The Responsibilities of Linguistics Programs:
Preparing and Supporting Linguistics Students in Collaborative, Revitalization-Oriented Work

by

Deirdre Demson
B.A., University of Toronto, 2018

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Departments of Linguistics and Indigenous Education

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We acknowledge and respect the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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Abstract

The Linguistics field has encountered many incisive critiques of its fieldwork and documentation practices regarding Indigenous languages in recent years, yet, for this most part, this important scholarly work seems to have made little impact on the way that Linguistics students are being taught and trained. Many Linguistics students, especially those who are non-Indigenous, leave Linguistics programs lacking both necessary preparation and support in collaborative, revitalization-oriented language research with Indigenous communities. This thesis takes up the question of what constitutes ethical language work with Indigenous speech communities, and argues finally that curricula must provide instruction and training in preparing students to undertake collaborative research practices not only by providing such instruction within dedicated fieldwork courses, but also by making alterations to the full scope of Linguistics curricula and program designs. The thesis also incorporates an examination of the ideologies that underpin the Linguistics field and that hinder its ability to orient itself aright towards Indigenous language revitalization. The centrepiece of the thesis comprises interviews with four scholars, all of whom work in or adjacent to the Linguistics field, who offer knowledge and practical insights into the causes and perpetuation of the complex problems at the heart of these programs as they pertain to Indigenous language revitalization. On the basis of the thesis's findings, practical proposals for decolonizing Linguistics programs are discussed.

Acknowledgements

With deep gratitude, I would like to thank the following people:

My co-supervisors, Professor Ewa-Czaykowska-Higgins and Professor Megan Lukaniec, for their tireless dedication to and tremendous support of my research;

My external examiner, Professor Andrea Berez-Kroeker, for her incisive critique and thoughtful proposals for further exploration of this topic;

My professors in the MILR program, for sharing invaluable knowledge that I will take with me throughout my career;

My MILR cohort, for being my family away from home, for being my teachers, for being an inspiration to me: mathacos, Gail Sam, Lois Williams, PENÁ Elliott, Kahentéhtha Angela Elijah, Maria Pascua, Danita Bilozaze, MENEŦIYE Elliott, Kanen'tó:kon Hemlock, Keisha Everson, Kirsten Dobler;

The scholars whom I interviewed for this thesis, for their interest in my work, for their encouragement, for their time, for what I learned from them: Professor Ryan DeCaire, Professor Marianne Ignace, Professor Wesley Leonard, Professor Keren Rice;

Mom, for always making time for me, whether for editing or hugs; Dad, for always supporting me in whatever I study;

Friends and family; Lacey Jones; Roger John; Zola Kell;

Ryan DeCaire and the late Trish Rosborough, for being the ones whose belief in me mattered the most.

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Chapter 1

The Linguistics field's responsibility to Indigenous language revitalization—and to Indigenous peoples—has been deliberated by many Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars over the past several decades (e.g., Hale et al., 1992). For the most part, the discourse regarding responsibility has been keyed to linguistic fieldwork (e.g., Rice, 2006; Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009), since it is generally within the context of fieldwork that one finds linguists engaged in Indigenous language revitalization. Also central to the discussion of responsibility is language documentation (Woodbury, 2011), which is often the product of linguistic fieldwork. What is seen today within the Linguistics field is an increasing recognition that the practices of both fieldwork and language documentation need to be decolonized, and numerous publications within the field are proposing methods for doing this.

To date, however, colonial approaches to fieldwork and language documentation regrettably persist (Leonard, 2018). Zuni Pueblo linguist Adrienne Tsikewa (2021) has found, for example, that fieldwork training in Linguistics programs continues to teach linguist-focused models of language research (see Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009, for discussion of the term *linguist-focused models*). Tsikewa argues that, in consequence, this fieldwork training "is inadequate when it comes to preparing students to appropriately include community-based perspectives and participation in their own research" (p. e306).

Underpinning theoretical Linguistics programming are ideologies about language and language revitalization, ideologies which are not limited in their impacts to fieldwork courses alone. In postsecondary Theoretical Linguistics programs, for example, ideological perspectives have resulted, more often than not, in a disregard for or dismissal of Indigenous understandings of language in general (Leonard, 2018). Furthermore, students are rarely, if ever, taught

Linguistics in a way that is revitalization-oriented, or that might prepare them to participate in language revitalization work. Because the ideologically-grounded positivist nature of many Linguistics programs prevails, students are often not given the space to question or challenge what they are being taught. Courses throughout the curricula as a whole tend to reflect the same ideological perspectives. There is, of course, a diversity of thought among Linguistics instructors, program designers, and programs. There are numerous linguists who support the decolonization of Linguistics programs, although many of them do not yet know how to do so, or are not supported by others in their departments or institutions, or by systemic institutional structures. To date, there have been positive steps towards decolonizing Linguistics programs in some institutions, but those remain the minority. I am being general, therefore, in my discussion of Linguistics programs. These curriculum designs have consequences for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. Non-Indigenous students may, even unknowingly, continue the tradition of harmful colonial language research practices that do little to nothing to support Indigenous language revitalization. Indigenous students, for their part, may be discouraged—or prevented—from using culturally-grounded and culturally-appropriate research methodologies, or from pursuing the types of research useful for language revitalization. Moreover, because Linguistics programs are rarely revitalization-oriented, students may find it challenging to discern how to apply their skills to revitalization work.

In this thesis, I argue that there is a pressing need for postsecondary Linguistics programs to decolonize: to value Indigenous knowledge and research, to undertake introspection of ideological assumptions and methods that hinder positive ways forward, to provide training in collaborative language research, and to teach revitalization-oriented Linguistics. My thesis builds upon a review of the literature on collaborative language research and on decolonization theory for academia, so as to establish the cues that postsecondary Linguistics programmers might take in designing their curricula. That is followed by interviews of four scholars, all of whom work in or adjacent to the Linguistics field; I present their experiences of Linguistics programs, their observations on what has changed over the last ten to twenty years, and what changes still need to be made. Finally, the thesis concludes with some practical strategies to be used as a starting point in considering how to decolonize a theoretical Linguistics program, based on findings that arise from the literature and from my interviews.

Indigenous language revitalization does not have its origins or emergence within the Linguistics field. Indigenous language revitalization is a global movement led by Indigenous peoples working within different (but often similar) contexts of resistance to the effects of colonization and language shift. In this thesis, I write from and focus on a North American context. There are, of course, many Indigenous nations across North America, and I note that the issues that I discuss in my thesis may require more context-specific strategies and solutions than I am able to specify here. Nevertheless, I aim for my findings to be of some support for Linguistics program designers, and to encourage Linguistics departments to be in discussion with local Indigenous communities in developing curricula more tailored to the local context. With this in mind, the thesis conclusions incorporate a measure of flexibility that may render them relevant to Linguistics programs outside of North America.

Though this thesis cannot comprise every possible decolonization strategy for every Linguistics department, it fills an important lacuna, being the only study to date on decolonizing postsecondary Linguistics curricula. It by no means represents the definitive word on the topic; additional strategies proposed by other scholars are expected to be joined to and enhance it in the coming years. In the event that Linguistics programs become decolonized, the next generation of linguists will be better able to support Indigenous language revitalization. Indigenous Linguistics students will be better supported in the research that they are pursuing, in the methodologies that they use, and in their understandings of language. Non-Indigenous Linguistics students will be better equipped to work in collaborative partnership with Indigenous communities on research that supports language revitalization. Furthermore, the decolonization of Linguistics programs will forward the decolonization and, hence, the enrichment of the Linguistics field as a whole.

As my positionality has a direct bearing on my work, particularly on the methodologies employed in the study (see below), I mention that I am a non-Indigenous scholar. Though presently writing my Master's degree in an Indigenous Education department, I regard myself as positioned within the Linguistics field, having received my Bachelor of Arts degree in Linguistics, and will soon begin a doctoral degree in Linguistics. Because I hope to support Indigenous language revitalization, particularly with respect to the Indigenous peoples local to my home, I research what I believe to be knowledge critical for my linguistic work throughout my academic career. In Chapter 2 of this thesis, I offer a more thorough introduction of myself and my background leading to my undertaking this work and the methodologies that I employ.

In the following sections of this chapter, I review some terms that I will be using throughout this thesis; I assume that most readers will not need definitions for these common terms, but to minimize ambiguity, I clarify how I am using the particular terms. I then set forth background relevant to this research. This background information is intended to give readers an understanding of the need for the research that I am doing. First, I review some Indigenous understandings of language, which may be unfamiliar to some readers. I also cover the historical contexts around Indigenous Language Shift, Indigenous language revitalization, and the Linguistics field's relationship to Indigenous language revitalization. Though this history is already familiar to some, it is impossible to discuss the contents of my research without this context at the forefront. With the context established, I then describe the purpose of each of my guiding research questions; I present them initially here, without comment, so as to establish the general aims of my research. My principal research question is:

> *In what ways can postsecondary Theoretical Linguistics departments prepare and support their students in collaborative, revitalization-oriented language research?*

To guide my research, I developed three guiding sub-questions:

1. *Does collaborative language research require specialized study and training? If so, why, and what kind?*
2. *Are there critical ideological differences related to language and language revitalization between Euro-American academic institutions and Indigenous communities?*
3. *To date, what are some of the positive and effective changes that have been made to postsecondary Linguistics curricula in response to the increase in publications on collaborative language research?*

Though not a guiding question, I also consider:

> *How can the Linguistics field benefit from the inclusion of Indigenous views of language and language revitalization?*

Finally, having established what I aim to do with my work, I discuss what I am unable to do, within the scope of this work, in the section describing the limitations of the research.

In Chapter 2, I discuss the methodologies that I am using in conducting my research. As part of my particular methodological approach, I devote a section to my self-location, to give the reader a more detailed picture of who I am, and why I do the work that I do. Because I am a non-

Indigenous scholar, I have taken to heart guiding principles for work with or concerning Indigenous peoples designed by a number of Indigenous scholars. The methods used in conducting my research, also discussed in Chapter 2, proceed directly from these guiding principles.

In Chapter 3, I review literature specifically relevant to my research questions. In the first half of the chapter, I survey ethical models of collaborative language research, with the aim of discerning which aspects of this kind of research are confusing or unintuitive to non-Indigenous linguists. In the second half of the chapter, I review decolonization theory for academia, and investigate some of the ideologies that underpin the way that theoretical Linguistics is taught to students. Through the exploration of these areas of research, I identify potentially problematic aspects of the way that theoretical Linguistics classes are frequently taught; these cues serve in the corrective strategies that I develop in the final chapter of this thesis.

In Chapter 4, I interview four scholars, all of whom work in or adjacent to the Linguistics field, and who have experience with theoretical Linguistics programs. Included in the interviewees’ response to my questions (see Appendix A) are their understandings of the responsibilities that postsecondary Linguistics departments have to Indigenous peoples, and their experiences and insights on the existing problems within many theoretical Linguistics curricula, and offer ideas and strategies for improving them.

Chapter 5 revisits my guiding research questions, and I discuss there what answers one might give to those questions. Based on findings that arose from the literature and from my interviews, I offer eight practical suggestions for transforming a theoretical Linguistics curriculum, so that it might become a more welcome environment for Indigenous scholars and scholarship, a better foundation for non-Indigenous students to learn how to participate in collaborative language research, and a source of knowledge for linguistic research and practices that are revitalization-oriented. I propose directions for future research. On a concluding note, I offer some closing thoughts as a non-Indigenous Linguistics student. Though I intend for my research in this thesis to support the training of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, the advice that I can offer from my own personal experiences is directed particularly toward linguists and Linguistics students who are non-Indigenous.

1.1 Notes on Terms

I sometimes employ terms in this thesis in specific ways that may differ from general usage; here I clarify my usage of these terms so as to avoid ambiguity. Some terms will be clarified in greater detail in later chapters of this thesis; terms needing early specification are discussed in the present section.

I follow Miami linguist Wesley Leonard's (2020) convention of writing *Linguistics* with a capital-*L* when referring to the academic field. That said, the term *linguist* need not refer only to someone trained within the *Linguistics field*, and the term *linguistic* need not refer only to work that is done within the context, and in the tradition, of the *Linguistics field*. Another way of understanding lower case-*l linguistics* is as the scientific study of language more broadly. In this thesis, for the sake of clarity, I stay consistent in using *linguist* to refer to those trained within the academic field. This is not to be understood, however, as a diminishment of *linguistic* work conducted beyond the scope of the academic field.

