Systematic literature review on the heritage language teachers agency from micro Perspective

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Abstract: Teacher agency plays a pivotal role in shaping language teaching practices, influencing learners' language acquisition, implementing language policies, and facilitating or hindering the transmission of heritage languages. Despite its critical importance, systematic research on teacher agency in heritage language education remains limited. To address this gap, this study systematically reviewed seven empirical studies selected from two major databases, Scopus and Web of Science. The findings reveal that teacher agency operates at both behavioral and cognitive levels, encompassing actions and attitudinal shifts. The contexts in which agency is exercised include new teaching environments, teacher training, emotional labor, language education, and the implementation of language policies. Importantly, five micro-level factors—knowledge, emotions, identities, beliefs, and orientations—emerged as key influences that either facilitate or constrain the exercise of agency. These factors interact dynamically with external conditions, highlighting the complex interplay of personal and contextual elements in shaping teacher agency. This review contributes to the understanding of heritage language teacher agency by expanding its conceptualization to include attitudinal transformations and emotional labor, dimensions often overlooked in existing research. The findings underscore the need for targeted support, including professional development initiatives, emotional support mechanisms, and flexible policies, to empower heritage language teachers. Finally, this study identifies limitations in the current literature and proposes future research directions to further explore the dynamic and multifaceted nature of teacher agency in heritage language education.

Keywords: Heritage language teacher; Teacher agency; Micro perspective; Systematic

literature review

1. Introduction

In the realm of language education, teachers are not merely facilitators of knowledge but active agents who navigate complex realities to achieve pedagogical and professional objectives. Teacher agency—defined as the capacity to make choices, influence outcomes, and adopt stances (Kayi-Aydar, 2019)—plays a pivotal role in shaping educational practices and outcomes. However, research on teacher agency has predominantly focused on second or foreign language teachers, particularly those teaching English, leaving heritage language teachers underrepresented (Choi, 2022; Tao & Gao, 2017; Wu, 2022). This oversight is significant, as heritage language teachers often serve as primary agents in the preservation and revitalization of minority languages, which are critical for cultural transmission and identity preservation(Curdt-Christiansen & Sun, 2022; Duff, 2011; Valdés, 2017).

Heritage languages, typically used by minority groups within families or communities (Fishman, 2001), face increasing risks of attrition due to globalization and dominant language pressures. Heritage language teachers, many of whom are heritage speakers themselves, operate within a unique sociocultural context where their roles extend beyond language instruction to include cultural preservation and community leadership(Atoofi, 2011; Choi, 2022; Li & Shen, 2024). Despite their critical contributions, these teachers encounter challenges such as limited resources, lack of institutional support, and tensions between their personal and professional identities. Addressing these challenges is essential to sustaining heritage languages and supporting the communities they represent.

Existing research on teacher agency has applied diverse theoretical frameworks, such as social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1999), sociocultural theory (Ahearn, 2001), and ecological perspectives(Eteläpelto et al., 2013), to examine the factors influencing agency. However, these studies have largely emphasized macro-level (e.g., policies) and meso-level (e.g., institutional systems) influences. Micro-level factors, including personal beliefs, emotions, and ideologies, remain relatively underexplored, particularly in the context of heritage language teachers.

This study aims to bridge this gap by conducting a systematic literature review on the agency of heritage language teachers, focusing specifically on micro-level factors. Through a synthesis of current research, this study seeks to explore how these factors shape and influence the formation and exercise of teacher agency, contributing to a deeper understanding of this critical issue in the academic field.

2. Literature review

2.1 Teacher agency: conceptual frameworks and contexts

Teacher agency has been extensively studied as a critical construct in understanding the dynamic roles of educators in diverse educational contexts. Defined as the capacity of individuals to make choices, take stances, and exert influence to achieve goals (Kayi-Aydar, 2019), agency is considered essential for teacher professional development(Choi, 2022; Tao & Gao, 2017) student learning outcomes(Ashton, 2022;

Chen, 2022), and policy implementation(Macleroy et al., 2024; Mansouri et al., 2021). Existing research has explored teacher agency across various domains, including educational reform(Kitade, 2015; Wang, 2022), social equity(Leal & Crookes, 2018; Peña-Pincheira & De Costa, 2021), and novice teacher experiences(Ashton, 2021; Robertson & Yazan, 2022).

