homeland of the Philippines. One might say, then, that at the local level of the US Filipino diaspora, Tagalog is endangered, but on a global scale it is safe. In other scenarios in which the population of the diaspora is significantly numerically greater than the *in situ* population, language shift that occurs in the former has profound effects on the status of the language as a whole on a global scale (e.g.,

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[20]To return to my family example, consider the following scenario. Despite 'losing' the ability to speak Cebuano fluently, my elders can still re-access their Cebuano skills to engage in Cebuano-Tagalog-English code-switching, which is in itself a linguistic mode that is used for humorous positive face-building family interaction and rapport development. On the one hand, one linguist might say that my family members are 'stricken' by the loss of Cebuano in their linguistic repertoire; on the other hand, another linguist might say that a new and unique Cebuano-Tagalog-English mode of communication is being developed by members of a diasporic Filipino community in their linguistic repertoire—and such a mode of communication is worthy of language documentation.

[21]In documentary linguistics, in order to create a "lasting, multipurpose record of a language" (Himmelmann 2006:1), there is a tacit understanding that some kinds of linguistic phenomena are more valued than others, partly due to the urgency associated with documenting the language in a state in which 'loss' has not yet completely affected the grammar; such a state is most often reflected in the speech of elders. If the speech of the youth is in fact afflicted by 'loss' as a result of language shift, then such speech is not particularly interesting or relevant to some documentary linguists. To other linguists, however, the youth's speech is just as interesting and worthy of documentation and analysis as any other variety, perhaps because to those linguists, the loss has also resulted in gain.

[22]Most cases of endangerment not caused by intergenerational shift include natural disasters and destructive human action that suddenly reduce the number of speakers of a language in communities with small populations.

the shifts reported in Taumoefolau et al. 2002 from immigrant Pasifika languages to English in Aotearoa).

I must stress that the mere fact that a heritage language of an immigrant diaspora such as Tagalog remains 'safe' because it is spoken by millions of other people does not lessen the impacts of language shift occurring in the generations of children in immigrant communities around the world, which include the corresponding effects on linguistic identity and self-esteem (cf. Hinton 2009, Rumbaut 1994, *inter alia*). I have personally encountered comments from academics who almost flippantly brush aside attempts at comparing the situation of immigrant children with the situation of children in *in situ* endangered language communities, pointing to the very fact that the immigrant languages are still 'safe,' and so there is no 'urgency.' Hinton (2001a:3) claims that while "many people of immigrant descent who do not know their language of heritage manage to learn that language through classes or during visits to the homeland,"[23] people who are identified (and/or self-identify) as indigenous minorities rarely have "anywhere to go to learn their ancestral tongue." What such comments and observations reveal are the larger undercurrents in linguistic research about endangered languages, that is, linguistic diversity and language as the valuable objects of scientific study. Therefore, the impending loss of a language that only has a dozen living speakers in the entire world is a more time-sensitive matter than the ongoing loss of a language in a diasporic community of hundreds of thousands of immigrant children, and yet the language is still spoken by millions more in the *in situ* homeland.[24]

I respect and understand those positions, especially from the perspective of documentary linguistic 'triage' and the logistical constraints for research (i.e., funding, time, priority, etc.). What I disagree with, however, is the notion that there is nothing to be gained from comparing the language shifts of immigrant diasporas with those of *in situ* endangered speech communities. Research on bi/multilingualism, heritage language learning, and intergenerational transmission often relies on cross-linguistic/cultural case studies of shift happening in both immigrant diasporas and *in situ* communities (e.g., Fishman 1991, 2001; Valdés 2005; Wyman et al. 2013; *inter alia*). Wyman et al. (2013:5) assert that, "the experiences of youth from Indigenous and immigrant communities in North America share certain similarities," such as negotiating the dynamic linguascapes of movement, identity formation, language competencies, and peer culture. There are certainly differences in the sociolinguistic contexts of both communities (cf. Hinton 2001:3), and yet they can be connected by their efforts in reclaiming language and culture, however separated by time and space;[25] the actions of one have effects on the other (see Otsuka 2007:465–466 regarding the Tongan diaspora, as well as Otsuka & Wong 2007 regarding the Tokelauan diaspora).

My perspective is a pragmatic one when it comes to discussing the issue of language endangerment with undergraduate students. As an instructor of a 100-level course in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa (UHM), I found the task of teaching units on language endangerment a welcome challenge. For better or worse, it is admittedly easy for undergraduate students to perceive language endangerment as a process

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[23] From my own experience, none of my generational cohort from my hometown in the US have taken classes to learn Tagalog, and none of them have visited the Philippines for an extended period of time long enough to learn Tagalog. Hinton's point, however, is well taken: the opportunities for children of immigrant diasporas to reclaim their language in academic and naturalistic settings are usually much more readily available than the opportunities for minority indigenous groups.

[24] Consider Hinton's (2001a:3) statement: "When an indigenous group stops speaking its language, the language disappears from the face of the earth." Such rhetoric parallels other linguists' valuing of each language as a piece that comprises global linguistic diversity.