The term *language revitalization* is at first glance straightforward, but needs further precision in its usage in this thesis. It may seem to some non-Indigenous people—including non-Indigenous linguists—that any effort to document an Indigenous language automatically contributes to the revitalization of that language. As discussed above, and in further detail in Chapter 3, *language documentation* does not necessarily have language revitalization as an inevitable outcome. Non-Indigenous linguist Anthony C. Woodbury (2011) describes *language documentation* as “the creation, annotation, preservation, and dissemination of transparent records in a language” (p. 159). Non-Indigenous linguist Nikolaus P. Himmelmann refers to it as “a lasting, multipurpose record of a language” (p. 1). It does not necessarily follow that documenting a language results in language revitalization. In particular, language documentation that is conducted by non-Indigenous linguists solely for an academic audience will have little to no value for members of Indigenous speech communities who have not been trained in Theoretical Linguistics (as I discuss in Section 1.2.4). Documentation that is more accessible, however, could be used to this end—but this depends on who decides what is being documented, and for what purpose.

When I refer to work that supports *language revitalization*, therefore, I refer to work that aims to support *language use*. This kind of work may involve *language documentation*, although it may not. It also may or may not involve *linguistic fieldwork*—work in which “[linguists] go to study a language in the place where it is spoken, by the people who usually speak it” (p. 2), as defined by non-Indigenous linguist Claire Bowern (2015). Implied in the term *fieldwork* is the idea that the fieldworker is not at home; *linguistic fieldwork* often involves the participation of a linguist who is an outsider to the community. In many cases, the outsider linguist is non-Indigenous. *Linguistic fieldwork* often involves some degree of *language documentation*.

One often sees the term *linguist* contrasted with *community member* in publications on fieldwork, but these positions certainly can and do overlap. When it is necessary to clarify that the linguists under discussion are not Indigenous, I use *non-Indigenous linguists*. I also use *non-*

Indigenous Linguistics students when I want to be clear that I am not referring to *Linguistics students* as a group that potentially includes Indigenous students. I assume that *Indigenous Linguistics students* and *non-Indigenous Linguistics students* who are in the same Linguistics program are attending the same courses, so changes made to curricula will affect both groups of students, but *Indigenous Linguistics students* will not necessarily benefit from exactly the same education and training as *non-Indigenous Linguistics students* in ethical, collaborative language work, since the positionalities and relationship to community differ between these groups.

Since the claim that research on Indigenous languages ought to always be collaborative is contentious within the Linguistics field, I clarify that my use of the term *collaborative language research* includes a broad spectrum of circumstances. Miami linguist Wesley Leonard and non-Indigenous linguist Erin Haynes (2010) acknowledge that:

> [I]n some settings, […] equal input is not appropriate or feasible. […] Collaboration should take the most appropriate form possible, with consideration for local cultural norms and legal regulations. Because what we advocate […] is a philosophy and approach to research rather than a set of methodologies or standards, collaboration can be adapted to a number of settings as appropriate, and the discovery of what actually is appropriate can be part of the collaborative process. (p. 273)

That said, there are recognized criteria for *collaborative language research*. Non-Indigenous linguist Ewa Czaykowska-Higgins's (2009) model of Community-Based Language Research necessitates a "collaborative relationship" (p. 24) between linguists and members of the speech community. She describes her model as "research that is *on* a language, and that is conducted *for*, *with*, and *by* the language-speaking community within which the research takes place and which it affects" (p. 24). In discussing language research that is *collaborative*, Leonard and

Haynes (2010) stress the importance of “every participant’s equal access to the project’s inception […] in terms of the questions that get posed, the methodologies by which they are investigated, and the intended application and ownership of the data, analysis, or materials that they lead to” (p. 274). It would seem that models of collaborative language research are generally developed with the intention of guiding non-Indigenous linguists in navigating their partnerships with members of Indigenous communities. Indigenous Linguistics students generally will not necessarily require the same type of guidance in collaborating with their own communities as their non-Indigenous peers; still, these types of projects can be thought of as collaborative in the sense that an Indigenous Linguistics student is still participating in the language research partly as a representative of their academic institution, and is expected to develop and meet academic goals as well as community ones. Collaborative language research can be understood to be in contrast with *linguist-focused models* (Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009) of linguistic research, wherein an outsider linguist has most or all of the control over the project’s inception, execution, and dissemination.

Collaborative language research may involve *linguist fieldwork*, *language documentation*, both, or neither. In this thesis, the use of the term *collaborative language research* is intentionally broad. The key criterion for *collaborative language research* is that every stage of the research is carried out in partnership.

In my criticism of Linguistics programs, I am, for the most part, referring to *Theoretical Linguistics* programs rather than to *Applied Linguistics* programs:

> [T]heoretical linguistics studies language and languages with a view to constructing a theory of their structure and functions and without regard to any practical applications that the investigation of language and languages might have, whereas applied linguistics

> has as its concerns the application of the concepts and findings of linguistics to a variety of practical tasks, including language-teaching. (Lyons, 1981, p. 35)

Theoretical Linguistics can be further compartmentalized into *formalism* and *functionalism*, wherein, prototypically, the former school studies language structure independently of its context, and the latter is concerned with language structure as it relates to language use, although this distinction is tenuous in some parts of the field. Both *formalism* and *functionalism* can be assumed to be part of my examination of Linguistics programs.

In considering the decolonization of Linguistics programs, one should keep in mind the term *reconciliation*. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015a) defines reconciliation as "an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change" (p. 16). Talk of reconciliation by non-Indigenous linguists in their work ought to include this fuller understanding of the process, and will likewise be presupposed in my use of the term throughout this thesis.

Finally, I mention here *language* reclamation, though not a term I have opted to use in this thesis. Miami scholar Wesley Leonard (2017) makes a case for using language reclamation—which he defines as "a larger effort by a community to claim its right to speak a language and to set associated goals in response to community needs and perspectives" (p. 19)—over language revitalization, "a process focused on language itself wherein the goals and measures of a given effort revolve around variables such as the number of speakers" (p. 19). Chickasaw scholar Kari Chew (2019) agrees that this framework "emphasizes the ways in which community members are returning to the practice of speaking and the ways of using the language as a means to strengthen cultural identity and to resist hegemonic legacies of colonization" (p. 3). I concur that *language reclamation*, as it is conceptualized by these scholars, should be supported by the Linguistics field. I have opted to use the term *language revitalization* in this thesis, in part because it is currently the most conventional term, and in part because it seems appropriate within the context of my current postsecondary program ("Indigenous Language Revitalization"). That said, my personal preference is for the term *language reclamation*, so it is my hope that the term will soon become more utilized in the Linguistics field.

1.2 Background to the Research

Before presenting more specific research aims, I can state more broadly that, in this thesis, I advocate for large-scale transformation within the Linguistics field. I include this section as part of my introduction to underline that transformation as a response to a particular context requires a thorough understanding of that context. In discussing Indigenous research in academia, Margaret Kovach (2009) contends that "[t]he possibility of a research environment capable of engaging Indigenous thought cannot be abstracted from its history, nor can its full purpose be understood. […] [H]istorical relations must be acknowledged or else transformative efforts will be blocked" (p. 158). The following subsections, therefore, review the historical relations that have engendered this need for transformation; here I focus on Canada's relationship with Indigenous languages as one example of settler colonial relationships, and the Linguistics field's relationship with Indigenous languages.

1.2.1 Understanding Indigenous Languages within and without Linguistics

A very technical definition of *language* portrays language as a means of communication. Attempts to broaden this definition of language are surprisingly controversial in the Linguistics field. One general consensus about language is that it is a cultural signifier (May, 2017): a given language identifies the people who use it, and identifies an individual as belonging to a larger people or culture. Whereas these Euro-American definitions describe language as a *symbol* of a larger culture, a number of Indigenous scholars have defined language as being itself an intrinsic part of culture.[1] Kwa’kwa̲ka̲’wakw scholar Keisha Everson (2020) asserts that “[i]t is important to resist separating culture from language” (p. 17). Chickasaw scholar Kari Chew (2019) observes, “[F]or Indigenous peoples, language is the path already created by the Creator; by the ancestors; by the plants, animals, and other relatives and teachers; and by those who have yet to come” (p. 2). Kwakwa̲ka̲’wakw scholar Trish Rosborough (2012) describes speaking Kwak’wala and passing it down to her grandchildren as “a birthright and a responsibility: It is about my identity, my connection to community and family, and my place in the world” (p. 6). Those noting the connection between language and worldview include Mi’kmaq scholar Marie Battiste and Chickasaw scholar James Sákéj Youngblood Henderson (2000), Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2021), and Tahltan scholar Edōsdi / Judith Thompson (2012); the latter writes, “[O]ur land is intrinsically tied to our language, and from that stems our culture and worldviews, and the relationships that we have with all the beings that we share the land with” (p. 119). Kanien’kehá:ka (Mohawk) scholar Kahentéhtha Angela Elijah (2020) writes on the significance of her language to all areas of life:

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[1] A more in-depth analysis of language ideologies is in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

> Kanien’kéha, the natural or original language of the People of the Flint, is the means of communication of people to other people and other living entities. It is used in identifying oneself and identifying relationships to other people and living organisms. It is the means used to express one’s gratitude through words of thanksgiving and appreciation, ceremonies, songs and other ways of knowing. Language connects our past, present and future through intergenerational-transmission, from the Ancestors who have passed, to those coming whose faces are still in the ground. Language expresses who we are, where we are and where we are going. (p. 3)

A non-Indigenous linguist who has been trained in Theoretical Linguistics, having studied language’s technical properties, may see these definitions of language as verging too far into abstraction to be of any relevance to a Euro-American scientific field, like Linguistics, that is principally interested in data collection and analysis. Words such as “connections” and “ties” (Elijah, 2020, p. 3) could be misunderstood as referring only to a sentimental association. In fact, language provides a critical *connection* to many tangible practices: the ability to speak with relatives and community, the passing down of cultural history and teachings, the sharing of stories and songs. In many cases, these are practices that require their original language. Cultural traditions that sustain communities, such as hunting, fishing, farming, preparing food, finding medicine, navigating the land, may rely on words in their original language that would be difficult to translate into another. Makah scholar Maria Pascua (2020) explains that “important facets of Makah culture are better understood and experienced through our language” (p. 2). There are a number of Indigenous languages in which the name of an individual or a family describes their roles or responsibilities (for example, Tahltan [Edōsdi, 2008], and Kwak’wala [Rosborough, 2012]).

Another very practical consideration is the role of language use as a protective factor for at-risk communities. A study by Hallett et al. (2007) found evidence that language use was one of the factors in reducing youth suicide rates in First Nations communities in British Columbia. Whalen et al. (2016) report that community Indigenous language programs improve the physical and mental health of participants (Sarkar et al., 2017, and Taff et al., 2018); Indigenous language learning acts as a protective factor (McIvor & Napoleon, 2009).

That language inextricably entails identity, cultural values, rights, responsibilities, and community vitality demonstrates that language use is an act of sovereignty—not a symbolic sovereignty, but an actual political sovereignty that undergirds the (often unacknowledged) nation-to-nation relationship between Indigenous Nations and the settler-colonial state. Nisenan scholar Sheri Tatsch explains:

> Retention, maintenance, and revitalization of our traditional languages and the knowledge contained therein, are the keys to our intellectual sovereignty and are legitimate concerns for indigenous nations—concerns because it is our language and the social structures created by the use of language, that informs not only our history, but that informs us as individuals, as a society, and as a sovereign people of who we are. Language situates us within the larger social and political structure of the United States and the state of California. (2004, pp. 258-259)

1.2.2 Indigenous Language Shift

For over a century, the Canadian government, in tandem with religious entities, worked actively to eradicate Indigenous cultures and languages, as recorded in the 2015 Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada [TRC] (my summary of the report follows).

From 1831 to 1996, Canada operated residential schools that aimed to assimilate Indigenous children into Canadian society. In 1894, an amendment to the Indian Act made attendance to residential schools or day schools mandatory for First Nations children. An estimated 150,000 Indigenous children attended residential schools, many of whom were forcibly removed from their parents, under threat of prosecution, by government agents, parish priests, or Mounted Police officers.

Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first prime minister, addressed the House of Commons in 1883 with the following position:

> When the school is on the reserve the child lives with its parents, who are savages; he is surrounded by savages, and though he may learn to read and write his habits, and training and mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write. It has been strongly pressed on myself, as the head of the Department, that Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence, and the only way to do that would be to put them in central training industrial schools where they will acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men. (As cited in Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015a, p. 2)

As well as being cut off from their communities and cultures, Indigenous students faced corporal punishment for speaking their native languages, and instead had to learn to speak English or French. Many students of residential schools lost the ability to speak their native languages over time. Though reports by Indian agents informed the government that the disciplinary methods in many residential schools (including beatings of the head, strappings on bare backs, starvation, days-long solitary confinement, and public humiliation) were too severe, the first nation-wide discipline policy for residential schools on record was not issued until 1953.

In addition to public physical and mental abuse, sexual abuse by teachers and staff (dating back at least to 1886, according to records) was common enough that in 1968 the Indian Affairs department had to make a list of former staff members who were not to be hired at other schools. Conditions of residential schools were often unhealthy (inadequate ventilation and heating, non-nutritious or contaminated food, inadequate medical and dental treatments). Historical records of student deaths at residential schools are incomplete, but 3,201 known deaths have been reported. In May 2021, 200 unmarked graves were found at Kamloops Indian Residential School, prompting investigations at other former residential school sites. At the time of writing this thesis, 1,874 unmarked graves have been uncovered across ten residential school sites.

The TRC (2015a) also reports that residential school closures (beginning in 1970 and ending in 1996) were "accompanied by a significant increase in the number of children being taken into care by child-welfare agencies" (p. 69), a phenomenon that has come to be known as the Sixties Scoop (which began in the 1960s, but extended into the late 1980s). In 2011, 3.6% of First Nations children under the age of fifteen were in foster care, compared with 0.3% of non-First Nations children (p. 138); child maltreatment investigations involving First Nations children were conducted at 4.2 times the rate of investigations of non-First Nations children. The TRC has declared that "Canada's child-welfare system has simply continued the assimilation that the residential school system started" (p. 138). The TRC (2015a) observes that Canada's actions fit the criteria for cultural genocide:

> Land is seized, and populations are forcibly transferred and their movement is restricted. Languages are banned. Spiritual leaders are persecuted, spiritual practices are forbidden, and objects of spiritual value are confiscated and destroyed. And, most significantly to

> the issue at hand, families are disrupted to prevent the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next. (p. 1)

The historical and continued erosion of Indigenous languages requires intervention at multiple levels. In “A guide to an act respecting Indigenous languages,” the Assembly of First Nations (2019) states:

> Despite their importance, all Indigenous languages in Canada are in danger of disappearing. […] There is grave urgency to develop fluency in First Nations languages. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reports that three-quarters of Indigenous languages in Canada are “definitely”, “severely” or “critically” endangered. In Canada’s 2016 Census of Population, only 20% of First Nations people could converse in an Indigenous language, down almost 6 percentage points from 2006. […] It is essential that drastic actions are taken to offset the erosion and loss of First Nations languages. (p. 6)

Across Canada, Indigenous peoples have been working to revitalize their languages with limited support from the Canadian government. Among the ninety-four Calls to Action by the TRC (2015b), five are under the subheading “Language and Culture.” They call not only for the federal government to acknowledge Indigenous language rights, but to valorise, promote, and sufficiently fund Indigenous languages. Postsecondary institutions are also called upon to host degree and diploma programs in Indigenous languages.

The Indigenous Languages Act, a Canadian federal bill developed in support of the revitalization of Indigenous languages, has been met with criticism. The bill, however, became law without the criticisms being addressed. A report published by The Yellowhead Institute (Fontaine et al., 2019) points out that the law “does not create any language rights” (p. 2), and “amounts to nothing more than an aspirational policy statement” (p. 2). They also observe that there is nothing in the law that obligates the federal government to provide funding for Indigenous languages.

After centuries of continued measures to eradicate Indigenous languages and cultures, the Canadian government has done little to support Indigenous language revitalization thus far. Even without Canada’s support, however, Indigenous peoples have taken on the work of revitalizing their languages.

1.2.3 Indigenous Language Revitalization

That so many Indigenous languages have survived at all is a testament to the work that Indigenous peoples have done to ensure that their languages persevere (or even awaken from a “sleeping” state [Leonard, 2008]), at many different levels. Many Indigenous adults are learning their languages from language classes and immersion programs. The Master-Apprentice Program (or Mentor-Apprentice Program; MAP), developed by Leanne Hinton working with the Native California Network and the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival, is a program that pairs young adult learners with Elder mentors in language immersive settings (Hinton et al., 2018). Adult learners often take up the task of becoming teachers as well (Hinton, 2013; Johnson, 2017), teaching other adults, or teaching children in the home (O’Regan, 2018; Bommelyn & Tuttle, 2018), in language classes, immersion programs (Hinton, 2001), and language nests (McIvor & Parker, 2016).

Because Indigenous languages often differ dramatically from commonly-taught languages in both grammar and phonology (and from one another, with some exceptions found in related languages), Indigenous peoples are having to develop their own language-learning resources and pedagogies (for discussion see Hinton, 2011; for examples, see Greymorning, 2018 for the Accelerated Second Language [ASLA] method; see Green & Maracle, 2018, for the Root Word Method). They are also having to develop their own unique curricula, language plans (Pecos & Blum-Martinez, 2001), and language assessment tools (Peter et al., 2011; Edmonds et al., 2013; Johnson, 2017) that are language-specific and culturally-relevant. Additionally, because trauma around language use often prevents speakers from learning or re-learning their language, programs have been developed for “silent speakers” (for examples, see Juuso, 2015; Elijah, 2020).

Many Indigenous researchers have devoted time and resources to documenting language to be used for language learning and teaching materials (Elliot et al., 2021). In some instances where a language may be sleeping, Indigenous researchers have used archival documentation to create teaching materials (for examples, see Baldwin & Costa, 2018, on the revitalization of Miami; see Lukaniec, 2017, on the revitalization of Wendat).

Indigenous language media is growing in popularity and availability, including radio shows, television shows, newsletters and magazines (Hale, 2001), original songs and translated songs (Alia, 2012). Some podcasts now feature content given in Indigenous languages, with one Inuktitut language podcast on the CBC being presented entirely in Inuktitut (Powder, 2020). Online media also offers a platform for Indigenous language learning resources, such as FirstVoices (www.firstvoices.com), and language learning courses, such as those found on 7000 Languages (www.7000.org).

Finally, Indigenous peoples are sharing information, ideas, and stories of successes and failures with one another at workshops such as Breath of Life (Baldwin et al., 2018) and conferences such as the Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium and at HELISET TŦE

SḰÁL (“Let the Languages Live” in the SENĆOŦEN language), an international conference on Indigenous languages that was held in 2019 during the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

1.2.4 Linguistics and Language Revitalization

The Linguistics field’s role in Indigenous language revitalization has never been distinct or explicit. With the rise of structuralism, and its neglect of social contextual information, it was generally expected that models of linguistic research on Indigenous languages would be linguist-led and *linguist-focused* (see Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009, for discussion of the term). Whether or not a linguist had a positive relationship with language speakers, these models were inherently hierarchical—language speakers were seen as *informants* or *participants*, not *partners* or *collaborators*—and research outputs were developed for linguists, rather than for the community (for example, see Samarin, 1967). Structuralism and generative ideas about grammar eventually dominated the field at the expense of research that was less rarefied and more ethnographical or ethnological (Woodbury 2011). “Raw data,” which was narrowly-understood as “texts, elicited data, judgements and other exemplifications of use” (Woodbury, 2011, p. 165), gained precedence over all other kinds of documented language, continuing the devaluation of the kind of documentation necessary for revitalization:

> Grammars were often published without texts, and the data in grammars were not always sourced or even drawn from texts at all. But even more significantly, grammars themselves became less highly valued within the disciplinary economy (…). More commonly, grammatical analysis was pursued in the context of typology and theory, presented in article-length works, and was often not even founded on systematic

> lexicographic analysis, let alone documentary records curated for long-term preservation or easy access. (Woodbury, 2011, p. 165)

Language documentation, however, is not always directly useful for revitalization, as explained by Sapién and Hirata-Edds (2019). While there are many Indigenous language learners who "must rely on existing documentation to develop teaching and learning materials [,…] documentation often was produced for an academic audience" and "may not be immediately useful to those most affected by language endangerment—speech community members themselves" (p. 560). Shulist and Rice (2019) remark that:

> There remains a gap […] between even the most well-done documentation and the actual emergence of revitalization activities – the move from writing the language down to bringing it off the paper and into the lives of speakers/learners is not a straightforward one. (pp. 36-37)

An additional barrier to documentation for revitalization was how linguists were conceptualising a language archive prior to the 1990s: "a brick-and-mortar institution that holds and preserves physical items, where access is available only to a select few with the permissions and capabilities to travel to the archive" (Berez-Kroeker & Henke, 2018, p. 348). Moreover, it was not guaranteed that materials would be archived at all (p. 348). Later digital archives often "did not have enough support or resources to usher linguistic data smoothly into a digital era of proper curation and open access" (p. 348).

In 1992, a seminal collection of papers edited by Hale, and published by the Linguistic Society of America, issued a call to action for linguists to turn their attention to endangered languages. At that time, the authors explicitly recognized the responsibility of linguists to work in partnership with communities towards revitalization, and not to conduct research solely for the sake of the field; these paradigm shifts were happening in response to advocacy by the communities (including community members who are also linguists) (see England, 1992, for example). In recent years, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous linguists have written about the movement towards ethical and revitalization-oriented collaborative research (reviewed in chapter 3 of this thesis).

Though many non-Indigenous linguists have reconsidered their roles—and the repercussions of their research—within Indigenous language communities, a preoccupation with "documentation-only" research continues to overwhelm linguistic fieldwork, as observed by Maliseet anthropologist Perley (2012): "Documentation as language salvation has become the operative metaphor used by language experts. The irony is that the documents are artefacts of a living language and not the living language itself" (p. 134). Perley's observation illustrates first that *preserving* a language through the documentation of linguistic data does not revitalize a language per se[2], and second that, again, the "documentation-only" research described by Perley (2012) relies on a hierarchy of relations wherein an outsider linguist is the sole decider of what is important to the research—which may not align with what would support community language revitalization efforts—and is, moreover, the only one doing the work, effectively the "saviour" of the language. Furthermore, linguist-focused documentation may be inaccessible to the community, either logistically or because the jargon used requires specialized linguistic training to understand.

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[2] Neither Perley nor I argue that documentation is useless to language revitalization. Perley argues that a focus on "*documentation as salvation*" "put[s] those languages that would ostensibly benefit from documentation work at greater risk of being silenced" (2013, p. 117).

Though the practices of many individual linguists are changing, these changes, in many cases, have not permeated Linguistics education. Moreover, linguistic research on[3] Indigenous languages does not itself constitute revitalization. In order to support Indigenous language revitalization, postsecondary Linguistics departments need to consider what that support looks like in practical terms.

1.3 Research Questions

The preceding section has shown that not only are linguist-focused models (Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009) a reflection of what has been practised in the field, but they are also a reflection of what has been taught to Linguistics students. Linguists who have advocated for collaborative, revitalization-oriented models of research report to have done so as a direct result of their experiences working with communities, rather than because of what they learned in academic institutions—and perhaps *in spite of* what they learned in academic institutions; Grenoble (2009) observes that "traditional field methods classes have also failed to discuss how to work in communities," in part because of "pressure to work on language description" and "a general lack of attention to the importance of this aspect of training" (p. 65). The literature contains numerous examples of collaborative research partnerships in practise, but there is a paucity of Linguistics programs that prepare and support students working in university-community partnerships in language research. The literature also discusses that problems in linguistic fieldwork have arisen as a result of a devaluing of Indigenous knowledge and expertise (for discussion, see Rice, 2006; Benedicto et al., 2007; Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009); in addition to the repercussions that this devaluing has on research conducted among non-Indigenous linguists and Indigenous community members, it also entails consequences for Indigenous Linguistics students. In a Theoretical Linguistics program that does not value Indigenous epistemologies and research methodologies, there may not be support for Indigenous Linguistics students who are using culturally-grounded methodologies in their work, or participating in research that benefits community needs.