Theoretical frameworks underpinning the study of teacher agency include Bandura (1999) social cognitive theory, which emphasizes purposeful behavior, sociocultural theory that frames agency as mediated by social and cultural contexts (Ahearn, 2001; Wertsch et al., 1993), the ecological approach that situates agency within spatial and temporal contexts (Eteläpelto et al., 2013), and poststructuralism, which views agency as discursively constructed (Davies, 1990; Zembylas, 2003). These frameworks have been applied in diverse empirical studies, such as examining teacher agency in blended learning contexts (Qi & Wang, 2022) and exploring its manifestations in curriculum reform (Ruan et al., 2020). Methodological innovations, such as the use of reflective journals and collaborative autoethnography, have further expanded the scope of agency research (Zhu et al., 2024).

2.2 Heritage language teachers: roles and challenges

Heritage language teachers occupy a unique space in language education as both instructors and cultural custodians. Heritage languages, defined as the languages used within minority families and communities (Fishman, 2001), are essential for preserving cultural identity and fostering intergenerational transmission (Curdt-Christiansen & Sun, 2022; Duff, 2011). As heritage speakers themselves, many heritage language teachers bring lived experiences and personal connections to their work, positioning them as pivotal agents in language revitalization efforts (Ansó Ros et al., 2024; Li & Shen, 2024).

Despite their significance, heritage language teachers face challenges such as limited institutional support, resource constraints, and balancing their dual roles as educators and community advocates (Choi, 2022; Wu, 2011). Research indicates that these challenges often intersect with broader sociopolitical dynamics, including language policies and societal attitudes toward minority languages (Atoofi, 2011; Mansouri et al., 2021). Addressing these barriers is critical to enhancing their capacity to sustain and promote heritage languages.

2.3 Micro-level factors influencing teacher agency

While macro-level (e.g., political environment, language policies) and meso-level (e.g., institutional support, interpersonal relationships) factors influencing teacher agency are well-documented (Pantić & Florian, 2015; Priestley et al., 2015), micro-level factors have received comparatively less attention. These factors, encompassing individual beliefs, emotions, ideologies, and identity, are highly dynamic and interact with broader systemic influences (Eteläpelto et al., 2013).

Li and Ruppar (2021) highlighted the importance of examining micro-level factors by showing how teachers' past experiences, present perceptions, and future aspirations collectively shape their agency. Their analytical framework identified five dimensions of teacher agency—self-reflection, autonomy, professional philosophy, competence, and identity—operating across temporal dimensions. These insights underline the need for more nuanced studies of agency that prioritize the individual experiences of teachers, particularly in underexplored contexts like heritage language education.

Although teacher agency has been extensively studied, much of the existing research has focused on second or foreign language teachers, particularly those teaching English (Choi, 2022; Tao & Gao, 2017; Wu, 2022). Heritage language teachers, despite their critical role in preserving and revitalizing minority languages, remain underrepresented in the scholarly discourse (Ansó Ros et al., 2024; Atoofi, 2011; Li & Shen, 2024). Furthermore, while macro-level factors (e.g., policies and political environments) and meso-level factors (e.g., institutional systems and interpersonal dynamics) influencing teacher agency are well-documented (Priestley et al., 2015), micro-level factors such as individual beliefs, emotions, ideologies, and identity remain comparatively underexplored (Eteläpelto et al., 2013). This gap is particularly significant for heritage language teachers, whose agency is often shaped by their unique sociocultural and emotional contexts. A more focused investigation of micro-level factors influencing the agency of these educators is necessary to advance understanding in this field.