[25] I would like to thank Alexander Mawyer (pers. comm., 2014) for this important reminder.

that affects the 'other,' happening in 'exotic' places to languages they have never heard of before. To contextualize language endangerment, I focus primarily on language shift as it occurs in immigrant diasporas and minority groups in the US (and especially in Hawai'i), as that is a much more relatable concept for a great number of the students: many are descendants of immigrants from Japan, Okinawa, Ilokano- and Tagalog-speaking areas of the Philippines, and other places—immigrants who moved to Hawai'i several generations ago; others are of *kanaka maoli* 'Indigenous Hawaiian' descent, many of whom take classes at UHM to learn *'Ōlelo Hawai'i*; others still are recent immigrants from US-affiliated nations such as the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). Even for students who perceive that they have 'no culture' because they are raised in a majority culture speaking a majority language (i.e., Americans speaking English), I have them engage in self-reflection about their own immigrant histories, however far back. The common thread for all is that language provides tangible signs of intergenerational shift.[26]

As I have seen in the students' written assignments, choices for research paper topics, and after-class comments, for many of them the realizations hit home—even to the point of some of them having emotional reactions in class.[27] I am especially reminded of a particular student who raised this question in class: "Is it not possible to be a member of a community without knowing how to speak the language fluently?" She explicated that as a member of a Spanish-speaking community, she finds value in being able to cook foods and engage in cultural traditions with her family, and the fact that she is a heritage learner of Spanish does not preclude her from being a part of the wider community. I was very grateful that this student was so outspoken in class, because it is a point that is often overlooked (or perhaps ignored) by linguists who are fixated on the problems affecting the 'Language.' She was processing her linguistic and cultural identities, negotiating how language can be a meaningful—but not compulsory—component in defining her membership to a Spanish-speaking community.[28] It is a brave act, for she is 'putting herself out there' for possible judgment from her peers as to the authenticity of her ethnicity.

For some linguists, such conversations may not emerge in their classrooms, or perhaps they avoid eliciting such kinds of topics.[29] For others, though, these topics are unavoidable,

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[26] By virtue of the fact that these students—many of whom take the courses I taught for general academic requirements rather than for degree requirements in Linguistics—read and reflect on some of the same resources I cite in this paper about language shift and endangerment, they become members of the wider audience who read what academics have to say on these matters (Hill 2002:119).

[27] I have asked some academics what their response would be to such a scenario, such as a student who is crying in class or who is visibly angered by the topic of discussion. Their replies are understandably idiosyncratic, but some of them seem to shrug their shoulders and say something to the effect of, "What can you do? Those are the realities of life, especially for immigrant families." As a teacher of those students who have emotional reactions to class discussions, as well as a person who witnesses language shift in his own family, such a reply is inadequate, but I understand those academics' perspectives: they are neither interacting with the particular group of students I am teaching, nor are they members of a generation in which language shift is currently happening. Nevertheless, my discussion in this particular section is an attempt at addressing such inadequate replies.

[28] See, for example, Muehlmann's (2008) discussion of Cucapá youth in a Spanish language context and how they negotiate indigenous identity—not in the Cucapá language, but "in an awareness of a shared history of the injustices of colonization and a continuing legacy of state indifference" (34).

[29] In the context of language endangerment, consider for example a young adult who has the same realizations as the Spanish-speaking student I mention here, but that young adult is a member of an endangered/minority language community. If a linguist encounters such kinds of negotiations of identity whereby the young adult asserts that she or he can be a member of Language Community X without speaking Language X (and only speaking Language Y), then the linguist might be alarmed at the realization that this is one less person—one less future parent—who is speaking Language X, a person who (from the activist's perspective) 'should' be speaking it. To what extent, then, do such negotiations of identity in which the ability to fluently speak the heritage language is not a foundational element represent a defeat of language maintenance/revitalization efforts? This is admittedly not an easy question

and the realizations from the students are sure to follow. The deeply personal, emotional, and spiritual effects of losing the ability to speak one's ancestral/heritage language—or experiencing regret that one was not able to acquire it fluently as a child in spite of being raised by fluent speakers, or not even having *the opportunity* to acquire it at all—as experienced by a youth from an *in situ* endangered speech community are just as real as those experienced by a youth from an immigrant diaspora,[30] regardless of whether the latter's language is deemed 'safe' by academics.[31] By contextualizing a global phenomenon through a localized perspective, these undergraduate students understand that language endangerment via language shift is not something that happens to the 'other,' but rather something that happens close to home, thus opening discursive spaces for students to think about what kinds of real action can be taken to turn the tide of language shift.[32]

3. LINGUISTIC IDENTITY AND YOUTH PERSPECTIVES. I now turn to 'youth linguistic identity.' I discuss the denotations of 'youth' and 'identity' in late modern contexts, as well as the relative dearth in academic literature on language shift and endangerment. Underlying these discussions is the emphasis on the value integrating more youth perspectives into these academic discourses.

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to answer, but it must be asked nonetheless. As is emphasized in the literature, "speakers themselves are the ultimate arbiter of language revitalization, and the other players need to be sensitive if they aspire to play a role" (Wright 2004:230). If these young members of the speech community choose to identify themselves as individuals who—despite their inability to fluently speak the heritage language—are legitimate members of that community, how can one argue otherwise? Does one try to change those young people's perspectives, as in having them realize the benefits of additive bilingualism *and* actively supporting them in those endeavors to (re-)learn language and culture? The answers are understandably different depending on the various roles we play in each other's lives.