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[3] Contemporary linguists make a distinction between "research *on*," "research *for*," "research *with*," and "research *by*" (or combinations of the above). A "research *on*" model of linguistic fieldwork does not include a working partnership between the linguist and the community, and does not take community goals into account. See Rice (2006) and Czaykowska-Higgins (2009) for discussion.

As fieldwork practices shift, one might reasonably expect academia to shift accordingly. To my knowledge, there has been no dedicated research study of how North American academia as a whole is accommodating, or *could* accommodate, the changes necessary to successfully train students for collaborative, revitalization-oriented language research—and why doing so might be important for both the discipline of Linguistics and for language revitalization. My research aims to address this gap.

My principal research question, therefore, is:

> *In what ways can postsecondary Theoretical Linguistics departments prepare and support their students in collaborative, revitalization-oriented language research?*

My thesis is not an attempt to develop a practical step-by-step guide applicable to all institutions, all Indigenous communities, or all Indigenous languages. Instead, with this research question, I aim to investigate potential barriers to providing training and preparation for participation in collaborative language research partnerships within academia, and to consider how those barriers might be challenged and removed.

I qualify this question further by not assuming that Indigenous students require the same instruction as non-Indigenous students with respect to learning how to work collaboratively with Indigenous community members, or with respect to orienting their work towards language revitalization efforts. That said, it is not to be assumed that Linguistics departments will support them in doing that. Greater focus on collaborative, revitalization-oriented research models in Linguistics curricula and courses, however, will entail better preparation for the students who need it, and better support for all students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike.

In investigating my principal question, I consider three guiding sub-questions:

1. *Does collaborative language research require specialized study and training? If so, why, and what kind?*

My principal research question assumes that a non-Indigenous linguist would require specific training in order to successfully participate in collaborative language research. The next question to address, therefore, is what that training might look like. In reviewing a variety of models and case studies of collaborative language research and projects, I address the complexities and challenges of collaborative language research in order to establish why it may require specialized training.

2. *Are there critical ideological differences related to language and language revitalization between Euro-American academic institutions and Indigenous communities?*

"Language" here could be understood as referring both to specific languages (particularly in comparison with one another) as well as the idea of language as a human faculty.

Even Theoretical Linguistics departments that give support to research on Indigenous languages may not be supporting research in which language revitalization is an intended outcome. This has consequence for Indigenous students and for non-Indigenous students working collaboratively with Indigenous communities. I investigate, therefore, the possible ideologies informing divergent understandings of what is important in language research. If it is indeed the case, moreover, that revitalization-oriented language research requires a specific kind of training for non-Indigenous students, that is another cause for critical introspection concerning presuppositions and axioms of the Linguistics field. In the previous section, I noted that a particular style of research commonly taught to non-Indigenous linguists has been unhelpful, and even harmful, to Indigenous communities. Additionally, some of Euro-American academia's standard narratives and rhetoric surrounding Indigenous languages and Indigenous language revitalization circumscribe—and possibly colour—academia's beliefs about the role and responsibility of the linguist in Indigenous language research. This question is predicated on a hypothesis that, if collaborative research models are counterintuitive to non-Indigenous linguists, then part of the issue may be ideological.

I do not assume that there is a single ideology about language shared by all Indigenous peoples; rather, the focus is on possible reasons why Euro-American academia may be exclusionary of ideologies outside of its own. To explore this hypothesis, I look to theories of decolonization.

3. *To date, what are some of the positive and effective changes that have been made to postsecondary Linguistics curricula in response to the increase in publications on collaborative language research?*

Given what the field has learned from numerous models and case studies in the literature, I investigate if and in what ways Western Linguistics curricula have changed in response, what they aim to accomplish, and if they have been successful in those aims.

In proceeding from the third question, asking, "What further changes can be made?", I return to my principal research question. At this point, I can propose practical initiatives and strategies that postsecondary academic institutions could make in developing successful ways of guiding non-Indigenous Linguistics students in collaborative work with Indigenous communities.

Though not a guiding question, I also consider the following question:

How can the Linguistics field benefit from the inclusion of Indigenous views of language and language revitalization?

I consider this question in light of criticism directed towards collaborative language researchers, which has asserted that a focus on collaboration in research is “linguistic social work” that distracts from work with “scientific value” (Newman, 2003, p. 6); therefore, I follow scholars in discussing whether diversity of language knowledge truly detracts from scientific study and inquiry (e.g., Dwyer, 2006, 2010; Rice, 2018).

Though there is a gap in the literature on this thesis’s particular topic, many published works address adjacent themes; in particular, models and case studies of community-based research and the rationale behind implementing them, and theories of decolonising academia. These are the topics that I explore in the third chapter of this thesis, which comprises the literature review. Additionally, though there is a scarcity of formal publications on this topic, these questions are frequently discussed by Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics, many of whom have significant insights on the matter. In the fourth chapter of this thesis, I review some of these insights through interviews with Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics. In the fifth chapter of this thesis, I revisit my guiding questions to discuss what answers have emerged from my research. A more detailed explanation of my methodologies and methods is found in the second chapter.

1.4 Limitations of the Research

Some issues are beyond the scope of this particular work. First, I do not present my findings as the final word on decolonizing Theoretical Linguistics curricula and training. There are many more suggestions to be broached, many more ideas to implement, and many more concerns to be addressed. I offer my research only as initial findings on the topic.

Second, in this thesis, I discuss North American Linguistics departments very generally. There is decolonizing work being done by individuals and programs throughout North America. Departments, and individuals within departments, may differ across countries, across more local regions, and across institutions. Consequently, different institutions may require particular practices to address their local contexts. These kinds of specific circumstances are not fully explored within this research.

Third, within the scope of this research, I focus principally on Canada, with some attention given to the United States as well. Other parts of the world are not examined. Given that there are Indigenous populations facing similar issues in many parts of the world, however, the discussions around this topic could well be applicable to those circumstances as well. Looking at Linguistics departments in all parts of the world, however, would be beyond the reach of this research.

I also acknowledge that I come to this research as a non-Indigenous white woman, so I do not write from within the context of a particular Indigenous culture or language situation. In my research, I often defer to the perspectives of Indigenous scholars, through existing publications and through my own interviews, but it is important for me to note that the context from which I approach this research is, of course, the Linguistics field, so my conclusions as to how the field needs to change are coming from within the Linguistics bubble rather than from without; there may be issues that are invisible to me because of my personal context.

Chapter 2. Positionality, Methodology, and Methods

2.1 Self-Location

In her research, Anishinaabe scholar Kathleen Absolon (2011) uses self-location to describe her personal background and how she came to the work that she does. She argues that, in Indigenous contexts, articulating one's location is part of ethical research: "Because of the biased and obscured history of research on and about Indigenous peoples, visibly locating allows readers to make their own judgements about the research, knowing that there is no such thing as neutrality" (p. 72). Absolon explains that in "positivist eurowestern research," the assumption is that a lack of transparency about researcher positionality "safeguard[s] against researcher bias" (p. 71). In an Indigenous context, however, "location does matter. People want to know who you are, what you are doing and why" (p. 71).

For my own self-location, relevant to this research is my family background, and my academic background as a former Linguistics student at the University of Toronto and as a current student of Indigenous language revitalization at the University of Victoria. Absolon (2011) writes that "our location reveals a worldview and cultural orientation, which is central to what and how we search" (p. 72); bearing this in mind, I consider why I am doing the work that I do, and what I hope to accomplish with it.

My name is Deirdre Elizabeth Demson. I am a white, non-Indigenous, settler-Canadian. My family on my father's side comes from Central Europe, and my mother's family comes from Ireland and Scotland.

I grew up in, and currently live in, Toronto, Ontario. Toronto's name comes from the Iroquoian *Tsi Tkarónto* which means 'the place where trees are immersed in water.' The name of Ontario comes from the Wendat word *Ontarïio'*, meaning 'big, beautiful lake' (personal communication, Megan Lukaniec, 2021). The formal land acknowledgement for Toronto, developed with the Aboriginal Advisory Committee as part of the 2018 Toronto for All Campaign, is as follows:

> We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit. (City of Toronto website, 2019)

Toronto is in Dish with One Spoon Treaty Territory, traditionally shared among the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The Dish with One Spoon (represented by *Sewatokwà:tshera*, the Dish with One Spoon wampum made by the Haudenosaunee) symbolizes taking what you need to sustain yourself, but leaving something in the shared bowl for others and for future generations.

I completed my Linguistics specialist undergraduate degree at the University of Toronto. Like many undergraduate students, I had not entered the program with any aspirations of being a linguist, or even of being an academic; I had an interest in languages and presumed that studying Linguistics would help me as a language learner. The program was largely formalist and generativist, and only a few of my courses—such as sociolinguistics—dealt with language in social contexts. None of my early courses made mention of Indigenous language revitalization, although we occasionally analysed data from various Indigenous languages as part of our assignments.

My first introduction to language revitalization came when I took a fourth-year course in linguistic fieldwork taught by Dr. Nicholas Welch. He invited a Cree speaker, Dr. Brenda

Wastasecoot, to come to our class for elicitation sessions. As we learned from Dr. Wastasecoot about the Cree language, we also learned from Dr. Welch about the kind of research and projects that Indigenous communities and linguists undergo to support language revitalization. Having enjoyed conducting fieldwork and having become interested in language revitalization, I enrolled in the fourth-year Linguistics course in Revitalizing Languages, taught by Professor Ryan DeCaire.

In this course, I learned a number of important things: Canada's role in the attempted eradication of Indigenous languages (especially through residential schools), the ways that Indigenous communities are working towards revitalising their languages, and the role that linguists—even non-Indigenous linguists—have in ethically and practically supporting language revitalization. Professor DeCaire's own work in language learning and teaching, especially as a young person, was inspiring to me.

In an interview with CBC Radio, Professor DeCaire spoke on why he teaches at the University of Toronto:

> We need to work on language revitalization at many levels, and [one] way we need to do that is we need to create what I call "good neighbours," and that's really helping young non-Indigenous people to understand the importance of language in Indigenous people's cultures, ways of thinking, and also realize that one's Canadian identity is built in a relationship with Indigenous people. (DeCaire, as found in CBC Radio, 2018)

As one of Professor DeCaire's students, this was the message that really struck me. I have been asked what motivated me to pursue work in language revitalization, but I would say that it was not so much that I decided to do it, but that I decided not to walk away from it.

I had focused my research in this semester-long course on the ethics of non-Indigenous linguists working collaboratively with Indigenous communities, but I still felt as though there was more that I needed to learn about language's role in Indigenous cultures and Indigenous ways of understanding language if I were to responsibly work with Indigenous communities. Part of how I attempted that was taking Professor DeCaire's introductory Kanien'kéha[4] (Mohawk language) course. I also applied to the Master's in Indigenous Language Revitalization (MILR) program at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. Though I intended to later continue my studies in Linguistics, I viewed the MILR program as a prerequisite for my later linguistic work.

The MILR program is practically-oriented, which is different from the theoretical courses that I was used to in my undergraduate experience. Some courses, including Program Design (taught by Dr. Kari Chew) and Leadership + Governance (taught by Edōsdi / Dr. Judith Thompson), involved projects such as designing curricula or language plans. This was far-removed from my training in Linguistics, but I began to see that it would be crucial to the kind of collaborative work that I wanted to undertake in my career.

The introductory course on Indigenous Epistemologies, taught by the late Dr. Trish Rosborough, set the stage for the rest of the program; this was in part because Dr. Rosborough had thoughtfully selected readings and course materials that provided insightful, illustrative examples of Indigenous ways of doing research. It was also because Dr. Rosborough encouraged all of us in the cohort to bring ourselves into our work. I was able to learn not only from my instructor and course materials, but from my peers as well. As the only non-Indigenous student in the cohort, I was able to learn much from each of my classmates. This was the case throughout the program, though it was this initial course that facilitated our growing as a family. Dr. Megan Lukaniec's courses on linguistic theory were also a critical part of my education: I was beginning to see language outside of the box that it had been in during my basic Linguistics courses at the University of Toronto.