To address these gaps, this study seeks to explore the following research questions: In what contexts do heritage language teachers exercise agency, and what forms does this agency take? What micro-level factors facilitate or inhibit the exercise of teacher agency? What additional micro-level factors warrant further attention in the study of heritage language teacher agency?

3. Methodology

This systematic review adheres to the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines (Page et al., 2021) to ensure a rigorous and transparent review process. The inclusion criteria focused on peer-reviewed English-language journal articles without restrictions on publication time or location. Chapters from monographs, conference papers, reports, and dissertations were excluded. The study targeted teachers engaged in heritage or immigrant language instruction globally, excluding those teaching second or foreign languages. Empirical studies were prioritized, while literature reviews, editorial notes, and theoretical discussions were excluded. To refine the concept of teacher agency, this review adopted the dimensions identified by Pantić and Florian (2015) and expanded by Li and Ruppar (2021), which include teacher identity, professional competence, teaching philosophy, autonomy, and reflectivity. Studies were selected if they demonstrated these dimensions or related micro-level factors such as identity, emotion, beliefs, cognition, and positioning.

The search process was conducted in two prominent databases, Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus, using a two-step strategy. First, the terms "heritage language teacher," "HL teacher," or "immigrant teacher" were applied, yielding 218 records. In the second step, the term "language teacher agen*" was used, producing 283 additional records. A total of 501 records were retrieved. After removing duplicates, 436 unique records remained for screening. Titles, abstracts, and keywords were reviewed against the inclusion criteria, narrowing the dataset to 30 studies.

A detailed full-text review of the remaining 6 studies was conducted, guided by the research questions. Seven studies, presented in Table 1, were ultimately identified as the final research units for this systematic review. These studies were selected for their

alignment with the study's focus on heritage language teacher agency and their incorporation of micro-level factors.

4. Results

4.1 Contexts and forms of agency exercising

Agency is contextually embedded, reflecting the interplay between individuals and their environments (Archer, 2003; Eteläpelto et al., 2013; Priestley et al., 2015). Across the seven studies analyzed, heritage language teachers exercised agency in diverse ways, influenced by specific sociocultural and institutional contexts. The forms of agency observed ranged from shifts in attitudes to proactive actions, illustrating the complexity and adaptability of teacher agency.

4.1.1 Attitudinal agency: shifting perspectives toward multilingual learners

Ducar (2022) explored the experiences of novice heritage language teachers during their training to work with learners from multilingual backgrounds. Initially, these teachers viewed students' deviations from standard heritage language norms negatively, perceiving them as deficiencies. However, through classroom interactions and extracurricular activities, these teachers began to recognize the value of multilingualism as a resource rather than a limitation. This shift in perspective represents a form of attitudinal agency, where teachers adapted their understanding and tolerance of learners' heritage language variants. Unlike action-oriented agency, this case highlights cognitive and emotional shifts as integral components of agency. The transformation not only reshaped the teachers' professional identities but also improved their relationships with students, fostering a more inclusive learning environment.

4.1.2 Combining attitudes and actions: adapting to diverse linguistic needs

Ansó Ros et al. (2024) examined secondary school teachers working with immigrant students in host countries' educational systems. In this context, the teachers assumed dual roles as educators and heritage language instructors. Their agency was reflected in both attitudes and actions. These teachers valued students' multilingual backgrounds and utilized their native languages as assets rather than barriers. Additionally, they addressed the lack of institutional support by creating their own teaching materials and employing metalinguistic approaches to instruction. This combination of attitudinal and action-oriented agency demonstrates how teachers can bridge gaps in resources and policies to meet the needs of linguistically diverse learners.

