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Decolonizing Indigenous Language Pedagogies:

Additional Language Learning and Teaching

Kari A. B. Chew

Independent Scholar

Wesley Y. Leonard

University of California, Riverside

Daisy Rosenblum

University of British Columbia

Abstract

Given the experiences of colonization common to North American Indigenous communities, people learn Indigenous languages in situations with multiple layers of removal: communities from land; relations from intergenerational continuity; and grammar from real communicative contexts, places, and spirituality. Indigenous languages are often taught in ways inscribed by norms and assumptions associated with dominant language pedagogies, which can further these removals by reproducing colonial power dynamics. Considering current research and examples within the decolonial framework of language reclamation, which emphasizes community needs and values as the starting point for developing language work, we discuss how Indigenous language pedagogies can reflect Indigenous knowledge systems and nurture wellbeing. Engaging decolonization as a guiding principle, we shift away from normative Second Language Acquisition models, which can be incongruent with the aspirations of Indigenous com munities for their languages, and instead employ a framework of additional language learning. We provide an overview of pedagogical strategies for Indigenous language reclamation and discuss how they can be implemented to create and sustain spaces and opportunities for people and languages to flourish.

Introduction

Pedagogies are often thought of as simply the methods and practices of teaching. However, pedagogies also include the broader underlying theories and ideologies guiding their development and implementation. Couched within cultural norms, power relations, and institutional goals, these methods and practices are thus never neutral. Across North America, many approaches to teaching Indigenous languages rely heavily on norms and assumptions associated with teaching dominant Western languages (Hermes and Dyke 2019; Holden 2020; Mellow 2000; Rosborough, Rorick, and Urbanczyk 2017). Within these approaches, Indigenous languages tend to be reduced to translations of dominant languages, thereby overlooking "the rich worldview and knowledge embedded in [Indigenous] languages" (Rosborough, Rorick, and Urbanczyk 2017: 428). Problematically, this decontextualization of Indigenous languages from their community and cultural contexts also fails to meet the goals of Indigenous language learners and sustain their motivations (King and Hermes 2014; McIvor 2015). Building on a growing body of literature that identifies cultural and linguistic continuity as crucial for Indigenous community wellbeing (e. g., Hallett, Chandler, and Lalonde 2007; McIvor, Napoleon, and Dickie 2009; Oster et al. 2014; Taff et al. 2018; Whalen, Moss, and Baldwin 2016), this chapter describes how language pedagogies can both reflect Indigenous knowledge systems and meet the needs of learners and teachers.

As authors, we explore this issue through our perspectives as Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars working across the fields of Education, Indigenous Studies, Anthropology, and Linguistics in what are currently the United States and Canada.[1] We begin by introducing

[1] We adopt for this chapter the convention of capitalizing the names of academic disciplines and their frameworks, but using lower case to refer to the work that occurs within them.

ourselves in order to make visible our positionalities, relationships, and embodied ways of knowing (Magnat 2014; Rosborough and Rorick 2017).

- Chokma, saholhchifoat Kari Chew. Chikashsha saya. Chikashshanompa' ithanali. Chikashshi̲yaakni' attali. [Greetings, my name is Kari Chew. I am a Chickasaw citizen. I'm learning the Chickasaw language. I live in the Chickasaw Nation.] Because of my ancestors' forced Removal from our southeastern homelands in the 1830s and enduring pressures to assimilate, my family did not speak Chikashshanompa' for generations. As a language learner, I aspire to restore Chikashshanompa' as a family language. I advocate for Indigenous-led scholarship (e. g., McIvor and Chew 2021) and work with the Chickasaw Nation on language education projects.
- aya, Wesley Leonard weenswiaani. niila myaamia. [Hello, my name is Wesley Leonard. I am Miami.] I was greatly influenced by my grandfather, who emphasized that research could support the reclamation of our language, myaamiaataweenki, which was a sleeping language for about thirty years and wrongly deemed "extinct" within the categories of Western science. In response, I became a linguist with a focus on language reclamation. Although I was raised in Ohio in ancestral Miami homelands, I now work at the University of California, Riverside, as a guest on the lands of the Cahuilla, Tongva, Serrano, and Luiseño peoples.
- Hello, my name is Daisy Rosenblum. I am a non-Indigenous person working at the University of British Columbia as a guest on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded lands of the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ -speaking Musqueam people. I was raised in Lenape territory and became a linguist after several years working with multilingual com munities in New York, as a teacher, artist, and advocate. My current work involves a long-term

partnership with the Gwa’sala-’Nakwaxda’xw Nations engaged in reclamation of Bak̓wa̱mk̓ala, a dialect of Kwak̓wala. My involvement with language originates with the many languages my grandparents spoke, among them Catalán, Yiddish, Ukrainian, and Hamburg German, none of which I was raised to speak.

Together, we acknowledge and thank the many people who have shared with us their insights and experiences about Indigenous language pedagogies; their collective wisdom is reflected throughout this chapter.[2] We begin by situating decolonization as a guiding principle for our discussion of Indigenous language pedagogies. We shift away from normative Second Language Acquisition models, which are often incongruent with the aspirations of Indigenous communities for their languages, and instead employ a framework of additional language learning. We then give attention to pedagogical strategies for Indigenous language reclamation before moving into analysis of how pedagogies can be implemented to create and sustain spaces and opportunities for people and languages to flourish.