[30] Authors such as Wyman et al. (2013:5–6) take the position that "approaches to the study of Indigenous youth language demand additional consideration and sensitivity, as families, communities, and youth struggle with the realization that their languages may disappear from the earth altogether with the death of elders, the keepers of these linguistic systems and related accumulated oral bodies of Indigenous knowledge." They go on to give the example that if language shift occurs for youth whose ancestral/heritage languages are Turkish, Spanish, or Chinese, because "those languages exist elsewhere" (6), then such shifts are tacitly perceived as 'tolerable' in comparison. Although I fully understand the scenario they describe—so much more rests on the shoulders of young members of endangered language communities, as opposed to those from immigrant diasporas—I must ask, why should "additional consideration and sensitivity" be given to Indigenous/*in situ* minority youth; why cannot one's consideration and sensitivity be *commensurate* when interacting with both Indigenous/*in situ* minority youth *as well as* immigrant/diasporic youth whose languages are deemed 'safe' by others? Are the tears of a teenager who sits in class realizing that she cannot speak Tagalog any less real than the tears of another teenager who realizes that he cannot speak *te reo Māori*? I take the personal stance that language shift and its effects are first and foremost matters of the heart, and only secondarily are they 'intellectual' matters concerning typology and diversity. Each person's experiences with language shift will be idiosyncratic; I would rather strive for offering equal compassion (to the extent that one can achieve it) to each person, rather than allowing factors such as absolute numbers of speakers to determine the degree of compassion I offer to anyone experiencing language shift.

[31] The underlying question here, then, is, "Are we as linguists prepared to discuss these very issues with young students?" My approach has been to talk with each student and draw upon my own heritage language learning experience, emphasizing that no matter what past circumstances has led her or him to this present moment, the future remains open. It is important to remind students not to look at the past with regret (e.g., being angry at their parents for not passing on the language). If they choose to begin the process of reclaiming their ancestral/heritage languages, then they should know that there will be support for that decision. I write this paper in the spirit of providing some support to young people who embark on these journeys (see §5 and Odango in press).

[32] There is a profound difference between (1) the perception that language endangerment is 'bigger than all of us' and therefore there is nothing that a US college student can do for a youth in the 'jungles of a faraway land' whose language is endangered; and (2) the perception that language endangerment as caused by language shift is a process that a student can relate to, and asking questions of "What can we do?" actually includes the student in the pronoun.

3.1 YOUTH AND IDENTITY IN A LATE MODERN LINGUASCAPE. For the various academic discourses in which 'language' is a shared parameter, the concept of the 'youth' remains a fundamental part in the conversations, and yet the voices of the youth themselves are severely under-represented. To reiterate what researchers, practitioners, and parents already know—but nevertheless can stand to bear repeated emphasis—"the good guardians of a language are not children…[but rather the] adults who learn the language as children and use it continuously throughout their lives" (O'Grady & Hattori 2013:n.p.), and such adults may one day become parents themselves. Youth perspectives are therefore crucial elements in the discourses about language shift that allow us to seek answers to persistent questions of *what* is happening, *why* it is happening, *how* the youth perceive these changes, and *what* actions/solutions can be taken if there is a perceived problem.

Before one can engage in studies about such perspectives, however, it is important to understand the emic constructions of 'youth' in the particular community under investigation. As Suslak (2005:14) asserts in the context of Mixe-speaking youth in the Totontepec community in Mexico, "[s]tudents of language socialization and language shift could also benefit from thinking about age and age categories in a more critical way." He notes that in many studies about adolescence or youth, "[u]nfortunately, adolescence continues to be treated as a given, and age continues to be treated as an independent variable" (14), when in fact perceptions of age in any given community can be as disputed and recontextualized— very often realized in discursive processes—as can gender, class, and race.

Regardless of how 'youth' is defined, the linguistic identity of the youth generation is an important component in discerning questions about the problem of and answers to language shift. 'Identity' as defined in the sociolinguistics literature "is best viewed as the emergent product rather than the pre-existing source of linguistic and other semiotic practices and therefore as fundamentally a social and cultural phenomenon" (Bucholtz & Hall 2005:588). Linguistic identity—that is, the identity that is formed in relation to and through the use of a speech system—is not a permanent 'badge' that someone simply wears, handed down from older generations; a person's linguistic self is ever-changing, co-constructed through interaction with other people and through various modes of communication, on an everyday basis.

Closely associated with linguistic identity are the linguistic attitudes that a person holds toward any given speech system. Such identities and attitudes can be formed positively when members of a person's cohort use the code of local prestige to build rapport among each other. They can be formed negatively when members of a person's family ridicule that person's speech as a heritage learner of the ancestral language.[33] Investigating the linguistic identities of members of the youth generations in communities in which language shift is occurring and their attitudes toward the languages being shifted—as well as attitudes about the shift itself—allows one to better understand their motivations of accepting or rejecting any given language in their lives.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, linguistic identity can be methodologically ascertained through discourse analysis: in the course of everyday speech, people create, negotiate, reject, and accept linguistic identities *about* language and *through* language; it is the task of the analyst to examine such speech for recurrent patterns that point to a certain

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[33]This general example is drawn from a specific anecdote shared by a student of Chamorro heritage in one of the Linguistics courses I taught at UHM, in which he described how one of his aunts who was a heritage learner of Chamorro was ridiculed by family members for her mispronunciations of the language, thus leading to her discouragement to continue learning Chamorro. Apay (Ai-yu) Tang (pers. comm., 2014) has shared with me similar anecdotes in the context of heritage learners of Truku Seediq.

linguistic identity being formed in the discursive moment (e.g., Androutsopoulos & Georgakopoulou 2003).[34] Other approaches to youth linguistic identity investigate global level discourses rather than local level everyday interactions (e.g., Alim et al. 2009). The common thread in these areas of research is the integration of deep ethnographic description to provide contexts for what is said, for what reasons, and what kinds of effects emerge.