4.1.3 Action-oriented agency: overcoming structural challenges

Five studies emphasized agency primarily through direct actions. For instance, Rosenfeld et al. (2022) investigated Jewish heritage language teachers who had relocated to new teaching environments due to global mobility. These teachers exercised two forms of agency: compliance and resistance. While some embraced their new contexts by proactively creating opportunities for students to engage with the language, others resisted unfavorable conditions, either ignoring institutional regulations or terminating their contracts early. This duality illustrates how teachers navigate structural constraints by employing varying strategies.

In Kayi-Aydar (2019), a heritage language teacher at an American university demonstrated the dynamic evolution of agency over time. Initially, the teacher resisted

marginalization within the institution by advocating for equitable recognition of her professional contributions. However, prolonged exclusion led to disillusionment and eventual withdrawal. This case highlights the fluid nature of agency, which evolves in response to changing personal and institutional circumstances.

4.1.4 Emotional labor as agency: building relationships with families

In Bao et al. (2022), home tutors teaching heritage languages engaged in emotional labor as a form of agency. Initially, the tutors faced challenges in building relationships with learners and their families due to misunderstandings and negative emotions. Over time, through empathetic engagement and sustained effort, they developed harmonious relationships with families, transforming emotional labor into a tool for fostering collaboration and trust. This form of agency underscores the importance of emotional investment in overcoming interpersonal barriers and enhancing the effectiveness of language instruction.

4.1.5 Adaptive agency during crisis: navigating the COVID-19 pandemic

Lytra (2024) and Li and Shen (2024) explored how heritage language teachers exercised agency during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers faced significant challenges due to shifts in teaching environments and modes. In Lytra's study, teachers leveraged their professional knowledge and creativity to adapt existing materials for online learning, ensuring their continued relevance to students. Similarly, in Li and Shen's study, teachers modified monolingual policies to accommodate students' language proficiency levels, allowing limited use of mainstream languages to facilitate interaction. These examples highlight the resilience and adaptability of teachers as they navigated crises while maintaining their instructional goals.

4.2 Micro-level factors and their influence

The formation and exercise of agency are influenced not only by structural and interpersonal factors but also by micro-level factors such as identity, knowledge, beliefs, positioning, and emotions. These factors interact dynamically with external conditions to shape how teachers navigate their roles and respond to challenges.

4.2.1 Identity: balancing professional and marginalized identities

Identity, defined as an individual's self-concept within a sociocultural context(Atay & Ece, 2009), plays a crucial role in shaping agency. Professional identity, a core aspect of teacher identity, significantly influences how teachers exercise agency. Ducar (2022) highlighted how novice teachers' initial emphasis on normative language instruction created tensions with students. Over time, as teachers adapted their professional identities to accommodate learners' multilingual backgrounds, they demonstrated greater inclusivity, fostering more positive teacher-student relationships. This shift illustrates how evolving professional identities can enhance agency.

Conversely, marginalized identities can constrain agency. In Kayi-Aydar (2019), the teacher's sense of exclusion within the institution led to resistance but ultimately resulted in withdrawal. Similarly, Rosenfeld et al. (2022) documented cases where conflicts between teachers' self-identification as mobile professionals and their externally imposed identities as "foreign workers" limited their agency, prompting some to leave their positions.

4.2.2 Knowledge: leveraging and adapting expertise

Knowledge is a foundational component of agency, enabling teachers to navigate instructional challenges effectively(Bandura, 2001; Eteläpelto et al., 2013). Ducar (2022) demonstrated how novice teachers' limited understanding of linguistic variations initially constrained their agency. As they gained contextual knowledge, their teaching strategies became more inclusive and effective. Similarly, Bao et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of adapting prior knowledge to new contexts. Teachers in (Rosenfeld et al., 2022) engaged in "professional deconstruction," reshaping their existing knowledge to align with institutional expectations, demonstrating the iterative nature of knowledge application.