Decolonization as a guiding principle for Indigenous language pedagogies

A fundamental intention and outcome of colonial policies has been the disruption and suppression of the Indigenous ecologies of language and culture from the places and situations in which they thrive. For this reason, many Indigenous languages exist in ongoing contexts of removal: communities removed from their original lands, grammatical constructions removed from real communicative contexts, speakers removed from their full community roles, ecological

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[2] This chapter grew out of the “Decolonizing Indigenous Language Pedagogies” Talk Story workshop facilitated by the authors at the 5th International Conference on Language Documentation & Conservation (ICLDC 2017). The Talk Story workshops were sponsored by the National Science Foundation Documenting Endangered Languages Program under grant BCS-1614134. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this chapter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

knowledge removed from places, and spiritual connections removed from everything. Decolonization represents a guiding principle for theorizing Indigenous language pedagogies because it responds to this removal by centering the sovereignty, peoplehood, intellectual traditions, cultural values, and agency of Indigenous Nations (Leonard 2018; McCarty and Nicholas 2012; Michel 2012; Twitchell 2018).

Decolonizing the concept of language is a critical step toward decolonizing Indigenous language pedagogies. In the field of Linguistics, "a language" is commonly framed as an object containing a set of shared grammatical patterns and vocabulary. In Indigenous ways of knowing, however, "language" often includes culture, peoplehood, spirituality, and land (Leonard 2017). Rather than a cognitive system of rules for making "good" sentences, language can be viewed as a right, a connection to ancestors, a means for expressing cultural truths, a way to speak and listen to land, and a tool for communicating with loved ones. Embracing such community views, we operationalize *language reclamation* as an "effort by a community to claim its right to speak a language and to set associated goals in response to community needs and perspectives" (Leonard 2012: 359; see also Leonard 2011: 141, 2017).

A language reclamation framework thus emphasizes how the study of language learning requires alignment with the diverse realities and goals of Indigenous communities. Following an emerging convention among some scholars and practitioners of Indigenous language pedagogies, we adopt "additional language learning" rather than "Second Language Acquisition" (e. g., Chew et al. 2021; McIvor 2015, 2020; Rātima and Papesch 2014). The Australian Federation of Modern Language Teachers Associations Inc., for example, prefers the term "additional" to "second" for many reasons, including "to avoid 'othering' languages that learners potentially have connection with" (Babel 2019: 62). The field of Second Language Acquisition emerged in

the 1950s as a Europe an-based tradition of inquiry with an emphasis on school- or classroom-based foreign language instruction for monolinguals (Thomas 2013); as a result, acting on the associated pedagogical assumptions can reproduce dominant Western power structures that underlie Indigenous language shift (Errington 2008; Meek and Messing 2007; Volfová 2015). Effective Indigenous language reclamation strategies center communities' histories, needs, values, and intellectual tools.

For example, in many North American Indigenous communities, there is a legacy of people speaking or signing more than one language or dialect (Davis 2010; Philips 2011), and in many cases also a tradition of valorizing variation among the users of a given language (Abtahian and Quinn 2017: 146; Ahlers 2014; Kroskrity 2009: 193). Describing language learning as second language acquisition privileges an assumption of monolingualism that has only been recently introduced (cf. Wildsmith-Cromarty and Balfour 2019). We should not assume that using more than one language is inherently difficult, that speakers should focus only on learning one of their languages, or that a single dialect should be selected as a standard. Rather than framing language as an object to be acquired, additional language learning centers what Indigenous scholars Hermes, Bang, and Marin (2012) call a "relational epistemology" that starts "with the language itself and then extend[s] to all of those who are involved" (391). A relational epistemology encompasses the word *additional* in "additional language learning" because it embraces all language generated within language reclamation work. This includes not only variations in language use among first language speakers, but also "younger voices, new uses, and ways of learning" as a living part of a language (Hermes, Bang, and Marin 2012: 391).

Additional language learning also emphasizes the verb *learning* as an ongoing process that exists in contrast to the noun *acquisition*, which suggests an end goal. In focusing on

process, we concur with Larsen-Freeman's (2018) assertion that a per son-centered frame of reference is needed to understand language learning, as languages are not only learned but lived (Ros i Solé 2016). Our discussion of additional language learning further complements the conceptualization of terms like "new speaker" (Hammine 2020; O'Rourke 2018) or "emergent multilingual." These terms, as O'Rourke (2018) points out, challenge deficit perspectives surrounding commonly employed labels like "second-language learner" or "L2," which can imply a status of less authentic than "first-language speakers" or "L1s." Practitioners of Indigenous language pedagogies shift away from top-down models in which ideals reflecting language ideologies of native ness, language purity, and authenticity are imposed. Some create culturally-grounded terms in Indigenous languages to describe language users (e. g., Hinson 2019).