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[4] The name for the Mohawk language can be spelled *Kanien'kéha* or *Kanyen'kéha*, depending on the dialect. Whenever I mention the language in this paper, I use the spelling consistent with the dialect of the speaker or area being referenced.

I am deeply grateful for my education at the University of Victoria, and for all of my teachers (including my cohort). It was not long into the program before I realized that the training that I was receiving in the MILR program was invaluable to my education as a linguist and as a fieldworker. Throughout my coursework, I focused my research on what I felt was important for me to learn, in particular: research ethics, Indigenous epistemologies and research methodologies, and decolonisation. It came as no surprise to me that these topics wove together as the foundation of my thesis.

What was really at the heart of my thesis, however, was the realization that I was fortunate enough to have an education that most non-Indigenous Linguistics students do not, including those who go on to work in Indigenous communities. This is neither to say that I learned everything that there is to learn during my Master's degree, nor that it is impossible to learn the same or similar things through other avenues. I do, however, feel strongly that Linguistics departments have a responsibility to do their utmost to provide their students with respectful, appropriate context for the Indigenous languages that they study—one that is not divorced from Indigenous peoples—and a fuller look at ethical, collaborative relationships within fieldwork with Indigenous communities.

The research in this thesis is a culmination of my own learning journey within the Master's in Indigenous Language Revitalization program. As with any thesis, it is in part for myself, as an opening note to a career of learning. It is also something that I am eager to share with my readers: I have been fortunate to be able to gather the knowledge and wisdom of many remarkable, inspiring people—both in my literature review and in my interviews—and I trust that there will be something stimulating, or heartening, for everyone.

2.2 Methodology

Given that my research concerns Indigenous peoples and languages, and includes the experience and knowledge of Indigenous experts, I incorporate a number of suggestions by Indigenous researchers in my research design. The principles that I centre in my process are “The Four R’s” outlined by Cree scholar Verna Kirkness and non-Indigenous scholar Ray Barnhardt (1991). Originally proposed as recommendations to be adapted by higher institutions with Indigenous students, these principles have been adapted by Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers into their research methodologies. The Four R’s are: Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, and Responsibility; their full titles, with my own notes, are as follows:

Respect of First Nations Cultural Integrity. As a non-Indigenous researcher, one of the most important ways for me to discuss elements of Indigenous cultures and languages is to defer to Indigenous perspectives. I do not attempt to interpret any Indigenous beliefs myself, or speak for Indigenous peoples. For this thesis, I chose a literature review and a series of interviews as sources of research data, to be able to centre Indigenous voices on subjects that directly concern them. I quote Indigenous writers in particular on cultural worldviews and community perspectives. I include the perspectives of non-Indigenous scholars where appropriate, given my own position as a non-Indigenous scholar who is learning from those with more experience on these topics.

Relevance to First Nations Perspectives and Experience. As I am a Linguistics student, there is a reasonable expectation that my scholarly research will contribute to the Linguistics field. When my research involves Indigenous peoples and languages, I aim to contribute in some way to Indigenous language revitalization. This is not to anticipate my research having any particular prominence, but I hold in mind that my work should be purposeful. My purpose for this thesis is to gather perspectives and ideas on how Linguistics departments can better support Indigenous language revitalization through their curricula, with the hope that these perspectives and ideas will, when applied, generate beneficial outcomes for Indigenous language communities.

Reciprocal Relationships. Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) describe reciprocal relationships in higher education as "making teaching and learning two-way processes" (p. 10). In the context of language revitalization research, a university-community research partnership may engender reciprocity by creating opportunities for knowledge exchange—for example, a university may provide Linguistics training to community members as the university receives language knowledge from the community; additionally, the types of knowledge of all research partners are acknowledged as equally valuable to the research (see Chapter 2 for further discussion on knowledge exchange in community-university research partnerships). In the context of this thesis, my position is that of a student learning from experts; though my research does not facilitate an equal knowledge exchange, I thank each of my interviewees with a modest gift, in appreciation of their time and teachings. As I conduct my interviews in a conversational format, rather than survey-style, I am able to honour my interviewees as experts on the interview topics, rather than as sources of data for my research.

Responsibility through Participation. Non-Indigenous linguists, such as myself, may find themselves wondering how to incorporate their own knowledge (linguistic or otherwise) into research involving Indigenous peoples and cultures, or if it is even appropriate to do so. From my perspective, if my own knowledge, worldviews, and experiences can support Indigenous language revitalization, then I have a responsibility to share them. It is not a *responsibility* in the sense of a *chore*, but a responsibility that gives me a participatory role in relationships with other people. The idea of *participation* also entails that I am an active learner in carrying out my responsibilities.

Another principle that I hold as central to my work is Professor DeCaire's concept of a "good neighbour," as described in the previous section. The concept of being a "good neighbour" may resonate with people who are unsure if they meet the criteria of being an ally or an activist. The term also emphasises relationships, and the active role one has within them. From my perspective, remembering the four R's goes hand-in-hand with being a good neighbour.

Though I endeavor to observe principles recommended by Indigenous scholars—and in doing so, I deviate from traditional Western academia—I do not call my methodologies or research product "Indigenous." Cree scholar Shawn Wilson (2007) uses the term Indigenist to describe a research paradigm that "creates Indigenous knowledge" (p. 194), and can be implemented by Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers alike. The focus of this paradigm is placing myself in a "relational context" (p. 194), and holding myself accountable to the persons and communities (whether they are Indigenous or non-Indigenous, academic or non-academic) who participate in my research or who are affected by my research. Quoting selections from Wilson's list of guiding principles for his model of an Indigenist research paradigm, I highlight the following for their relevance to my work:

- Conduct all actions and interactions in a spirit of kindness and honest compassion.
- The reason for doing the research must be one that brings benefits to the Indigenous community.
- The methods used will be process-oriented, and the researcher will be recognized and cognizant of his or her role as one part of the group in process.
- It will be recognized that the researcher must assume a certain responsibility for the transformation and outcomes of the research project(s) which he or she brings into a community.
- It is recognized that the integrity of any Indigenous people or community could never be undermined by Indigenous research because such research is grounded in that integrity.
- It is recognized that the languages and cultures of Indigenous peoples are living processes and that research and the discovery of knowledge is an ongoing function for the thinkers and scholars of every Indigenous group. (p. 195)

To other non-Indigenous researchers who may be considering using an Indigenist paradigm—or any research methodology that is guided by Indigenous principles—I do not claim that what I have outlined above is the single correct way of proceeding. I have shared my thought process in deciding on these aspects of my methodology so that others may find inspiration in coming to their own conclusions about what is appropriate in their own research.

As I mentioned in the previous section, I do not believe myself to be an objective researcher. I bring to this research my own perspectives and experiences. This research is conducted as a culminating work to my Master's degree; consequently, my thesis is an expression of my learning journey throughout the MILR program. With this in mind, a formal Western scientific, positivist methodology was not appropriate for my research. I did, however, consider a number of the key characteristics of qualitative research in deciding how to conduct, organise, analyse, and present my findings. Cresswell (2013) writes a comprehensive definition of "qualitative research:"

> Qualitative research begins with assumptions and the use of interpretive/theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to the inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is both inductive and deductive and establishes patterns and themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of the participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and its contribution to the literature or a call for change. (p. 44)

Creswell's definition acknowledges the subjectivity of the researcher and the researcher's assumptions, but notes that the aim of the research is to address not the *researcher's* ascribed meaning to the topic, but that of the research participants. This is accomplished by having an "emergent design" (p. 47), a flexible research plan that allows for adjustments and modifications to the research process as it unfolds. The data is categorized into themes so as to "sketch […] the larger picture that emerges" (p. 47), but researchers are called "to develop a complex picture of the problem or issue" (p. 47) rather than make reductive generalizations. This definition corresponds well with my own vision for my research process.

2.3 Methods

My research process entailed writing a synthesized literature review and conducting one-on-one interviews with four Indigenous language revitalization experts who work in or adjacent to postsecondary Linguistics departments.

My literature review became part of my presentation of data. A literature review provides topical background information for research, as well as highlighting the original research's contribution to the literature; in my case, since I could not find any dedicated studies on decolonizing postsecondary Linguistics curricula, I reviewed two adjacent topics and synthesized the ideas within each of them, so as to form synthesized arguments about my own subject.

Additionally, the literature review allowed me to establish themes that would become important for developing my interview questions. Recalling Creswell's (2013) definition of qualitative research, the development of themes within data analysis allows for a theory to be both developed and argued, as well as providing the reading with organisational clarity.

The one-on-one interviews, rather than being survey-style, were designed to be conversational (for examples, see Kovach, 2010, and Comeau, 2018). Non-Indigenous scholar Emily Comeau employs an interview method that "treats interviewees as active co-constructors of knowledge, rather than as passive repositories" (p. 20). I prepared open-ended guiding questions that would explore my chosen themes while allowing interviewees to give answers as broad or as in-depth as they preferred. I also ensured that they would have an opportunity to bring up any ideas or insights that we had not visited through my prepared questions. I intentionally chose to have a small number of participants (four) so that I would be able to give more attention to their responses, rather than having to summarise, in less detail, a larger number of responses. The interviews were semi-structured: I had guiding questions, but allowed conversations to move away from the specific questions asked as interviewees brought up new and illuminating topics and ideas. I transcribed the audio recordings of the interviews, and with those transcriptions I coded the interviews. My coding process was similar to that of Charmaz (2006), who defines coding as “categorizing segments of data with a short name that simultaneously summarizes and accounts for each piece of data” (p. 43). I categorized excerpts of the interviews by theme, and used these themes to organize my chapter into subsections. Though some of the themes were predictable because of the guiding questions for the interview, I included new themes as well, consistent with Charmaz’s observation that new themes can “arise from [a] reading of the data rather than emanating [sic] from an earlier frame applied to them” (p. 45).

Prior to holding the interviews, I was required to submit a research application to the University of Victoria’s Human Research Ethics Board. Though a tedious process, writing the application gave me time to reflect on how I was ensuring the comfort of those whom I would interview. I gave participants the option to be anonymous in the dissemination of the research (although all of them chose to have their names associated with their words); once the interview transcripts were written, I sent them to my interviewees for approval; I also sent excerpts of my thesis that included their words to them for approval. This was to ensure that I was representing their positions fairly. Some of them requested minor changes or corrections, all of which were straightforward. I also allowed my interviewees the option to withdraw all of their data from my research at any stage, with the reassurance that our personal relationship would not be negatively affected. My interviewees were not given monetary compensation, but I sent thank-you gifts of artisanal jams to each of them. The gifts were sent after the interviews were conducted, before any approval of the transcripts of writing drafts—I let my interviewees know that the gifts were for sharing their time with me, and that they still had the option of withdrawing from the research even after receiving their gifts.

Chapter 3. Literature Review

Although *Indigenous language revitalization* and *community-based research* are frequent subjects of discussion among those in the Linguistics field who work towards Indigenous language revitalization, the literature to date lacks a dedicated study of how postsecondary Linguistics departments can support these endeavors through their curricula (although see Tsikewa's [2021] recommendations to postsecondary Linguistics departments for training non-Indigenous Linguistics students to work collaboratively with Indigenous speech communities in a fieldwork context). Fortunately, we do not lack scholars who have reflected on related topics; I begin to answer my research questions, therefore, by looking to these scholars.

In the first section, I review existing models of collaborative language research, looking to their ethical foundations, challenges, and contexts. Models and case studies of collaborative language research offer insights into what challenges need to be addressed by linguistic training in order to provide non-Indigenous Linguistics students effective preparation. Additionally, I introduce some of the ideological differences that hinder support for the research of Indigenous Linguistics students, as well for non-Indigenous Linguistics students undertaking collaborative language research, which I expand on in the second section.

In the second section, I review theories and methodologies of decolonization for academia; they are not Linguistics-specific, but they provide an understanding of the ideological foundations of Euro-American scientific fields (which include Linguistics). Here I review why there is a need for decolonisation within Euro-American academia, considering that these ideological foundations are informing Linguistics programming.

Having established the aims of collaborative language research, and having exposed some of the underlying ideologies of Euro-American academia, in the third section, I provide examples of collaborative language research that have proved beneficial to both the academic institution and the Indigenous speech community.