There is already a broad literature of ethnographic descriptions of language shift with particular emphasis on youth generational perspectives, such as Dorian's (1981, *inter alia*) work on the East Sutherland Gaelic community's shift from their unique dialect of Gaelic to English, Suslak's (2005) work with Mixe-Spanish bilingual youth in the Totontepec community in Mexico, Schimdt's (1985) work on 'young peoples' Dyirbal' in the Jambun community in Australia, Kulick's (1992) work on the shift in Gapun Village in Papua New Guinea from Taiap to Tok Pisin, Makihara's (2005) work on Rapa Nui-Spanish children's speech in Rapa Nui, Muehlmann's (2008) work with Cucupá youth in Mexico, and Tse's (2001) work on bilinguals/biliterates of immigrant background in the US. One might observe, however, that while it is common in this literature to describe the 'problem' of language shift in detail, it is not common to see commensurate coverage of the 'solutions' of language reclamation, maintenance, and revitalization.

In other cases, the academic material about youth perspectives may be sparse, yet emerging. Te Raukura Roa (pers. comm., 2014) — a member of the first cohort to graduate from the Māori 'language nest' immersion schools known as "kōhanga reo" in Aotearoa — points out that there is a developing academic literature that focuses on the experiences of her cohort (who are now adults in their 30s) as they enter into life after graduating from kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori (elementary level immersion schools) and eventually into parenthood (Martin 2012; Tocker 2007, 2012).[35] She also observes that news broadcasts, newspaper articles, and internet social media touch on matters about the experiences of her cohort and their choices with *te reo Māori*. Documentaries such as *Tongues of Heaven* (2013) by Anita Wen-Shin Chang capture the experiences of young learners of heritage languages who, as one individual in the film states, "know the importance of saving a language, and that you must start doing it," but face personal challenges when they admit that they "don't have the motivation." Conferences such as the 21st Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium[36] feature panels of young heritage learners in high school and college discussing their experiences in reclaiming their languages.[37]

A common theme in these contexts of language shift and reclamation is the emergence of a late modern[38] multilingual linguascape in which members of the youth generation constantly navigate their linguistic selves. The interactions between heterogeneous speech

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[34] Suslak (2005:14) makes the following observation: "Too many investigations that claim to be about adolescence or youth turn out to be studies of the social construction (and in particular, the discursive construction) of gender, class and race. The novelty here is that instead of working with adults, they have chosen to investigate how adolescents do race, gender, etc. And there are, in fact, sound reasons for suspecting that adolescents play a crucial role in the formation of e.g. racial identities. But what about how adolescence itself is 'constituted and indexed through both discursive and nondiscursive practices'?" Suslak's point is well taken: in order to understand youth identity in the context of language shift, one must understand how both 'youth' and 'identity' are constructed in the particular community of investigation.

[35] See Cooper et al. 2003 for longitudinal studies of kōhanga reo and kura kaupapa Māori students.

[36] The homepage is available here: http://sils2014.hawaii-conference.com/. (8 February, 2014.)

[37] I would like to thank Michele K. Johnson (Sʔímlaʔxw) (pers. comm., 2014) for bringing this panel to my attention.

[38] I follow Rampton's (2006) discussions of 'late modernity' in language contexts as "major changes in the real world linked to globalisation" (4) whereby places such as metropolitan/cosmopolitan cities "serve as centres of finance, transport and communications, and as such, they are inhabited by populations that are both highly diverse and highly stratified" (7).

communities lead to the commodification, recontextualization, and re-valuing of various resources, most especially language. These are environments "where a plurality of different transnational and diaspora flows intersect," leading to "high levels of local meta-cultural learning and awareness" (Rampton 2006:8). One should not underestimate the effects on language use and language shift from these multilingual/cultural factors—not restricted to just the 'big' cities, but applicable to regions where late modernity continues to develop, facilitated in no small part by digital modes of communication and movement across geopolitical boundaries. No longer is the Māori child, for example, deciding between only *te reo Māori* and English, for now she or he has the opportunities to incorporate into her or his linguistic repertoire other Pasifika languages from islands such as Sāmoa, Tonga, the Cook Islands, and Niue (Taumoefolau et al. 2002)—not to mention the plethora of other non-Pacific Islands immigrant languages in metropolitan Aotearoa. The choice of a Māori adolescent—who can speak Māori yet replies to her or his parents only in English—to want to learn how to speak Samoan because it is the language of her or his best friends is not an insignificant observation.[39]

The existence of multilingualism in a region *does not*, however, necessarily cause language shift, since there abound numerous examples of communities in which the members maintain additive bi/multilingualism for several generations. One example is the Mortlockese diaspora on Pohnpei (see Rehg 1998:331), in which members have maintained additive bilingualism in their community L1 of Mortlockese and the state language of Pohnpeian for over five generations. On Pakin Atoll, for example—an outer island of Pohnpei where I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer (2006–9) and where I continue to engage in documentary fieldwork (2010–present)—I witness the robust acquisition of Mortlockese by young children who then learn Pohnpeian in school and in social contexts as they become adolescents and young adults, but not at the expense of giving up their ability to speak Mortlockese (see Odango in press for further discussion). Nevertheless, the literature on language shift and endangerment tends to focus on the overwhelming reality that the sociocultural competition of various speech systems in a given community can lead to a 'winner,' that is, the code that is intergenerationally transmitted to the next generation.