Though it is widely recognized that educational systems, despite constraints, can contribute to community-based language efforts (Hinton 2001: 7; Hornberger and De Korne 2018: 98; Ignace 2016: 8; McCarty and Lee 2015), tensions may arise when com munities, in partnership with primary, secondary, or post-secondary institutions, offer courses that teach the Indigenous language as a classroom subject. As "remnants from the … beginnings of Indigenous language classroom instruction, relying heavily on the curricula for teaching primary English and French and other Western European languages" (Rosborough, Rorick, and Urbanczyk 2017: 428; see also Meek and Messing 2007; Mellow 2000), methods emerging from Second Language Acquisition often treat language as one of many subjects to be consumed (Ignace 2016). Many emphasize reading and writing at the expense of oral proficiency and cultural competency. More generally, while there may be a focus on "culture" within schools that offer Indigenous language courses, there is a tendency for it to be a discrete subject rather than a way of being and doing

that is integrated throughout the curriculum (Hermes 2007: 57; Hermes and Dyke 2019: 383). Power dynamics within the classroom may perpetuate a colonial structure by centering authoritative expertise in a credentialed instructor, who transmits legitimated knowledge to the learners. In turn, learners' progress is evaluated through Western forms of assessment using milestones associated with expected and established norms of Second Language Acquisition. Studying a heritage language through this model can be problematic: academic evaluation includes the possibility of "failure"; institutional educational contexts may evoke painful intergenerational histories related to boarding schools or residential schools; and imposing a "student" identity often fails to capture the range of roles, relationships, and knowledges that learners actually have or seek to develop.

Centered in widely-shared community-driven goals of increasing proficiency and supporting wider language use and community wellbeing, language reclamation also recognizes that additional language learning is ultimately a local phenomenon. Contexts of learning vary across multiple dimensions, and a range of teaching situations can coexist to serve the diverse needs of learners. Reclamation embraces culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogies (McCarty and Lee 2014), which recognize "the need to reclaim and revitalize what has been disrupted and displaced by colonization" and, as an expression of sovereignty, emphasize accountability to community (McCarty and Lee 2014: 103). As discussed by Indigenous scholars reporting on their own community con texts, the reclamation model also underscores that the implementation of pedagogies is complex and must be informed by a deep knowledge of the community, its context, and how learners relate to their languages (e. g., Archibald 2008; Chew 2016; Cranmer 2015; Hinson 2019; Holmes 2018; Leonard 2007; McIvor 2012; Michel 2012; Rosborough 2012; Rodriguez 2020; Stacey 2016; Twitchell 2018). In recognition that many language learners

are also language teachers (Hinton 2003; McIvor 2020: 82) or otherwise engaged in language reclamation, we place special focus on the fact that adult learners in language reclamation situations usually have multiple roles, all of which must be considered when planning and implementing language work. In the next sections, we address these issues.

Pedagogical strategies for Indigenous language reclamation

Indigenous language scholar-practitioners have drawn on Second Language Acquisition research to support their understanding of the processes of learning and teaching (e. g., Billy 2015; Ignace 2016; McIvor 2020; Rosborough, Rorick, and Urbanczyk 2017; Sarkar and Metallic 2009; Volfová 2015). In particular, Second Language Acquisition strategies influenced by a "Natural Approach" emphasize oral communication over grammatically correct production, posit that comprehension precedes production and that production emerges naturally, and attend to the impact of the "affective filter" on learning by creating low-anxiety situations and focusing on making the message interesting so students are motivated to understand content (Krashen and Terrell 1983: 58–61). At the same time, efforts to learn based solely in these models may be difficult to sustain when not attentive to the social, historical, emotional, and political realities that are crucial to language reclamation. For this reason, we regard dominant approaches to language pedagogy with caution. An Indigenous framework does not preclude the incorporation of tools generated for and by dominant institutional structures, but requires that con versations about learning and teaching Indigenous languages be positioned within a decolonizing framework. This approach disrupts the unmarked status of dominant tools and their assumptions, and facilitates the selection of methods that are grounded in culturally-specific knowledges and needs.

Within spaces that strive to privilege Indigenous languages, learners and teachers weave together a variety of pedagogical approaches, actively developing methods appropriate for the learners with whom they are working, the particulars of their language and its structure and use, and the cultural stewardship in which they are engaged. Although some of these pedagogical strategies arise from and are informed by the field of Second Language Acquisition, Indigenous communities across North America have long innovated strategies to meet their language needs and aspirations. Many such approaches are guided by a motivation to (re-)create opportunities for "natural" language use and learning, modeled after how children learn their first language, through ample attentive input, positive interaction, and low pressure. In the following para graphs, we introduce several of these strategies, focusing on how they can privilege relationality and providing meaningful exposure to language. For clarity, we discuss each approach separately, but emphasize that they overlap and may function best in combi nation with each other. Scholars and practitioners involved in language work caution against a search for a "magic bullet," or one particular method or approach that best supports language learning and teaching (McIvor 2015). As Indigenous language scholar-practitioner and learner of Nsyilxcn (Okanagan) Sʔímlaʔxʷ Michele Johnson said, "we need to use all the second-language learning tools" (2012: 84).