Over the past several decades, many linguists and community members have contributed insights into how collaborative language research can be enacted and supported. Meanwhile, the literature has also seen substantial contributions from Indigenous scholars in developing methodologies for decolonizing academia. Combining what we have learned from collaborative language research in practice with what we have learned about decolonizing academia uncovers how postsecondary Linguistics departments need to evolve in order to support their students in collaborative, revitalization-oriented language work.

3.1 Collaborative Language Research

I have posed the question of whether collaborative language research requires specialized training for non-Indigenous students. In order to answer this question, it is necessary to define what collaborative language research is (as an umbrella term, and in its forms in specific models). In the previous chapter I discussed some of the history that led to a shift in thinking about how community-based research should be conducted; this section further explores the ethical foundations that underlie collaborative language research. This section also reviews the particular challenges of collaborative language research, exploring what complexities would need to be addressed in a Linguistics program; through this, this section also identifies the need for non-Indigenous linguists and Indigenous communities to find *ideological clarification* (Kroskrity, 2009, 2015), so as to avoid misunderstandings that might interfere with relationship-building and collaboration. Finally, this section articulates the specifics of local contexts, which directly call for universities to make practical changes.

3.1.1 Models of Collaborative Language Research: Ethical Foundations

Collaborative language research, a term that I use throughout this thesis, does not denote a particular model of language research. There have been a number of proposed research models for collaborative, community-based research, and these models are sufficiently non-prescriptive to allow for adaptations and modifications for a variety of contexts. The research models that I review here share an emphasis on collaboration, a democratization of knowledge (Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009), and an orientation towards community goals, hence my grouping them together under the term *collaborative*. This attention towards ethical concerns directly addresses the problems of linguist-focused models discussed in Chapter 1.

Rice noted, in 2006, the growing popularity of linguistic fieldwork conducted within an *empowerment model*, as defined by Cameron et al. (1992). Cameron et al. distinguish the *empowerment model* from other ethical frameworks by its emphasis on working *with* the community. Rice (2006) describes linguistic fieldwork within an empowerment framework: "[T]he work is on the language, for the speakers, and *with* the speakers, taking into account the knowledge that the speakers bring and their goals and aspirations in the work" (p. 132). In the context of the Linguistics field, this model is already a departure from a linguist-focused model (see Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009, for discussion of term: *linguist-focused*), wherein neither the language community's knowledge nor language goals would be considered relevant to the research.

Benedicto et al. (2007) develop a model of Participatory Action Research (PAR) specifically for linguistic fieldwork, aiming to "neutralize the power imbalances" (p. 1) of traditional linguistic fieldwork. This model implements the self-empowerment of the language community by community members assuming agentive roles throughout the research process, as well as maintaining control over language data, materials, and publications. The knowledge systems of internal and external researchers are recognized as having equal value, and therefore egalitarian relationships between researchers are expected: the research process "will go from involving a 'subject' and an 'object-of-research' to a 'subject-subject' pair involved in the process of creation of knowledge" (p. 2). Christie et al. (2000) identify the two major objectives of PAR as "empowerment and social change" (p. 10).

Czaykowska-Higgins (2009) adapts principles of Community Based Research (CBR) in her development of a Community-Based Language Research (CBLR) model. She identifies three principal elements of CBR as it is described in the literature outside of Linguistics: collaboration between researcher and community, a democratization of knowledge and roles in the research, and social action and change. Social action as a necessary component of CBLR entails research output that aims to benefit the community in a practical way. CBLR has a similar ethical foundation to previous models, but Czaykowska-Higgins (2009) notes the following distinction:

> It goes beyond the Empowering model […] in assuming that the linguist is only one of the *experts* in the research process, and that community members as well as linguists should be directors of and active partners in the research, as opposed to being simply empowered research subjects. (p. 24)

Though all of the above models assume that community members will be empowered through linguistic training, CBLR also "explicitly acknowledges and welcomes the extent to which linguists are trained by and learn from the community-members in issues related to language, linguistics, and culture, as well as about how to conduct research and themselves appropriately within the community" (p. 25).

Addressing a possible misconception that a collaborative research model does not allow the inclusion of outsider researcher goals, Leonard and Haynes (2010) clarify that a “truly collaborative” model is one in which all parties are empowered by a “shared vision” to “articulate their needs and fully incorporate their expertise in light of the various possible ways in which the final goals could be achieved” (p. 274). Leonard and Haynes note the benefits that outside linguists’ expertise has brought to practical research projects, offering “language documentation methods, historical reconstruction, and theories of language acquisition and pedagogy” as examples (p. 272), and contend that “theoretical directions of study […] may ultimately have long-term and/or indirect benefits for a given community” (p. 272).

Many scholars who have written on community-based research (linguistic or otherwise) have outlined principles and guidelines on research with Indigenous communities. Battiste and Henderson (2000), Czaykowska-Higgins (2009), and Riddell et al. (2017), for instance, have reviewed the Tri-Council’s[5] guidelines on conducting ethical research involving Indigenous peoples (published at https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_2018_chapter9-chapitre9.html). These principles include: respect for Indigenous individuals, cultures, traditions, and knowledge; collaboration; relevancy to the community; accessible data; acknowledgement of the viewpoints of community members in publications; and opportunity given to community members to respond to research findings before any final report or publications.

Kovach (2010) and Riddell et al. (2017) review the OCAP (Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession) principles, developed by the First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC)[6] and focus on the self-determination of Indigenous communities. These principles emphasise consultation and decision-making with Indigenous communities, collaboration on research methods, data storage that is agreed upon and accessible, and knowledge mobilization. Riddell et al. (2017) also review Inuit Ethical Principles, developed by the Inuit Nipingit (the National Inuit Committee on Ethics and Research), which similarly call for the respect of Indigenous language and knowledge as cultural property, empowerment of the community, and mutually beneficial research among research parties. The Centre for Community-Based Research Canada, as reviewed by Rice (2019), upholds the above guidelines as hallmarks of CBR, adding the importance of flexibility and adaptability for successful research partnerships.

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[5] The Tri-Council comprises three of Canada’s research councils: the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR), the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

[6] Formerly the National Steering Committee.

As discussed in Chapter 1, several scholars have also proposed their own guidelines for research with Indigenous communities. The “four R’s” of Indigenous-inclusive higher education by Verna Kirkness and Ray Barnhardt (1991), Cree and non-Indigenous scholars, respectively, are often applied to research by or with Indigenous peoples. The four R’s are: Respect—“not just as individuals, but more fundamentally as a people” (p. 6); Relevance—Kirkness and Barnhardt recommend that universities “include the institutional legitimation of indigenous knowledge and skills” (p. 8); Reciprocity—or “reciprocal relationships” (p. 9), wherein knowledge and expertise are shared and upheld as equal by all parties; and Responsibility—the acknowledgment and transformation of power imbalances. Cree scholar Shawn Wilson (2008) adds a fifth R: Relationships, writing, “It is the forming of healthy and strong relationships that leads to us being healthy and strong researchers” (p. 86). Relationships, in addition to fostering a sense of trust, also create a sense of accountability among research partners.

Though the above principles and guidelines do not address linguistic research specifically, all of them are applicable to linguistic research. Rice (2019) embraces the description of CBR as an orientation towards research, rather than a research methodology (as proposed by Ferreira and Gendron, 2011).

Notions within the field of the perceived appropriateness of practicing linguist-focused models of Indigenous language research relies on false narratives: if it is assumed that language research conducted within a community need not benefit the community, or if it is assumed that only an outsider linguist can be a “language expert,” then there is no incentive to share agency in the planning and enacting of research, to share knowledge as part of the research project, to credit language speakers as partners in research publications, or to make research materials accessible or useful to the language community. Tsikewa (2021) explains that “[p]ower relations are […] exemplified through the ideology that speakers are not qualified to self-analyze their language” (p. e307). Collaborative research models promote goals that challenge these narratives.

A Linguistics curriculum that provides instruction only in linguist-focused research models and approaches risks perpetuating these myths (Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009). Linguistics students, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, can and should be taught that their knowledge and skills are valuable to language research. Omitting any instruction in models of collaborative research, however, compromises students’ ability to conduct research ethically in Indigenous settings; this is particularly true for non-Indigenous outsiders to the community. This is not to suggest that instructors and students do not aspire to be ethical; rather, ethical criteria differ considerably according to context, so a more thorough overview of the contexts of collaborative research models is critical for understanding their ethical foundation. In fact, a number of non-Indigenous linguists have described their movement into collaborative research as a learning process, as discussed in the following two subsections.

3.1.2 Challenges in Collaborative Language Research: Ideological Discord

The historical contexts and ethical foundations of collaborative language research warrant a comprehensive overview within Linguistics curricula, but one might argue that such an overview could be taught in a single lecture. This would be a simple answer to the question of what constitutes specialized training for collaborative language research (anecdotally, I add that there are postsecondary institutions that *do* take this as the answer). A number of scholars in the literature have identified that Linguistics' ideologies about language and language revitalization practices, when unchallenged, pose considerable problems for collaborative language research.

That there exist non-Indigenous linguists who want to work collaboratively with community members towards language revitalization is not a solution per se. Leonard (2017) observes that even well-meaning linguists who have worked to support community needs are described by community members to be "tearing their languages apart or otherwise disrespecting them," and are ultimately unhelpful to the community (pp. 16-17). Non-Indigenous linguists have reported receiving this kind of criticism directly: England (1992), in her reflection on conducting language work with a community of Maya people, writes that it had been "a shock" to other the linguists on her team and herself "to realize that good will and good relations with the individual collaborators in our past research, a dedication to sound scientific principles of linguistic research […] were not enough to avoid rather severe criticism of our role in Mayan linguistics" (p. 29). More subtle than unethical research practices or incompatible research goals, the challenge of ideological conflicts described here in fact underlies recurring surface issues.

Non-Indigenous Linguistics students are often not prepared for this kind of challenge in their training. In her survey of postsecondary Linguistics field methods courses, through responses from professional linguists who teach or have taught field methods, Tsikewa (2021) finds that:

> Opportunities to learn about the speaker-collaborator's cultural traditions were not included in any course or focus description analyzed in this study, and a third of the survey respondents (seven), when asked how they address learning about the community's cultural traditions, values, and local norms, indicated that they do not discuss these issues in their courses. (p. e300)

Kroskrity (2009, 2015) identifies the value of establishing *ideological clarification*—that is, acknowledging each other's beliefs about language and language revitalization—between outsider linguists and community members. Though many outsider linguists anticipate having to learn new cultural values and protocols from the community, they may be unaware of the imposition of their own ideologies over others. Kroskrity (2015) notes the tendency of outsider linguists to believe that they have a "comprehensive, scientific, and truthful vision of linguistic structures and practices that can be contrasted with the exotic but deluded, false-consciousness of members" (p. 154). If outsider linguists believe in their own linguistic education as entirely objective and factual—rather than as a particular mode of representation and analysis—then any conflicting view of language or language revitalization from the community is dismissed. Leonard (2017) observes that this phenomenon contributes to the elevation of Western ideas over Indigenous ideas. England (1992) reflects on the consequence of the idealization of Western linguistic work as "pure science;" criticisms from community members are attributed to a lack of education or sophistication in scientific thinking (p. 30).

One of the goals of collaborative language research discussed in the previous section was *democratization of knowledge* (Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009). To revisit this idea: a democratization of knowledge cannot mean simply acknowledging that sophisticated Indigenous beliefs and understandings about language exist. It necessitates that non-Indigenous linguists deconstruct and de-elevate their own beliefs in order to work in true partnership. This is not to say that Euro-American Linguistics should be eliminated from collaborative language work; rather, outsider linguists and community members should decide together when and how Theoretical Linguistics tools are used in the project, and when alternative methodologies and methods are more appropriate.