Simply reporting on what youth are doing with their language is not enough for some scholars and activists. If one is compelled to address the questions of not just "What is happening?" but also "What should be done?," then one can urge youth who experience language shift to engage in the academic discourse, to navigate the waters of both documentary objectivity and introspective subjectivity. I am not suggesting that the perspective of a young researcher is inherently going to be distinct from that of a senior researcher simply because of age or generational membership; both can independently arrive at the same observations about, for example, the sociolinguistic contexts of an endangered speech community, regardless of whether either one is a speaker-member of the community. Then again, the perspective of the young researcher *can* be different, and if so, then it is a perspective that is worthy of entering the academic discourse, validated if anything by the shared value of research pluralism as fundamental to exploration, discovery, and the development of real-world answers.[40]

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[39] I draw upon this hypothetical example from a real-life example provided by Mary Boyce, to whom I am grateful for sharing her experiences with me and the students in the Linguistics courses I taught at UHM.

[40] While the 'insider's' perspective of a young speaker-member of a community undergoing language shift may reveal insights that are not discerned by 'outsiders' (however defined), one cannot ignore the real challenges that await young researchers who focus their work on their own families, cohorts, clanspeople, and communities. Such challenges of the 'indigenous' researcher negotiating multiple identities and responsibilities have been shared in the literature, such as Tengan's negotiations of being an *'Ōiwi* (Indigenous Hawaiian) and an anthropologist

3.2 OLDER GENERATION-CENTRISM. There is an overwhelmingly older generation-dominated perspective in the academic discourse on language shift and endangerment.[41] It is the community elders who are quoted by the researcher-author as saying that the young generation does not care about the language, or it is the members of the parental generation who reportedly lambaste the misuse of the language by teenagers. Discussions about the youth are often framed in the perspective of their elders. To take but just one of a plethora of examples, consider this anecdote by Ladefoged:

> Last summer I was working on Dahalo, a rapidly dying Cushitic language, spoken by a few hundred people in a rural district of Kenya. I asked one of our consultants whether his teen-aged sons spoke Dahalo. 'No,' he said. 'They can still hear it, but they cannot speak it. They speak only Swahili.' He was smiling when he said it, and did not seem to regret it. He was proud that his sons had been to school, and knew things that he did not. Who am I to say that he was wrong? (1992:811)

The following is Dorian's reply, in the context of describing the sociolinguistic situation of East Sutherland Gaelic:

> Even so, I would answer Ladefoged's rhetorical question about the smiling Dahalo speaker, 'Who am I to say that he was wrong?' (811), by noting that the Gaelic-speaking East Sutherland fisherfolk have in one sense already been proven 'wrong', in that some of the youngest members of their own kin circles have begun to berate them for choosing not to transmit the ancestral language and so allowing it to die. (1993:576)

In both cases, there is a want of a better understanding of these youth scenarios from the voices of the youth themselves.[42] Does the Dahalo youth share the same pride as his father in only being able to speak Swahili, rather than maintaining bilingualism in Dahalo and Swahili? What are the motivations of East Sutherland youth who *do not* want to make the investment in reclaiming their unique dialect of Gaelic? Given that these youths are the ones who will become parents one day, then in the context of efforts to stem the tide of language shift—if that is a goal of the local communities—should there not be a more nuanced understanding of what these youths are experiencing regarding their linguistic identities and their roles in the modern multilingual world? If the only voices one encounters regarding those situations are from older generations—insiders (i.e., the parental generation) and

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(2005), or Yourupi's negotiations of being a member of the HouPollap clan from Pollap Islet in the FSM and a documentary linguist (Guérin & Yourupi 2012). The call for young researchers to investigate language shift in their own generational cohort can lead to the further development of a self-reflexive literature that provides support for these researchers, literature that addresses issues of 'researcher versus community' identity formation.

[41] As colleagues such as Alexander Mawyer and Michele K. Johnson (Sʔímlaʔxw) (pers. comm., 2014) have pointed out to me, youth perspectives are among many of the under-examined speech (micro-)communities and subjectivities in academic research more broadly. I admit that I do not attempt here a comprehensive review of the matter of under-representation of youth in academic research. Youth speech practices, ideologies, and attitudes are exemplary of alternate/subordinate identities that nevertheless play fundamental roles in language shift and change.

[42] One cannot demand of authors like Ladefoged and Dorian to produce a thick ethnography of the situations they describe for each mention of 'the youth' in any given academic publication. The reader must turn to citations of previous work—for example, Dorian's (1981, *inter alia*) work on East Sutherland Gaelic, or Ladefoged's (1992:10) citation of Emeneau 1984 when mentioning youth perspectives of the Toda in India—or even 'take the word' of the researcher, as in Ladefoged's anecdote about the Dahalo father. The 'take my word for it' approach, however, should be viewed as a starting point for further inquiry of what those 'other people's words' are.

outsiders (i.e., experienced linguists) alike—then the skewed perspective persists.[43] Other authors such as Wyman et al. (2013:2) observe that the "commonplace rhetorics of endangerment…tend to invisibilize youth perspectives, concerns, and practices within language reclamation efforts."