Total Physical Response (TPR), a frequently referenced example, was originally introduced as a way to develop learners' listening comprehension in Second Language Acquisition contexts (Asher 1969). Teachers use commands in the target language along with gestures and movements, and evaluation occurs in real time as learners respond. TPR foregrounds the use of whole sentences and builds lessons around verbs in context. It has been widely adopted in Indigenous language classrooms, where routines allow for repetition as well as

introduction of new vocabulary (e. g., Cantoni 1999; De Korne 2010; Hermes 2007; Littlebear 2003). As an inherently embodied pedagogy, TPR effectively responds to the disembodiment reified in many dominant modes of language instruction, though we caution that reliance on physical movement can perpetuate ableism by not anticipating the needs of learners and teachers with varying abilities or "prioritiz[ing] accommodation, access, and inclusion" (Watzke 2020: 234). With TPR, as with all pedagogical strategies, scholar-practitioners must continuously evaluate whether these strategies are effectively supporting community-centered processes of decolonization.

Another common language teaching method, Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS), builds on the concepts of TPR while also drawing on tenets of the Natural Approach. Going beyond TPR's focus on comprehension, TPRS requires students to work together to create and act out stories, thus developing their ability to recognize grammatical patterns and construct new sentences. Within TPRS there are a number of named strategies such as "Parking" (staying with one sentence to allow many repetitions of target vocabulary), "Staying in bounds" (using only words that students know), and "Personalized questions and answers" (incorporating target grammatical structures into questions designed with specific learners in mind) (Ray and Seely 2004). The emphasis within TPRS on relationality, story, multisensory embodied learning, and local adaptability has proven useful for Indigenous language educators in a range of contexts.

For example, educators at T'selcéwtqen Clleq'mel'ten (Chief Atahm School), a parent-operated language immersion school on the Adams Lake Indian Reserve near Chase, British Columbia, ground their teaching in the Secwepemc oral tradition of *stsptekwle*, "a genre of legends featuring a magical cast of animals that incorporate the teaching of history, geography,

values, and culture" (Billy 2015: 1). Teachers are trained in the art of Secwepemc storytelling and must become proficient enough to tell the stories in Secwepemctsín. This approach, described by scholar-practitioners who co-founded the School (Billy 2015; Michel 2012), integrates selected aspects of TPR and TPRS with Sto:lo scholar Jo-ann Archibald's storywork as an Indigenous pedagogy (2008). Billy said, "I sought to focus on our own storytelling tradition, called *stsptekwle*, in order to articulate the key components of our stories from which we could begin developing our own storytelling teaching model" (2015: 5).

The language teaching model used at T'selcéwtqen Clleq'mel'ten draws from long standing culturally-specific pedagogical practices. Other approaches generate new practices that align with contemporary language ecologies, particularly in situations where there are very few users of the language. One of the most widely known such approaches is the Master- or Mentor-Apprentice Language Learning Program (MAP). Formalized as a program by the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival in 1992, MAP responded to the needs of Indigenous communities in California, many with fewer than ten first-language speakers and few active domains where language use was present and normalized. In this context, one-on-one intensive approaches were needed to create new adult speakers who could carry languages forward. Typically, MAP pairs individual or small groups of learners with fluent speakers, often working within a home through everyday activities, sometimes incorporating TPR and TPRS strategies. MAP teams receive training to support staying in language while doing other activities. Together, these pairs or small groups self-direct language learning around key principles including a commitment to use only the Indigenous language, to speak in full sentences, and to practice meaningful and useful communication (Hinton 2001: 222; Hinton et al. 2018). Because MAP encourages learning through traditional activities, it can restore intergenerational

transmission of not only language but also cultural knowledge. Apprentices use their knowledge in many ways, including as teachers in other settings.

Another method that supports learners to act simultaneously as teachers is Where Are Your Keys? (WAYK). WAYK frames language learning as a type of game, with learners as players. The approach is grounded in the belief that skills for effective language learning and teaching "can be broken down into discrete elements," identified as *Techniques* (Gardner and Ciotti 2018: 139). WAYK incorporates a process of noticing and naming Techniques among groups of practitioners. About such strategies, Gardner and Ciotti write "that you can teach them to other people, that they come from a variety of sources, that you can make new ones as needed, and that everyone can collectively save a massive amount of time by seeking out and sharing the solutions to common language learning problems" (2018: 139). WAYK practitioners create a nickname and a sign, often adapted from American Sign Language, for each new Technique. Dozens of these strategies have been created and passed along during WAYK trainings held across North America. Techniques address one or more of five key objectives: speed, immersion, comfort, accessibility, and community.[3]

Some models developed by Indigenous scholar-practitioners have become templates for curricular materials used by Indigenous language programs in other communities. One such curriculum, the Salish fluency transfer system, also known as the Paul Creek method, was first developed by LaRae Wiley, a Sn̓ ʕay̓ckstx woman, and her husband Christopher Parkin, originally a high school Spanish teacher. It utilizes recordings and visual aids, among other supports, as part of a multilevel curriculum providing approximately 1,000 hours of language instruction,[4] initially implemented at the Salish School of Spokane, a parent-founded immersion

[3] See https://whereareyourkeys.org/technique-glossary/.
[4] See http://www.interiorsalish.com/home.html.

school. In addition to several Interior Salish languages, this method has since been adapted for use in teaching Lingít by the Tlingit Language Revitalization Association (Johnson 2016),[5] and for nuučaan̓uł by the Hesquiaht Language Program.[6] An important feature of the curriculum is that it is designed to be delivered by beginning and intermediate learners (Johnson 2012).