4.2.3 Beliefs: shaping teaching philosophies and practices

Beliefs, particularly those related to self-efficacy and pedagogical goals, significantly influence agency (Bandura, 2001; Pantić & Florian, 2015). Lytra (2024) illustrated how a teacher's belief in the cultural and social significance of heritage language education guided her instructional practices. This teacher's emphasis on interactive and inclusive strategies reflected her conviction that language learning extends beyond linguistic competence to foster cultural connections. Beliefs, as guiding principles, enable teachers to align their practices with their broader educational objectives.

4.2.4 Positioning: mediating self-perception and external expectations

Positioning theory explains how individuals' roles are shaped by self-perception and external attributions(Davies & Harré, 1990). Rosenfeld et al. (2022) highlighted how teachers positioned as "foreign workers" faced constraints that limited their agency. In contrast, Li and Shen (2024)demonstrated how teachers' self-positioning as grassroots policymakers enabled them to navigate policy conflicts effectively, balancing institutional mandates with classroom realities. These cases underscore the mediating role of positioning in the exercise of agency.

4.2.5 Emotions: navigating the affective dimensions of agency

Emotions are integral to agency, influencing teachers' decisions and actions (Eteläpelto et al., 2013). In Kayi-Aydar (2019), negative emotions stemming from marginalization initially motivated resistance but eventually led to withdrawal. Conversely, Bao et al. (2022) illustrated how emotional labor facilitated the development of positive relationships with families, enhancing teaching outcomes. These examples highlight the dual role of emotions as both constraints and enablers of agency.

5. Discussion and conclusion

This study conducted a systematic review to explore the contexts, forms, and micro-level factors influencing the agency of heritage language teachers, offering a comprehensive synthesis of existing empirical research. It reveals that agency is highly context-dependent, with teachers exercising it through attitudes, actions, or a combination of both, shaped by their teaching environments and sociocultural dynamics. Teachers demonstrated agency in diverse ways, including negotiating multilingualism, adapting instructional strategies, resisting unfavorable policies, and leveraging emotional labor to foster meaningful relationships. The analysis also identifies five critical micro-level factors—identity, knowledge, beliefs, positioning, and emotions—that dynamically interact with external conditions to shape the formation and exercise of

agency. These findings underscore the nuanced, human-centered nature of agency, emphasizing its pivotal role in heritage language education and its capacity to address challenges unique to heritage language teaching.

5.1 Theoretical implication

Previous studies on teacher agency have consistently highlighted its context-dependent nature, emphasizing how teachers navigate sociocultural and institutional environments to enact their roles(Archer, 2003; Priestley et al., 2015). However, much of this research has centered on second and foreign language teachers, particularly those teaching English in mainstream educational systems (Tao & Gao, 2021; Wu, 2022). This study builds on and extends this body of work by exploring the unique contexts of heritage language teachers, whose agency is intricately shaped by their dual roles as educators and cultural custodians.

While prior research has primarily focused on action-oriented agency—such as teachers adapting curricula or resisting unfavorable policies(Eteläpelto et al., 2013)—this study underscores the importance of attitudinal agency. For instance, Ducar (2022) documented how novice teachers adjusted their attitudes toward students' multilingual practices, transitioning from negative perceptions to a more inclusive and appreciative understanding. This finding broadens the conceptualization of agency, highlighting internal, cognitive, and emotional transformations as integral components, and offering a more nuanced perspective on how agency operates beyond observable actions.

The interplay between identity and agency has been a prominent theme in teacher agency research, with studies demonstrating that identity not only shapes teachers' perceptions of their roles but is also influenced by the exercise of agency itself (Ruohotie-Lyhty & Moate, 2016; Tao & Gao, 2021). This study aligns with these findings while providing further insight into how heritage language teachers' professional identities evolve in response to their teaching contexts. For example, Ducar (2022) highlighted how teachers' initial adherence to normative language instruction reflected rigid professional identities. Over time, these identities transformed into more inclusive perspectives as teachers adapted to the multilingual realities of their classrooms. Similarly, marginalized identities, as observed in Kayi-Aydar (2019) and Rosenfeld et al. (2022), constrained agency, often leading to withdrawal or resistance. These cases reaffirm the bidirectional relationship between identity and agency, while also underscoring the challenges heritage language teachers face in negotiating their professional and sociocultural identities.