The various discourses about language endangerment and related topics are not without criticism (Dobrin et al. 2007, Duchêne & Heller 2007, Errington 2003, Hill 2002, Ladefoged 1992, *inter alia*), including the matter of the fragmentation of the approaches to these topics. In most 'mainstream' academic spheres, the discourses of language shift and endangerment are framed by the assumption that language endangerment is 'bad,' both on a global scale (e.g., the loss of languages is a defeat in the efforts to promote cultural pluralism and indigenous peoples' human rights) and a local scale (e.g., the widening gap between the parents and the children due to language and culture shift results in domestic challenges). In certain spheres of the discourses on language endangerment, the "global conversations in which the voices of academics and policymakers are especially prominent" (Hill 2002:119) are motivated by large-scale comparative scientific interests (e.g., typology, biocultural diversity, historical linguistics, etc.); conversations about 'local' matters—parenthood, spirituality, the foundation of the ancestors and land in identity formation—are relegated to other academic spaces, sometimes even physically realized as separate rooms/sessions in conferences on these topics. Attempts at finding solutions to the perceived problem of language shift and endangerment as they pertain to youth perspectives—thick ethnographic and discourse-informed understandings of why the youth do the things they do with language and in what contexts with what effects—are not often the research purview of most documentary linguists. And while researchers in the 'other' academic or community-oriented spheres may focus on practical matters related to the speech community, youth perspectives may also be under-represented. For both spheres, much can be learned from examples in the sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological literature in which there are frameworks and methodologies for analyzing youth perspectives about and created through language.[44] And if one wants to actively engage in discussing the *solutions*, then one must not dwell on the pathological cases of subtractive bilingualism to the exclusion of positive cases of additive bilingualism, especially as realized through youth agency (see Odango in press for examples from an Austronesian perspective).

4. CLARIFICATION OF THE 'CALL.' The 'call' that I make in this position paper is for further integration of youth perspectives into academic discourses, most especially (but not exclusively) perspectives written by young scholars who are speaker-members of communities in which language shift is occurring—perspectives that ask questions of what the youth perceptions are of language shift in their communities and what the effects are on their linguistic identities. To clarify this call, I assert that one must *continue* asking focused questions as a means of developing a more nuanced understanding of youth perspectives about language shift, because like anything else, youth perspectives *change* over time. Through concurrent longitudinal studies, one can better shape the solutions in response to the perceived problems.

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[43] I am not suggesting that linguists are actively 'suppressing' youth perspectives in the academic literature, but rather I am encouraging others—most especially the youth themselves—to actively explore and write about youth perspectives in the context of answering the "So what now?" questions.

[44] The issue of developing strategies for the integration of these different perspectives is an important topic beyond the scope of this paper. However, as Alexander Mawyer (pers. comm., 2014) suggested to me, the explicit attention to youth voices can offer a way toward integration.

As a brief example, I recall in a recent conversation with Te Raukura Roa (pers. comm., 2014) her identification of two primary motivating factors that play a role as to why members of her generational cohort choose not to learn *te reo Māori*: (1) the monetary motivation is not present, because Māori people living in Aotearoa know that the personal investment in learning *te reo Māori* does not lead to economic payoff in terms of securing a successful job; and (2) the social motivation is skewed toward learning English, since the only people with whom a learner of *te reo Māori* would converse are most likely family members, and anyone who wants to develop a social sphere outside of the family would resort to English or other languages.

On the one hand, it might suffice to assess the language attitudes of a sample of this particular generational cohort to ascertain their reasons for not wanting to learn the language, and from there develop strategies to address those factors (e.g., developing diverse job opportunities for speakers of *te reo Māori*). On the other hand, one would only benefit in developing more nuanced understandings of language attitudes and language choice through the continuation of these kinds of sociolinguistic investigations as these youth move into adulthood, parenthood, and beyond (see Hinton 2013 for perspectives on parenthood). The youth perspectives I encourage to be integrated more into the academic discourse will eventually become elder perspectives. And it is not uncommon to encounter examples of older adults making choices in their linguistic repertoire for reasons of reclamation connected to family and identity. Te Raukura Roa (pers. comm., 2014) observes that one of her uncles—a Māori who did not acquire *te reo Māori* as a child—now has grandchildren who are entering into kōhanga reo, and he is now making a choice to begin learning *te reo Māori* so that he can speak to his grandchildren in the heritage language.

I myself experienced a shift in perspectives about what being Filipino means to me, and how I realize that identity through the reclamation of my Tagalog language.[45] I grew up with receptive bilingualism in Tagalog since my cohort and I were raised hearing it on an everyday basis, as it was the language spoken among my parents, other elders, and other adults outside of the family while living in the US. While their language of interaction with my cohort and me during our childhood was primarily in English, they often engaged us in Tagalog but without the expectation for us to reply in kind. This ability to understand everyday conversations facilitated my desire to learn how to fluently speak Tagalog, a desire that started late in high school and continued to grow as I took courses in linguistics in college. The reason was very practical: because I wanted to study Tagalog from an academic perspective, it would only benefit me to learn how to speak it fluently. In the context of the linguistics projects I was working on at the time during my undergraduate education, my desires were fueled by the need to understand nuances in meaning in Tagalog morphosyntax and pragmatics. I was not satisfied by what other linguists were saying about Tagalog—most of whom are not Filipinos. The only way to satiate this curiosity was to dig into my own intuitions and those of my family, and to do so I needed to speak the language.