The strategies described above strive to create conditions that allow learners to stay in language for periods of time, whether a few minutes or a few hours (Hinton et al. 2018: 123–125). These approaches prioritize orality over literacy and whole language use rather than atomized lists of vocabulary and grammatical instruction, and also tend toward embodied activities and physical engagement such that language-learning emerges as an outcome. They are grouped together under a broad category of “immersion,” which is often considered the gold standard for language learning. Despite enthusiasm for immersion approaches, however, some Indigenous language learners and teachers feel overwhelmed at the thought of “doing immersion” as if it is an intuitive and automatic process. Although communicative and experiential learning methods are important, the goal of creating immersion contexts thus must be applied with consideration of ongoing colonization and the range of language ecologies in Indigenous com munities. In almost all cases, learners and teachers will need to attend to the emotional and practical realities of working together and build immersion domains incrementally in order to gradually extend the time they spend in language. This consideration is especially crucial for communities whose languages must first be learned from documentation, where immersion is not possible in the initial stages of reclamation.

Even for communities with fluent speakers willing to teach, there are factors which may impede success with an immersion approach: speakers may not be accustomed to using their

[5] See tlingitlanguage.com › L1-Textbook-45-LESSONS.
[6] See http://www.hesquiahtlanguage.org/free-downloads.html.

languages; learners may not have other people to talk to; both may feel pressure to recreate a "natural" process of first-language transmission that they likely did not experience themselves. In describing a school-based, verb-centered way of teaching Diné bizaad (Navajo) through immersion contexts, Holm, Silentman, and Wallace acknowledge that they cannot recreate the environment in which fluent speakers acquired Diné bizaad as their first language, but can create situations that promote the use of Diné bizaad (2003: 27). Like TPR, TPRS, MAP, and WAYK, the Situational Navajo approach integrates multiple strategies: gesture, 'Meta-Navajo' phrases used to direct or invite students to speak in language, 'survival' language that allows students to express basic needs and wants; and providing exposure to 'background Navajo' that is not explicitly part of a lesson and may not be understood by learners (Holm, Silentman, and Wallace 2003: 30–31).

Many teachers in immersion programs develop pedagogies which strive to "come to terms with, among other things, the structure of the language they are trying to teach" (Holm, Silentman, and Wallace 2003: 25) while attending to the needs of their community of learners. Part of this entails negotiating the ways learners think about and experience *grammar*, which as a named concept is often tied to learners' linguistic insecurities (Abtahian and Quinn 2017) and negative schooling experiences. Some strategies systematically introduce contextualized grammatical patterns without explicit explanation, so students can learn them unconsciously. The Root-Word Method, used since 1998 in the Onkwawén:na Kentyókhwa Adult Mohawk Language Immersion Program, presents the polysynthetic structure of Kanien'kéha (Mohawk) through a wide range of words and phrases, with the goal that learners will gradually recognize morphological patterns and begin to produce new language. Accelerated Second Language Acquisition (ASLA), developed by Neyooxet Greymorning to teach Hinono'eitiit (Arapaho

language), employs associations between language with images to allow students to learn how to understand and speak without direct instruction in grammar (Greymorning 1997, 2019). Alternatively, the Situational Navajo classrooms described above provide both conscious ('instructional') and unconscious ('practice') exposure to patterns of 'high-utility' verbs in relevant contexts and routines, in mode-aspects that "can apply to a number of different situations" (Holm, Silentman, and Wallace 2003: 33).

For many communities, the word *grammar* evokes a legacy of academic research that reduces language to decontextualized structural patterns, hence contributing to speakers' and learners' alienation from their languages (Leonard 2017, 2018). At the same time, research and practice indicates that direct grammatical instruction can be helpful for learners (Hermes 2007: 67; Nassaji and Fotos 2011), and culturally-centered linguistic analysis can also be beneficial. For example, a morphosyntax class made up of Cree students from multiple Nations at First Nations University nuhelot'įne thaiyots'į nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills in St. Paul, Alberta, adapted the Root-Word Method as an analytical and learning strategy and challenged colonial approaches to grammar by examining Nêhiyawêwin (Plains Cree) morphology through Cree epistemologies such as *wahkohtowin* 'relatedness.' Several students observed that this exercise facilitated deeper understanding of the worldviews embedded into words (Holden 2020: 26–31). Similarly, for the late Kwakwa̱ka̱'wakw scholar and language advocate T'łat'łak̲uł Patricia Rosborough (2012), teaching and learning about Kwak'wala linguistic features facilitated accessing "the beauty of" Kwak'wala and "discovering, sharing, and celebrating beautiful words that demonstrate embedded Kwakwa̱ka̱'wakw values and worldviews" in order to make "learning a joyful experience that fosters both the development of the language revitalization community and the community's well-being" (151–152). Thus, "a combined attention to

grammar and communication may be effective for both language acquisition and for the transmission of history, language, and cultural values across generations" (Rosborough, Rorick, and Urbanczyk 2017: 430).