The focus on micro-level factors—identity, knowledge, beliefs, positioning, and emotions—further enhances the understanding of agency within this unique teaching context. Building on established frameworks like sociocultural theory(Ahearn, 2001), social cognitive theory(Bandura, 2001), and positioning theory Davies and Harré (1990) , this study emphasizes the interdependence of these factors in shaping the dynamic exercise of agency by heritage language teachers. This nuanced approach highlights how individual attributes and interpersonal dynamics work together to inform agency.

For instance, emotional labor, an often underexplored aspect of teacher agency, emerged as a critical factor in Bao et al. (2022). In this study, tutors' emotional investments helped transform initially strained relationships with families into collaborative partnerships, underscoring the importance of emotional dimensions in

fostering agency. Similarly, findings from Li and Shen (2024) enriched positioning theory by illustrating how teachers' self-positioning as grassroots policymakers enabled them to navigate conflicting institutional policies effectively. These examples emphasize the need for a more integrated theoretical framework that accounts for the cognitive, emotional, and positional dimensions of agency formation.

Traditionally, most studies on teacher agency have concentrated on macro- and meso-level influences, such as policy constraints and institutional support (Pantić & Florian, 2015; Priestley et al., 2015). This study shifts the focus to micro-level dynamics, providing a more human-centered perspective on how heritage language teachers navigate their unique challenges. By examining the personal and relational dimensions of agency, it contributes to the diversification of agency research, expanding its scope beyond mainstream educational contexts and into the underexplored domain of heritage language education.

These findings also offer significant implications for refining theoretical models of teacher agency. For example, Pantić and Florian (2015) model, which identifies purpose, competence, autonomy, and reflection as key dimensions of agency, could be expanded to include emotional labor and positional negotiation as critical components. Similarly, sociocultural frameworks (Ahearn, 2001) may benefit from incorporating attitudinal and emotional aspects of agency, as revealed by this study. Such expansions would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of agency and its application across diverse teaching contexts.

5.2 Practical implications

The findings of this study offer valuable practical implications for heritage language education, particularly for educators, policymakers, and teacher training programs. By highlighting the complex interplay of micro-level factors such as identity, knowledge, beliefs, positioning, and emotions, this study underscores the need for targeted support to empower heritage language teachers in their roles as both educators and cultural custodians.

Teacher training programs should prioritize fostering inclusive professional identities among heritage language educators. Training should encourage teachers to value multilingualism and cultural diversity as assets, enabling them to adopt more flexible and empathetic instructional approaches. For instance, workshops and reflective practices can help teachers critically examine their attitudes and beliefs, equipping them to navigate the complex sociolinguistic realities of their classrooms.

Emotional support mechanisms should be integrated into professional development initiatives. Emotional labor, as highlighted in this study, plays a critical role in fostering positive teacher-student and teacher-family relationships. Schools and educational organizations should provide counseling resources, peer support groups, and opportunities for teachers to share experiences, helping them manage the emotional demands of their work.

Policymakers must consider the practical challenges heritage language teachers face, such as resource limitations and conflicting language policies. Providing access to culturally relevant teaching materials and creating platforms for teachers to contribute to policy development can enhance their agency and effectiveness. Policies should also

promote flexibility, allowing teachers to adapt instructional strategies to meet the diverse linguistic and cultural needs of their students.

Finally, fostering collaboration among heritage language teachers, schools, and communities can create supportive ecosystems that empower educators. Collaborative networks can facilitate the sharing of resources, innovative practices, and emotional support.

5.3 Limitations and future research

This study is not without limitations. First, the small number of studies analyzed limits the generalizability of its findings. Future research should expand the scope to include a larger and more diverse dataset, exploring heritage language teachers across various cultural and institutional contexts. Second, this study relied on secondary data, which may not fully capture the lived experiences of heritage language teachers. Empirical studies using qualitative methods, such as interviews and ethnographic research, are recommended to provide deeper insights into their agency.