Leonard (2018) describes a common example of a situation in which a non-Indigenous linguist may be surprised to find that their typical scientific practices are not as neutral as they had believed:

> ‘Dissecting’ is the word I tend to hear in critiques from Native American community members who are working with language documentation, particularly legacy documentation, and opine that some linguists’ approach to investigating language is inappropriate or offensive. This occurs, for example, when language community members encounter a linguist (or a material created by a linguist) that presents a grammatical issue as a puzzle to be solved for ‘our understanding’ (where the pronoun seems to refer to other linguists). Solving this puzzle then occurs through language data isolated from cultural contexts, and the analysis fails to acknowledge the people who claim the language, let alone to engage with what the language represents to them. (p. 58)

Leonard notes the problem with attempting to represent languages as “disembodied from the people who use them,” (p. 58), explaining that reducing a language to an object of scientific study consequently represents the people who speak the language also as objects of scientific study. Not only does this practice “evok[e] the general colonial practice of exploiting the colonized population for its own resources" (p. 59), it wrongly assumes that language can be reduced to mere linguistic data. As an example, England (1992) recalls community criticisms of publications that chose linguistically-useful words such as "hit" and "kill" in Mayan verb paradigms, and consequently painted a violent picture of Maya peoples (p. 32). Macauley (2012), reflecting on her first field trip, remembers:

> [I]n my ignorance, I thought that since I was just studying language I had no need for any of that anthropological 'stuff.' I had no interest in Mixtec culture: I wanted to know about Mixtec morphology and syntax. But this attitude, I now realize, was the cause of many of my problems on that first trip. (p. 2)

Tsikewa (2021) propounds the importance of "exploring the speaker-collaborator's definition of language, how they connect to their language, and how their language connects to their spirituality […], as it is usually the motivation for the speaker-collaborator to participate in language documentation, revitalization, and reclamation efforts" (p. e311).

The belief that research in Theoretical Linguistics is inherently neutral and objective can reinforce colonial hierarchies of knowledge and expertise, even if done unintentionally. The devaluing of Indigenous epistemologies and research methodologies can result—and has resulted—in harm to Indigenous communities, and damaged relationships between community members and non-Indigenous researchers. The following subsection highlights examples of collaborative research in practice, with attention to the researchers' process of ensuring that projects were collaborative and revitalization-oriented.

3.1.3 Examples of Collaborative Language Research in Practice: Local Contexts

Postsecondary Linguistics departments that take up the task of preparing students for revitalization-oriented collaborative work face an additional challenge in addressing the vast differences in contexts across different communities and languages. Collaborative research frameworks may vary greatly depending on both the language goals of the community and the cultural cues that guide the research process.

Non-Indigenous linguists cannot assume that all communities will have the same needs. Linguists may be accustomed to the kind of language data that their field prioritises, but there is a social dimension to community-based research that is not fully accounted for in data collection. A number of case studies in the literature reveal that both initial and ongoing consultation were crucial to establishing the aims of the project. Benedicto et al. (2007), Langley et al. (2019), and Velásquez Runk and Carpio Opua (2019) discuss having had meetings and planning workshops, not only with team members, but with members of the community. These kinds of meetings are not only about technical details, however, as highlighted by Czaykowska-Higgins et al. (2019):

> [A] central component of community-based research is relationship. Building relationship requires consultation, it leads to trust, trust leads to consultation that is meaningful, meaningful consultation leads to further development of relationship, and this circle of building and reinforcing relationship through consultation leads to fruitful collaboration. (p. 76)

Additionally, time spent in the consultation stage of the research can include clarifying a community’s cultural vision of language and language revitalization, which, again, will be different across nations and communities. Attention to a community’s unique culture will not only inform the research output, but also the research process. As an example of the former, Benedicto et al. (2007) discuss how the cultural interests of the community set the priorities of what materials would be collected and published, including traditional folktales and songs, oral history, and endogenous technology (p. 3). As an example of the latter, Czaykowska-Higgins et al. (2019) were guided not only by academic protocols, but also by Coast Salish protocols and understanding of respect, in establishing equality, control, management, benefit, governance, and ownership/sharing (pp. 74-75). Though a university cannot instruct students in all cultural values for all Indigenous communities, again, it can encourage students to learn and work within a community's cultural values and protocols as part of the collaborative process.

Many linguists, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, take an "activist" position when it comes to collaborative language research, including Rice (2006). Though this positionality is often seen as a personal choice, linguistic fieldwork is not politically neutral (Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009), and language revitalization is inherently political; consequently, non-Indigenous linguists will often find themselves involved in what Heaton and Xoyón (2019) call "language advocacy," elaborating:

> The politicization of linguistic phenomena, which is also tied into the sociocultural goals of a movement reacting to systemic oppression, creates an environment where anyone working on linguistic issues may get tied to the other social, cultural, and political aspects of the movement as well. […] [L]anguage research entails involvement in the broader context. (p. 233)

Though non-Indigenous linguists may not be at the forefront of political situations, their work has political repercussions; some degree of consciousness of the sociopolitical context of their work is necessary from the earliest stages of the work. A postsecondary Linguistics department can teach its non-Indigenous students to be cognizant of the political ramifications of their work.

At present, many universities do not teach their students to consider the cultural, ideological, or political contexts of their research. Non-Indigenous linguists who have unwittingly caused harm to communities have in many cases not had the appropriate preparation and training for avoiding these kinds of situations. It seems, therefore, that postsecondary Linguistics departments in North America are not, as a whole, providing the specialized training necessary for collaborative language research; furthermore, based on my reading of the literature and on conversations with linguists, Linguistics departments tend not to be self-critical of their own ideological foundations that hinder collaboration with Indigenous communities, and they do not acknowledge Indigenous knowledge and epistemologies as legitimate enough to be valorized in Indigenous language research. This is what needs to change.

3.2 Decolonizing Linguistics

Having established in the previous section that collaborative language research does require specialized training, and that ideological differences between Euro-American institutions and Indigenous communities do hinder revitalization-oriented, collaborative language research, the question that remains is: What should postsecondary Linguistics departments do about the present state of affairs? Non-Indigenous scholars Andrea Berez-Kroeker and Daisy Rosenblum (2018) report that, encouragingly, “universities in Canada and the United States are increasingly supportive of community-engaged research, encouraging partnerships, and seeking to welcome Indigenous researchers whether they choose to work within or outside of universities” (p. 346), and that these universities “increasingly recognize the complexity of community-engaged work, and are learning to shape expectations for project results accordingly” (p. 346). While these are positive and significant directions for universities, there remains a question as to whether further changes need to be made to Linguistics programming in order for non-Indigenous students to be prepared to engage with this kind of work, and for Indigenous students to be adequately supported. This section reviews theories of and strategies for decolonizing academia, including the contexts and motivations informing them; in order to understand how Linguistics might be decolonized, an understanding of decolonization in the sciences in general is instructive. This section also compares ideologies of language and language revitalization between Euro-American academia and Indigenous communities so as to identify the attitudes that hinder collaborative research—attitudes that could be reconfigured for the benefit of both the Linguistics field and Indigenous communities.

3.2.1 Decolonization in Academia

Decolonization is a reversal of colonialism, and entails practical action. I do not use it in a symbolic sense: as noted by Tuck and Yang (2012), "decolonization is not a metaphor" (p. 1). I note here that collaborative research—a research orientation that decentres Euro-American academic priorities and democratizes knowledge and outcomes—is an act of decolonization, at least at one level. Decolonization in academia, however, cannot be confined to fieldwork. Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2013) writes that one of the multiple levels of decolonization "is concerned with having a more critical understanding of the assumptions, motivations and values which inform research practices" (p. 21); this indicates that decolonization is already relevant at the stage when students are learning how to research.

An academia of colonization is an academia that upholds Euro-American theory and knowledge to the exclusion of others; this view obtains in part due to the regnant assumption that Euro-American theory and knowledge is inherently neutral and objective, an assumption that isolates non-Euro-American theory and knowledge as non-neutral and subjective, and of lesser value. Margaret Kovach, a Plains Cree and Saulteaux scholar, rejects such naïve notions of scientific positivism, noting that this assumption "narrows what knowledge can entail," (2009, p. 78). Anishinaabe scholar Kathleen Absolon (2011) adds, "In reality it is *people* doing the research and *people* interpreting and making meaning; *who they are* does impact the interpretation and meaning and *who they are* does matter," (pp. 73-74, emphasis in original). Western knowledge is not somehow more objective—or more legitimate—than Indigenous knowledge. This is not to say that Western theory is obsolete: Smith (2013), writing on Indigenous peoples decolonizing their own research, elaborates that:

> Decolonization […] does not mean and has not meant a total rejection of all theory or research or Western knowledge. Rather, it is about centring our [Indigenous peoples'] concerns and world views and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspectives and for our own purposes. (p. 41)

For non-Indigenous academics, it is not necessary (or even appropriate) to centre Indigenous worldviews in all scholarly contexts, of course—by definition, decolonization is led and primarily enacted by Indigenous persons. The responsibility of non-Indigenous scholars in a decolonizing context is to support and value, rather than reject, Indigenous knowledge and research. Indigenous knowledge and theory should not be rejected in research conducted by Indigenous students, or in any research that involves Indigenous peoples (or Indigenous languages); furthermore, Euro-American knowledge within scientific fields should not be upheld as objective while Indigenous knowledge is merely acknowledged or indulged. Kovach (2009) writes, "For those seeking to support Indigenous scholarship, there is a responsibility to […] reconceptualiz[e] the relationship with Indigenous communities from that of a studied, exotic ‘other’ to that of a partnering relationship” (p. 170). Denesųłiné scholar Danita Bilozaze (published as Lewis, 2020) asserts, “It is only fair to recognize, when creating resources, that the process should also involve the voice of the people” (p. 18).

Within the field of Linguistics, this partnering relationship applies not only to fieldwork, but to how language is conceptualized within the field, as noted by Stebbins et al. (2018):

> A decolonising linguistics is centred in the aspirations and priorities of specific language communities or their representatives. In the context of language revitalisation, decolonising linguistics requires us to think deeply about the nature of language as it is being constructed by the people of those language communities. (p. 46)

If decolonization within the Linguistics field entails a space for Indigenous language knowledge and values, then it must, as must other areas in academia, examine its own assumptions and motivations at an ideological level.

3.2.2 Ideologies about Language

In previous sections, I addressed Euro-American science’s positivistic inclinations, wherein theory and research are presented as inherently objective. The tendency in Theoretical Linguistics is to view languages as data; within this perspective, languages have no cultural uniqueness. Non-Indigenous linguist Dean Mellow (2015) observes Euro-American science’s preoccupation with universals:

> When researchers overstate hypothetical universals of human behavior and culture, a failure to acknowledge differences in language and culture can occur. Overstated universals erroneously claim that all humans are the same in terms of specific characteristics, such as the nature of the language that they use. A Eurocentric bias arises

> when researchers claim that the one universal value or characteristic is the European (or English) value or characteristic. (p. 47)

In this view of language, it is impossible to imagine that languages encompass cultural epistemologies. For many Indigenous peoples, however, this is exactly what languages do. Leonard (2017) notes that “in certain worldviews, what in Western science would be considered social factors that are merely associated with language might instead be part of what someone understands ‘language’ to be” (pp. 19-20). Kovach (2009) argues that “language is central to the construction of knowledge” (p. 61). In a paper co-written by Kwakwa̱ka̱’wakw scholar Trish Rosborough, nuučaaṅuł scholar chuutsqa Layla Rorick, and non-Indigenous linguist Suzanne Urbanczyk, polysynthetic languages are described as follows (using Kwak’kwala as an example):

> Polysynthetic languages have many meaningful parts (morphemes) in a single word, and those words can incorporate the kind of information that is contained in sentences in languages like English and French. Who the participants are, what the action is, when the action takes place, and also where it takes place can all be expressed in a single word in Kwak’wala. As such, Kwak’wala grammar exists not only in sentences but also in the morpheme-rich construction of words. The literal meanings and metaphor embedded in these morpheme-rich words can be seen as a reflection of Kwakwa̱ka̱’wakw knowledge and ways of seeing the world. (p. 430)

Battiste and Henderson (2000) provide an example of language description through an Algonquian worldview:

> The Mi’kmaw language builds on verb phrases that contain the motion of the flux, with hundreds of prefixes and suffixes to choose from to express a panorama of energy. The

> reliance on verbs rather than on nouns is important: it means that there are few fixed, separate objects in the Mi’kmaw worldview. What the people see is the great flux, eternal transformation, and interconnected space. […] [E]very speaker can create new vocabulary “on the fly,” tailored to meet the experience of the moment, to express the finest nuances of meaning. (p. 76)

These descriptions of language, however, may not be considered appropriately rigorous within Euro-American Linguistics, due to a lack of categorizable and quantifiable data. Consequently, Euro-American academic language ideologies and Indigenous language ideologies often clash.