Taking questions of scope and sequence into account further helps learners and teachers to structure pedagogical processes as well as develop appropriate ways of assessing and evaluating progress. Several communities have adapted or used the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) framework for this purpose. However, ACTFL guidelines (ACTFL 2012) are not an ideal default for Indigenous language reclamation in several ways. For example, they are framed in terms of a uniform top-down goal of achieving "native-speaker-like fluency" in a "foreign" language, and progress is measured through overcoming described deficits in ability. For many learners from Indigenous communities, institutional education, and especially processes of assessment and evaluation, are laden with negative associations, "especially to those who identify and have ancestral ties to the language and do not want to be seen as inauthentic participants of their culture" (Galla 2018: 107). Learner anxiety about being tested, judged, and graded on an ability to repeat memorized content can both drain existing motivation and prevent further engagement. Learners are better able to acquire language when they feel confident and the process is enjoyable and positive (Krashen and Terrell 1983: 59); learners and teachers are better able to maintain their motivation and enthusiasm when they can attend to the emotional complexity of their work.

The right type of assessment can provide an opportunity for learners and others to perceive, appreciate, and celebrate their progress and achievement. Scholars focused on learning and teaching Indigenous languages have responded with tools that are framed in terms of positive accomplishment. The NEȾOLṈEW̱ language learning assessment tool created to

support adult learners of Indigenous languages focuses primarily on speaking and understanding, and includes space for learners to reflect on their progress, frame ability in terms of statements about what they can do in the language—rather than what they cannot do—and also to document the relationships that are key to their learning (McIvor and Jacobs 2016). Appropriate methods of assessment will vary with community contexts: they may include spending time with speakers over a meal, creating a language lesson, or compiling a multimedia portfolio related to a learner's specific goals. In contrast with measuring individual learning in terms of reaching generic milestones, these methods prioritize community goals of supporting shared progress toward reclaiming language use. For example, learner progress within MAP teams is assessed at key stages by a group of speakers or other individuals able to evaluate team progress and provide helpful feedback. Such assessment strategies can encourage individual learners to see their strengths and work toward improvement while also being inclusive, creating space for each learner to be where they are in the process without measuring themselves against external metrics. Increasing proficiency is often a key goal in Indigenous language learning and teaching, but learners often have other aspirations such as healing from trauma, countering narratives of loss, and strengthening relationships. Acknowledging, assessing, and supporting these goals is part of a decolonial approach.

Creating and sustaining spaces and opportunities for language continuance

Decolonial approaches to learning and teaching Indigenous languages ensure the continuity of language across relationships, places, and times while confronting the hegemonic forces that contribute to language shift. This linguistic and cultural continuance is, as Simon Ortiz (1992) writes, "something more than memory or remembering … [it] is life itself" (9–10).

For this reason, language reclamation revolves around not only building and strengthening relationships among people, but also creating places and opportunities for these languages to be used. In creating these spaces, language work requires innovative, flexible, and responsive approaches which ensure the sustainability of a learning environment. Sustainable approaches to Indigenous language education must nurture the relationship between languages and these places, to support "people 'doing language' together in meaningful ways" (Fettes 1997: 303–304). Sustainability also entails attention to financial and other practical aspects of language work. In this section we explore these themes.

MAP approaches, for example, have been adapted for use in communities across the U.S., Canada, and elsewhere (Henke 2017; Hinton et al. 2018; Olawsky 2013). Some of these adaptations have sought to address challenges that may arise and prevent the original MAP model from being sustainable within a particular community. The Sauk Language Department of the Sac and Fox Nation in Oklahoma found that with a one-on-one model, their MAP teams, and the Elders in particular, struggled to fit hours of language work on top of other responsibilities and found it difficult to avoid using English. As a result the community implemented a team-based model in which a rotating group of master language speakers works with a core group of apprentices (Hinton et al. 2018: 131–133). The Chickasaw Nation in Oklahoma encountered similar challenges with their MAP efforts, and in 2015 also created a team-based adult immersion program (Hinson 2019).

Because new learners were struggling with the role of being in charge of their own learning, as the original MAP model requires, both the Sauk and Chickasaw programs started to include a position for an experienced language learner to act as a team leader and be responsible for maintaining the immersion environment. This adaptation was particularly beneficial because,

within one-on-one teams, very often team members already know each other and have an established convention of using English. These relationships may also make it difficult for apprentices to feel comfortable guiding or "correcting" a speaker (often an elder relative) to bring them back into the language or make similar requests. A team-based approach can provide more structure and support so that learners do not have to navigate these challenges in isolation. The Chickasaw Nation also creates a professional pathway for language learners by funding two-year salaried positions through Chikasha Academy, allowing graduates of the program to move into occupations involving language within the Nation (Hinson 2019). Not only does this contribute to the continuity of graduates' engagement with language, it also normalizes and extends domains of language use. Similarly, within the original MAP model, apprentices and master-/mentor-speakers are paid an hourly rate to facilitate spending time together in language.