I had the benefit of having access to fluent speakers and meaningful contexts: my family. They were the best teachers I could have. In the beginning, it was difficult getting my parents accustomed to speaking to me only in Tagalog because they found it natural to speak to me and my cohort mostly in English. I challenged that 'naturalness,' consistently asking them to repeat an English sentence they uttered but to give it in Tagalog, or asking them metalinguistic questions about word stress placement, morphology, and connotations of lexical items. I sometimes asked them out loud, "Why would you speak to me in English

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[45] Among a plethora of examples, see Tang's (2011:3) discussion about her changing perspectives on valuing her Truku Seediq ethnolinguistic identity in the course of her studies at UHM.

when I already know that language?" I needed them to converse with me in Tagalog so that I could practice. In the early part of this immersion process, though, my main motivation was to learn Tagalog for academic pursuits. It was not until much later when I took courses in sociolinguistics that I reflected on matters of identity. Over time, I no longer saw Tagalog solely as a language to analyze for 'interesting' morphosyntactic data. It became a code that provided the most meaningful way for me to define who I am as a Filipino while living in the US.[46] My parents have told me on various occasions that they see the value in a young person like me choosing reclaim Filipino identity through language.[47]

For many members of my cohort, they find answers to the questions of identity in other modalities: performing cultural dances, joining Filipino student associations, cooking traditional foods, creating new media-oriented contexts for the label of 'Fil-Am,' and so forth. Very few of them, however, consider the ability to fluently speak Tagalog (or another Philippine language) while living in the US—or, rather, the earnest *attempt* to gain fluency beyond simple words and phrases—as a crucial factor that defines their Filipino identities. In a conversation with one of my cousins, I asked her how she defines her Filipino identity; the most important components for her are the cultural and family values that she perceives contrast with her non-Filipino friends, such as the high value placed in outward signs of respect given to elders, and the responsibilities in personally caring for the health of an aging loved one. She is a receptive bilingual in Tagalog and English, and she only fluently speaks the latter. But she told me straightforwardly—with great *assuredness*—that she does not define her Filipino identity by the ability to speak Tagalog.[48]

I am uncertain as to the degree to which other Filipinos in my generational cohort are comfortable with similar choices to define their identities in such a way, as I have not engaged in a formal survey on this topic (cf. the broad literature on the identities of immigrant children, such as Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco 2001, *inter alia*).[49] But I do take the stance that they are entitled to that decision; who am I to pass judgment on a member of my cohort who is comfortable in her or his own skin as a receptive bilingual in Tagalog and English, as someone who does not need to speak Tagalog fluently in order to own the

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[46] I gained an even greater appreciation of my Filipino identity as realized through language and culture while serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the FSM, where I could easily see both the comforting similarities and stark differences between Filipino and Micronesian identities.

[47] My journey does not end here, though, as there is a part of me that longs to also reclaim my Ilokano and Cebuano identities—on my mother's and father's side, respectively—through language; the realization of the time and effort required in learning *two other* languages is understandably daunting, but nothing insurmountable.

[48] I cannot ignore, however, the periodic resurfacing in her discussion of sentiments such as, "Still, I wish that I knew how to speak Tagalog," or, "It would be nice if I could speak to my grandfather in Tagalog." Crucially, though, such comments made by my cousin were not fundamental aspects of her discussion about identity; those sentiments, while important, are not obstacles to her assertion that she is indeed a Filipino who defines her identity outside of language. I have had similar conversations with other youth in other language contexts, such as a *kanaka maoli* who sees his contribution to *mālama ʻāina* 'caring for the land' as being more important than the ability to fluently speak *ʻŌlelo Hawaiʻi* in terms of defining his Hawaiian identity.

[49] I would like to thank Ryan Likeke Alivado, Jonathan Valdez and Anthony P. S. Guerrero (pers. comm., 2014) for sharing their perspectives on these matters of Filipino identity—*maraming salamat sa inyong tatlo*.

'Filipino' identity?[50] As such, I am one of a very few number of people in my US-born cohort who still attempt to continuously speak Tagalog in family domains.[51]

Not every youth who wants to reclaim her or his heritage language for whatever reason will have the same experiences I had, such as constantly being in the company of family members who are already fluent speakers, or being in an academic context in which linguistic pluralism has academic benefits. In immigrant or minority language communities, while there is still relatively 'easy' access to fluent speakers in the family that facilitates the high frequency of naturalistic opportunities to speak the language (cf. Hinton 2001a:3), there are many competing interests in other languages (i.e., popular culture, academic/professional pursuits, and personal relationships embedded in the majority language).

For *in situ* endangered language communities, the last generation of fluent speakers may be passing away, and so being in the constant company of fluent speakers of the ancestral/heritage language requires concerted effort to find or create such circumstances, rather than being a unmarked aspect of everyday family life (e.g., kōhanga reo and pūnana leo 'language nest' schools in Aotearoa and Hawai'i, respectively; cf. Johnson's (2013, 2014) descriptions of the immersion process to learn her language of N'syilxcn). I was not raised in a sociopolitical environment in which my heritage language was overtly repressed by the government, and even though my academic and social experiences were English-dominated, nothing in principle prevented me from actively using my heritage language as a meaningful code of interaction in my family domains. Such scenarios certainly do not apply to youth in many speech communities around the world today.

In sharing my story with other members of my cohort—most especially my classmates at UHM who are speakers of other Austronesian languages—I realized that what I experienced as an individual is shared by so many others (cf. Odango in press for detailed discussions about examples of the maintenance of additive bilingualism from members of my cohort who speak Mortlockese, Truku Seediq, and Fijian). Such realizations lead to *inspiration*, which is a powerful factor in how linguistic identity and attitudes are shaped and reinforced. I have met other people who are successful at maintaining additive bilingualism, or who are engaged in similar struggles that I go through regarding performance, authenticity, and identity. These realizations can lead to the reinforcement of positive language attitudes that continue throughout adulthood, attitudes which are then shared with other members in a person's cohort through everyday interactional discourse (i.e., daily discursive identity work). Amidst overwhelmingly negative and fatalistic academic discourse about the 'inevitable' effects of language shift—literature that authors often admit can be difficult to write since many of the examples focus on the failures (cf. Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1998:57)—it is important to remind young readers of such discourse that singular desire can lead to action that inspires other people in similar scenarios. For a person to know that she or he is not alone in her or his experiences with the ancestral/heritage language is positive encouragement to keep moving forward, regardless of the challenges that remain ahead.

