Building Programs for Heritage Language Education

This presentation will start out with an overview of the history of heritage language education in the United States, focusing on the main developments that have shaped the current state of the field. Following that, the presentation will examine the current state of institutionalization of HL instruction, with a view to understanding the main institutional obstacles facing heritage language programs in mainstream schools, as well as community schools. Institutionalization refers to "a process through which an organization assimilates an innovation into its structure” (Ekholm and Trier, 1987). These two perspectives - the past and the present - will inform the discussion of five principles of program building.