Other adult language learning programs, though not arising from MAP, also focus on creating spaces for language. Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke in Québec have worked since 1985 to create and train new adult speakers of Kanien'kéha to support language nests, immersion schools, and other language efforts (Stacey 2016). Iehnhotonkwas (Bonnie Jane Maracle) addresses the need for mixed approaches to working with adult learners, defining immersion in the context of Kanien'kéha adult language programming as "a method of language instruction, which in this instance is Mohawk, whereby the learner is instructed directly in the language as well as being taught (in English) about the Mohawk language" (2002: 389). Adult learners of Nsyilxcn lived in a Syilx language immersion house in Penticton, British Columbia for several months in 2011 (Johnson 2014). Following that, a Sylix Language Association was formed in 2015 to create new speakers and document the speech of fluent Elder speakers; since then, a cohort of com mitted Nsyilxcn learners have spent two days each week at a space where they

work with a team of teacher-learners and with fluent Elders to follow a structured immersion-oriented curriculum (Johnson 2017).

The emergence of new adult speakers in many communities is integrated with a need for skilled teachers working in spaces focused on raising children in or with their language. Adult language learners often are the teachers and administrators in Indigenous language medium educational institutions, including language nests and schools. Language nests, such as the Pūnana Leo in Hawaiʻi (Wilson and Kamanā 2001), are intended to create a new generation of first language or bilingual speakers of an Indigenous language (Okura 2017: 2; see McIvor and Parker 2016 for an overview of early childhood programs). They are prototypically early childhood care centers or preschools that are immersive in an Indigenous language, privilege cultural learning, and recreate a home-like atmosphere. Immersion schools, like the T'selcéwtqen Clleq'mel'ten example discussed above or the Mohawk Akwesasne Freedom School on the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation in New York (White 2015), refer to K–12 institutions that provide instruction in all subjects through an Indigenous language medium. Intergenerational relationality is a keystone of many successful community-based efforts, within and beyond educational institutions. As such, many of these programs emphasize parental involvement, some even requiring parents to participate in language classes themselves (e. g., Wilson and Kamanā 2001: 152). In Hawaiian immersion programs, inclusive of language nests and K–12 schools, parental support is critical to the success of language education. As noted by Hilo Pūnana Leo founding member Kauanoe Kamanā, "Parents are what made [these programs] grow from the beginning, from the Pūnana Leo, so within the good and the bad, the blessings and the difficulties, the parents are there" (quoted in Calica and Rawlins 1999).

Along with relationships among generations, decolonial language pedagogies also honor the importance of relationships between languages, places, and people. Language activists often stress the reciprocal relationship between land and language. Melissa Nelson (Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians) emphasizes how the sounds of Indigenous landscapes, inclusive of animal sounds, wind, water, etc., "feed the languages; likewise, the words, songs, stories, and prayers of native peoples feed the spiritual essence of the land" (2002: 3). Knowledge for the Secwepemc people "is connected to individual and collective experiences on the land and to the ways that the [Secwepemctsín] language embeds, expresses, and organizes social and cultural experience" (Ignace and Ignace 2017: 121). Land-based pedagogies not only reflect established Indigenous ways of learning and knowing, but also counter the radical disruptions to places experienced by Indigenous communities. At Waadookodaading Ojibwe Language Institute, a Pre-K through 5th grade immersion school on the Lac Courte Oreilles reservation in Wisconsin, students go into the forest to participate in the cultural practice of harvesting maple syrup from trees. Intergenerational relationships as well as relationships to the landscape are nurtured as students engage "alongside teachers and elders, working the taps, tending the fire, and tasting the sap" (Hermes and Dyke 2019: 394) and learn science, culture, history, tradition, and language simultaneously. In this way, land-based pedagogies "offer a way of fostering individual and collective empowerment for students by re-embedding them in the land-connected social relationships that settler-colonialism, through education and otherwise, sought to destroy" (Wildcat et al. 2014: III).

While communities often strive to provide opportunities for language learning within their original homelands, where the language was first spoken, this is frequently not possible. As a result of forced removals and other displacements both community-wide and individual, many

have found themselves learning in other territories (e. g., Baloy 2011; Davis 2018). Learners in diaspora may be able to gather together and learn with speakers living nearby, whether through MAP, informal language classes, or classes held at universities or other academic institutions. These classes depend on the presence of a facilitator who can coordinate space, time, materials, and participation of interested learners. Learners may also periodically travel in order to connect with members of their Indigenous community. This commonly occurs through language/culture camps, which bring people together for a short time. This is true for Miami people, who are dispersed due to two removals by the United States as well as voluntary relocations by many Miami families. Miami youth camps take place both in the original Indiana homelands as well as in removal territory in Oklahoma; both emphasize relationships with myaamionki 'Miami lands' (Leonard and Shoemaker 2012). For example, the theme of one of the Oklahoma camps was identifying and strengthening multidimensional relationships between earth, sky, and Miami people. This camp took place on lands allotted to Miami people post-removal rather than in original Miami territory. Because the same constellations appear across both places, however, the inclusion of sky provided continuity in that specific language and cultural relationships already existed.