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[50]This is not entirely a rhetorical question: one the one hand, I *can* 'pass judgment' because I am a part of their generational cohort, and as a person (or even a family member) I have opinions about their linguistic identities. On the other hand, my professional identity as a linguist tells me that I *cannot* 'pass judgment' given the expectations in my field to consciously separate prescriptivism and descriptivism. Learning how to wear the two 'hats' of being a community member and being an academic is admittedly part of the ongoing process of identity and ideology negotiation that I encourage others to share, especially in linguistics (e.g., Stebbins 2012).

[51]The only others I know of are older members in my generation who were born in the Philippines and were raised there as young children before emigrating to the US, thus acquiring additive bilingualism at an early age.

5. CONCLUSION. This position paper calls for further integration of youth perspectives of language shift and linguistic identity into the academic discourse. These perspectives can be shared by any researcher, regardless of whether that person is a member of the youth generation or is a speaker-member of the community undergoing language shift—or even regardless of whether the community is experiencing language shift. Still, I encourage young researchers who are members of communities that are currently experiencing language shift to engage in self-reflective writing, so as to work toward the development of a literature that can inspire other people in their life-long work in reclaiming their ancestral/heritage languages. This call should reach not just young scholars who are beginning their academic/professional careers at the graduate level, but also youth at undergraduate and even secondary levels.[52] It hope that readers from any speech community who find common threads in my discussions will be inspired to take up the charge I offer.

At the core of my discussions is the question of "What can be done about language shift?" Among the various strategies we can take—whatever our personal and professional roles may be in the context of reversing language shift—I assert that by developing a nuanced understanding of what youth are doing with their language, how they perceive the shifts and transformations, and what kinds of conversations they have with each other and with others, we can hone our strategies in ways that support the efforts of specific communities toward whatever their particular goals may be. I hope that such efforts in connecting youth perspectives with real-world solutions will only continue to grow stronger in future research.

I overtly take personal and professional stances in this position paper, as I find that this self-reflexive autoethnographic mode of writing provides the best way to situate my own experiences as a Filipino in a diasporic community undergoing language shift with those of my generational cohort from other communities, as well as with the broader academic discourse. I choose to conclude this paper with a personal stance by returning to the discussion about the troubling use of metaphors such as 'language suicide' and 'steamrollers.' To me, it is hurtful to read/hear others' usage of the phrase 'language suicide,' since it implies that I am part of a group of people who willingly choose to kill our linguistic selves by not speaking our heritage language. It is hurtful for people to talk about English as a 'steamroller' language since such a metaphor implies that my family cohort are the drivers of the steamroller—we are steamrolling ourselves by not speaking our heritage language. In response to people who use such rhetoric, I ask, "Have you considered the effects your words have on us?" What is their motivation in causing young people pain—perhaps inadvertently, but *pain* nonetheless? What do they gain from sensationalizing the problem of language endangerment by tacitly branding us the underlying cause of the problem?

The only response I can offer is that regardless of the motivations of such authors, the only way forward is *forward*. Such metaphors of 'language suicide' and 'steamrollers' are hurtful on two fronts, not only because (1) an outsider is using them toward us, but also because (2) we realize that the metaphors ring true, and we do not want to immediately admit it—it is painful to do so. We must, however, acknowledge that pain and use it as our own motivation to continue on, and the paths we take include our various modes of linguistic expression (i.e., our written and spoken words). In an attempt to move past the negative metaphors of 'suicide' and 'steamrollers,' I turn to positive ones that I have encountered

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[52]Consider the success of the School Kids Investigating Language in Life and Society (SKILLS) program, which emphasizes the transformative power that high school youth have in researching issues in their local communities, with the realization that they are indeed experts in language and culture (Bucholtz 2014, Bucholtz et al. 2014). The SKILLS homepage is available here: http://www.skills.ucsb.edu/. (24 March, 2014.)

in my shared experiences with other Austronesians, such as the metaphor of the 'star' as a means of guidance throughout one's journey, especially Austronesian seafarer journeys (both ancestral and contemporary). Rather than solely focusing on the death of language, I challenge us to turn our attention to the journeys of language reclamation that happen around the world. I often get the impression from my cohort who are trying to hold onto their ancestral/heritage language that they are in it alone, since so many of their family and peers are giving up the language. It is important for me to constantly remind them—and myself—that we are not going at it alone.

We need to share with other teenagers, young adults, and new parents that it is OK to undergo a linguistic identity crisis; we need to encourage each other to not dwell on feelings of "I wish I knew how to speak my language." The venues for having these conversations can include the pages of academic journals and the rooms of international conferences, but crucially they need to happen in our own homes, in the electronic media we constantly re-shape, at the dinner table with our loved ones, and in our hearts. We need to ask our parents why they did not teach us the language. We need to ask ourselves why we did not want to (re)learn the language as (young) adults. More importantly, we need to facilitate conversation *between* the younger and older generations, lest one generation makes assumptions that the other does not care—that the other does not want to teach, or to learn.[53] We then take the answers and determine how to move forward, whether it be engaging in the long process of learning our elders' language one word at a time (and realizing we will do so imperfectly), or finding peace in ourselves that we can define our identities without being able to fluently speak the language. The process is painful and will never truly end, but wherever such roads lead us, we need to help each other along the way.

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