Future research should investigate the interplay between micro-, meso-, and macro-level factors in shaping teacher agency. For instance, examining how institutional policies and sociopolitical contexts intersect with micro-level dynamics could offer a more comprehensive understanding of agency. Another promising avenue is the exploration of technology's role in enhancing or constraining agency, particularly in post-pandemic educational contexts.

5.4 Conclusion

In summary, this study sheds light on the complexities of heritage language teacher agency, revealing the critical role of micro-level factors in shaping their professional practices and identities. By addressing gaps in existing research and proposing new dimensions for understanding agency, it contributes to the diversification of teacher agency studies beyond mainstream educational contexts. The findings underscore the importance of supporting heritage language teachers through targeted training, emotional support, and inclusive policies to enhance their roles as educators and cultural custodians. Future research should build on these insights to further explore the dynamic and multifaceted nature of teacher agency in diverse educational contexts.

6. New Knowledge contribution

This study contributes new knowledge to the field of heritage language education by expanding the understanding of teacher agency through the integration of micro-level factors—identity, emotions, beliefs, knowledge, and positioning—into existing theoretical frameworks. It highlights the previously underexplored dimensions of attitudinal agency and emotional labor, showcasing how internal cognitive and emotional transformations significantly shape the exercise of agency. By examining heritage language teachers in diverse contexts such as new environments, teacher training, emotional labor, and policy implementation, this study broadens the scope of teacher agency research beyond mainstream second and foreign language education. Furthermore, the study proposes an enriched conceptual framework that integrates both behavioral and attitudinal manifestations of agency, emphasizing their dynamic interplay with contextual factors. This research also introduces the concept of contextual adaptability as a critical feature of heritage language teacher agency, demonstrating how educators navigate and

reconcile institutional constraints, sociocultural expectations, and their professional identities. By addressing the complexities of heritage language teaching, this study not only fills a significant research gap but also establishes a foundation for future exploration of agency within the broader field of language education.

Authors Contribution

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Data Availability

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article, and further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author: li.hao@ku.th

Interest Declaration

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article. The research did not involve any financial, personal, or other relationships with other people or organizations that could inappropriately influence (bias) our work. This submission is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study being reported, without any material omissions. Any roles of funding bodies have been clearly delineated; these bodies had no influence over the content of the manuscript.

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During the preparation of this work the author(s) used ChatGPT in order to polish English. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

Appendix:
Table 1 Summary of Research Sample Information

Author and Year	Subjects	Contexts of Agency Exercise	Dimensions of Agency	Micro-Level Influencing Factors	Country
Rosenfeld et al.,	Embassy and	Teaching in a New	Autonomy, Teacher	Identity, Knowledge,	Global

(2022)	Consulate Teachers	Environment	Identity	Positioning	
Ducar (2022)	Secondary School Teachers	Teacher Training	Teacher Identity, Teaching Philosophy	Knowledge, Identity	United States
Bao et al., (2022)	Home Tutors	Emotional Labor	Reflectivity, Teaching Philosophy	Emotion, Knowledge, Identity	New Zealand
Kayi-Aydar (2019)	University Teachers	Language Education	Teacher Identity, Autonomy, Professional Competence	Identity, Positioning, Emotion, Knowledge	United States
Ansó Ros et al. (2024)	Secondary School Teachers	Language Education	Teaching Philosophy, Teacher Identity	Identity, Knowledge, Belief	Finland
Lytra (2024)	Secondary School Teachers	Language Policy Making and Implementation	Autonomy, Reflectivity	Belief, Positioning	Switzerland
Li and Shen (2024)	Chinese School Teachers	Language Belief, Knowledge Policy Implementation	Autonomy, Teaching Philosophy	Belief, Knowledge	Brussels

(Source: by this study)

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