When learners are not able to work together in the same place, they may rely on technology to access language (Galla 2016). They may use apps (Begay 2013), post on social media, join live video-conferenced language classes, or study asynchronous online courses (Alexander 2018; Bontogon et al. 2018; Chew, Hinson, and Morgan 2022). Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, remote language learning and related pedagogical frameworks have increased (Chew et al. 2022). It is a reality that learners and teachers of Indigenous languages are always (re-)constituting domains for their language in the place where they find themselves

living. In spaces and times when learners do not have access to fluent speakers who can be their mentors, they may choose to reclaim areas of their home, creating physical locations where their Indigenous language is used exclusively. Activities like washing the dishes or putting away groceries can be considered "domains" that are reclaimed for the target language (Zahir 2018). Significantly, learners can use this method on their own through self-narration of activities.[7]

As Indigenous language movements have gained momentum, an international network of language scholar-practitioners have also come to engage in wider com munities of practice that facilitate the exchange of strategies, methods, and modes of adaptation for local language contexts. For example, WAYK trainings have been held in several locations in Canada and the US focused on Sḵwx̱wu7mesh, Unangam Tunuu, Nee'aanèegn' (Upper Tanana), and Maidu, among other languages. At an annual summer institute held at T'selcéwtqen Clleq'mel'ten, Indigenous language educators from across Canada and beyond gather to share pedagogies and receive training in workshops on TPR, TPRS, and other methods within a framework attuned to Indigenous language teaching and learning (Billy 2015). Several universities host institutes to provide comprehensive training in Indigenous language education and linguistics. At the American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI) at the University of Arizona, participants' culminating experience is designing and teaching a short immersion lesson that embeds language in its appropriate cultural context. Other institutes include the North west Indian Language Institute (NILI) at the University of Oregon and the Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute (CILLDI) at the University of Alberta.[8] Conferences focused on language reclamation include the annual Stabilizing Indigenous

[7] Examples of this method as used for Twulshootseed (Lushootseed) language learning can be seen at http://www.puyalluptriballanguage.org/.
[8] AILDI: https://aildi.arizona.edu/; NILI: https://nili.uoregon.edu/; CILLDI: https://www.ualberta.ca/ canadian-indigenous-languages-and-literacy-development-institute/

Languages Symposium (SILS) held in various locations in North America, the Indigenous Language Institute Symposium (ILIS) in New Mexico, and the biennial Language is Life conference in California. Coming together allows learners and teachers to support each other through exchanging ideas, sharing perspectives, and renewing enthusiasm—which participants bring back to their work with language.

Conclusions

Decolonization requires the dismantling of colonizing forces and structures that continue to work against Indigenous languages and the peoples they belong to. Therefore, the process of decolonizing Indigenous language pedagogies, and by extension appropriately theorizing and describing them, involves a return to and recentering of ancestral knowledge and wisdom, "which respects and exists in relationship with the non-human and more-than-human" (Chew et al. 2019: 148). We must identify, draw from, respond to, and celebrate these broad sets of relationships that colonization has fragmented. Because language reclamation efforts are not static, continued dialogue is crucial among practitioners and researchers focused on language pedagogies. Researchers, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, can contribute through advancing knowledge and understanding of how pedagogies apply in different contexts, participating in the development and sharing of new strategies for language learning, and supporting and amplifying methods which connect with community goals.

Continued dialogue and further research can complement the work of Indigenous communities in imagining what is possible for their languages. Additional language learning is grounded in the restoration and recognition of connection among generations, land, beings, language, culture, mind, body, and spirit, thus calling for an embodied approach to language

pedagogies which embraces emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects of learning and teaching. Instead of focusing on individual effort, achievement, and rewards, additional language learning centers learning and teaching within com munities and emphasizes that individual learners are always part of networks, even if their study of language occurs in isolation. For this reason, additional language learning privileges culturally appropriate assessment that speaks both to learner and community goals.[9] The strategies described in this chapter include many ways of breaking language learning into smaller manageable pieces that allow learning and teaching to be a joy rather than a burden.[10] They can and should be adapted and combined to suit the needs of the community, the language, and the learners involved. When implemented in a decolonial framework, they attend to the emotional experiences and relationships among learners and teachers, establishing safe, fun, positive, and supportive spaces where learners feel comfortable acquiring new languages. Crucially, to be sustainable, language learning and teaching must nurture wellbeing and joy through pedagogies that are embodied, relational, and connected to what matters to people.

While we call for more research of methods that contribute to language reclamation by nurturing wellbeing, motivation, and relationships, we emphasize the need to move beyond talk and research by enacting decolonial pedagogies toward a shared vision of language continuance. Language is a way to communicate with one's relatives, inclusive of those that are not human, and ancestors. Learning and teaching Indigenous languages repairs the ruptures that have occurred in Indigenous communities, and are thus acts of both resistance and empowerment.

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[9] See Haynes et al.'s (2010) discussion of Culturally Responsive Assessment for Indigenous language communities.
[10] We recommend the *First Nations Curriculum Building Guide* (Ignace 2016), which provides an overview of useful pedagogical strategies that have been applied for the reclamation of Indigenous languages in British Columbia.

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