That there are different ideologies about language is not a problem per se; rather, it is the dominance of traditional Euro-American ideologies over Indigenous ideologies that results in nonacceptance of the Indigenous community’s values. Leonard (2018) writes, for example, that his Miami community values the relationship between their language and their land; in practice, this belief entails that “language vitality requires community access to our lands. […] [D]ocumentation practices that fail to acknowledge the land serve to erase our connection to it, thus reinforcing the legacy of colonial violence that dispossessed Miami people of much of our land” (p. 59). As reviewed in previous sections, this hierarchical relationship between knowledge systems can result in harm to the community. Furthermore, as mentioned in Chapter 1, the data and language descriptions often expected by Theoretical Linguistics departments may be inaccessible to the community (either physically, or by virtue of being full of academic jargon), or not relevant to community needs (Leonard, 2018). Non-Indigenous scholar Allison Taylor-Adams (2019) asserts that “many current documentary corpora” are not designed with language learning and teaching in mind (p. 439), and therefore may not be of immediate—or any—use for language revitalization. She notes that documentation, description, and revitalization are often taught as “three chronological steps in a linguistic process” rather than as “integral and mutually beneficial to each other” (p. 439).

A Linguistics curriculum that only teaches traditional Euro-American ideologies about language, and presents its own ideologies as fact, does a disservice to Indigenous students, whose ideas and methodologies are not valued or supported. It puts at a disadvantage the non-Indigenous students who will go on to work with Indigenous communities: they may unwittingly disregard crucial parts of the community’s identity and culture. This is not to say, however, that Euro-American linguistic theory must be entirely disregarded. Leonard (2018) also notes, “most community members I have spoken to about this do not mind the idea that their language’s structure will inform linguistic theory so long as the community’s ideas about language are respected” (p. 59). With an education in non-Indigenous and Indigenous language ideologies, Linguistics students will, with the partnership of community members, gain a sense of which linguistic tools and conceptual frameworks are appropriate in different contexts.

3.2.3 Ideologies about Language Revitalization

Though the Linguistics field has acknowledged language documentation as a valuable undertaking, there remains a question of how well academic research actually supports Indigenous language communities. Within the Linguistics field, the priorities of the academy tend to be given precedence over the priorities of the community, as I reviewed in previous sections. Though the Linguistics field seemingly recognises the importance of Indigenous languages, the academic goal of *preserving* language generally differs from the community goal of *revitalizing* language. Non-Indigenous linguist Jane Hill (2002) notes the field’s tendency to emphasise Indigenous languages' importance to broader society, or to humankind; though she does not dispute the truth of this postulation, she observes that "the theme of universal ownership specifically alienates endangered languages from their speakers and other members of communities in which the languages are spoken" (p. 120). In an effort to encourage non-Indigenous linguists' study of Indigenous languages, the field distances itself from language communities, and focuses on preserving language in the form of data. Languages are made "into objects more suitable for preservation in museums patronized by exceptionally discerning elites than for ordinary use in everyday lives" (p. 120).

The often-heard rhetoric that languages can be "saved" in the form of data for linguists is a concern to Maliseet scholar Bernard Perley (2012), as quoted in the previous chapter: "Documentation as language salvation has become the operative metaphor used by language experts. […T]he experts are interested in the language as a code, but not the speakers who use the code," (p. 134). While it sounds like a welcome narrative that a language would be "saved," it is only saved in a Euro-American scientific view: language data is archived for current and future scientific research, in case all speakers of the language pass away. This is not language revitalization in any sense of the term, even though, as Perley (2012) cautions, it may be described as such. Chickasaw scholar Jenny Davis (2017) comments on this trend as well, naming it "linguistic extraction, i.e. defining, analysing, and representing languages and the people connected to them separately from the complex socio-historical, political, and deeply personal contexts in which they actually occur" (p. 40). She explains the problem with this representation of language:

> Linguistic extraction, then, renders languages into extractable objects that can be collected, preserved, utilised, and even admired. Critically, linguistic extraction is not

> solely the collection of endangered and Indigenous languages in ways that often render them inaccessible to their communities, but also the presentation of languages as objects, or data, without their complex and varied human contexts. (p. 40)

Some Indigenous community members have opted to use the term *language reclamation* rather than *language revitalization*; as quoted in the previous chapter, Leonard (2012) defines the former term as “a larger effort by a community to claim its right to speak a language and to set associated goals in response to community needs and perspectives” (p. 359). Chew (2019) clarifies that while language reclamation “encompasses the important goals of revitalization,” it is also a “social process” (p. 2). The term *reclamation* also recognises that Indigenous languages are inseparable from the people who speak them, a fact which Linguistics departments often do not acknowledge.

If non-Indigenous Linguistics students are taught to see Indigenous languages as data, and Indigenous language communities as sources of data, they will have every reason to believe that they are in fact enacting language revitalization simply by recording and archiving their research. This may result in social and ethical difficulties in future work with Indigenous communities. A Linguistics curriculum that provided an understanding of community perspectives of language revitalization could allow non-Indigenous students to better understand their role within collaborative language revitalization work.

3.2.4 Racial Justice

Building on work by Hill (2008) as well as Hodges (2016), Charity Hudley et al. (2020) make the following observation about the Linguistics field:

> Many linguists, particularly those who are white-identified, seem to hold the implicit assumption that whether thanks to Boas's cultural relativism and antiracist activism or Noam Chomsky's linguistic universalism and left-wing politics, linguistics has adequately addressed racism. This disciplinary failure to recognize the racism within linguistics is largely due to the deeply entrenched societal ideology that positions racism as intentional and individual, rather than structural and often below the level of awareness of those who enact it. (p. 201)

Because enacting structural racism is often not intentional or overt, it may not be clear to non-Indigenous linguists what ideologies and practices are reinforcing colonial power structures. Leonard (2020) explains:

> Sometimes this occurs overtly, for example, when Native American ideas about language and/or research are not accepted as valid frameworks for academic inquiry, as might occur in a linguistics class or in a negative response to an essay submitted for publication consideration. This is seemingly ironic given that linguistic fieldwork with Native American communities by definition relies on community-held knowledge, but part of colonialism entails socially dominant groups asserting the right to determine what counts as valid knowledge, or to deem it valid only after it has been processed through dominant society's institutions. (p. 285)

Students learning traditional Linguistics norms are likely to continue upholding these colonial traditions without changes to curricula: "Linguistics has colonial origins and structures, which will continue to be reproduced without intervention" (Leonard, 2020, p. 289).

Leonard clarifies that there is nothing intrinsically racist about using Western linguistic methodologies and methods:

> Because I have been misconstrued in the past as having claimed that Western approaches to Linguistics should not be used, I emphasize here that this is not my position, nor do I believe that employing tools from one population to investigate the language(s) of another is itself colonial or racist. Rather, my intent is to call for a critical approach in which linguists recognize diverse epistemologies and research methodologies, and thoughtfully select their approach for a given research need from this larger pool. (p. 288)

He also states that decolonial scholarship even “welcomes thoughtful use of non-Indigenous methods” (p. 288). Indigenous students should, however, be able to defer to their own epistemologies over Euro-American ones, should they so choose: as Liğʷiłdax̌ʷ scholar Kirsten Dobler (2021) reminds her fellow Indigenous scholars, “[W]hen told we must fit into the box created by the academy we can say k̓i [no]. We have our own ways of knowing, understanding, and teaching” (p. 38).

Another factor in the marginalization of Indigenous students within a Linguistics program is the lack of content relevant to language revitalization. Calhoun et al. (2021) criticize the typical ordering of topics in Linguistics programs, where “sociolinguistic variation and applied linguistics are presented toward the end, if at all—typically after phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, historical linguistics, and language acquisition” (p. e14). They posit that:

> This bias is particularly consequential for black and underrepresented students who are interested in sociolinguistic topics: they may drop the course before they have the opportunity to learn about these topics, and even students who complete the course may feel that they have limited options for what they can do within linguistics or within the knowledge that they gain. (p. e14)

The authors argue for having instead “diverse and inclusive introductory courses” (p. e14).

As indicated in previous sections, Linguistics is not an inherently neutral or objective field. It is appropriate, therefore, for the discipline to be self-reflective and self-critical, including within its curricula. Students who are taught that the projects of Theoretical Linguistics are the only ones of value will continue Linguistics’ legacy of colonialism and racism.

3.3 Conclusion

The direction of collaborative language research has been guided by not only common ethical research principles and practices, but by the cultural and political context inherent in working with Indigenous communities. The larger Linguistics field, meanwhile, has had a tendency to see its own practices as inherently objective, thus precluding any critical reflection by linguists and Linguistics students. Though the field is not lacking in well-intentioned non-Indigenous linguists who are enthusiastic about language revitalization, the complexities involved in collaborative language research (especially when taking into consideration the particular local context), merit more study and training than would be required for fieldwork on more dominant languages.

In establishing what sort of training non-Indigenous Linguistics students might require for collaborative language research, one might look to theories of decolonization for academia, which decentres Euro-American academic traditions so as to democratize knowledge from a variety of sources. This requires not merely an inclusion of Indigenous knowledge, but a reconceptualization of how we understand *language*, particularly in—but not limited to—the context of language revitalization. Rather than seeing language as data to be preserved for scientific research, languages must not be presented as separate from the peoples who speak them; Linguistics departments cannot support Indigenous language revitalization without observing this critical principle.

This is not to say that Euro-American methodologies and practices cannot or should not be used, but rather that non-Indigenous linguists ought to carefully consider when and if they are appropriate for a given project. Without adequate training in collaborative research, however, it may be difficult for non-Indigenous linguists to make this assessment.

While the context for language revitalization work is often in the field, it is not only in fieldwork training that decolonization should become relevant. A decolonized Theoretical Linguistics curriculum would allow for engagement with Indigenous knowledge, expertise, and methodologies, coming either from local Indigenous community members or from Indigenous students. It is also critical that Indigenous understandings of language and language revitalization are not simply relegated to fieldwork courses, but incorporated into a non-Indigenous student’s foundational education in Theoretical Linguistics.

Because decolonizing curricula can be undertaken through different approaches, depending on both the leaders involved as well as the local context, the interviews in the following chapter address some of the unique challenges and solutions that Linguistics departments may encounter.

Chapter 4. The Interviews

As reviewed in the previous chapter, the extensive existing research on collaborative fieldwork has clarified that training for collaborative language research with Indigenous communities must extend beyond what has historically been taught in the prototypical Euro-American postsecondary Linguistics program, which is not revitalization-oriented. I also reviewed theories of decolonizing academia and discussed how these may be applicable to Theoretical Linguistics programs, with particular attention to challenging Euro-American ideologies that are presented as fact in academic settings. When a Linguistics program does not make transparent the differences of ideologies about language and language revitalization among postsecondary institutions and Indigenous communities—especially if Indigenous views of language and language revitalization are not valued (and, in many cases, not acknowledged) in the way that Euro-American views are—then there is no clear incentive for the support of Indigenous students' research, or for any revitalization-oriented research. It is challenging, moreover, for non-Indigenous students to know how to apply their Linguistics training in supporting actual language revitalization. Also challenging for non-Indigenous students is the process of building reciprocal relationships, which may not be intuitive when one's training has been modelled on more hierarchical structures.

Though the literature lacks dedicated studies on what kind of postsecondary programming is crucial for Linguistics students who aim to support Indigenous language revitalization, there are a number of professors who have not only given thoughtful consideration to this question, but have implemented programming in order to provide students with this kind of training. For this research, I interviewed four professors who have made significant contributions both in Indigenous language revitalization and in teaching Linguistics content in postsecondary institutions. With these interviews, I was able to find answers to questions not explicitly answered in the literature regarding the current misalignment between academia and Indigenous communities, practical strategies for beginning to correct this misalignment, and why Linguistics departments have a responsibility to enact these corrective strategies.

4.1 The Interviewees

Prior to conducting my interviews, I was aware that the scholars whom I contacted had each worked on multiple language revitalization projects, and had experiences working in, or alongside, the field of Linguistics. I mention this not simply as a way of describing their credentials, but also as an acknowledgement that I would not be conducting this research without having first been inspired by their work. I wanted, therefore, to highlight their voices in this thesis.

During our interviews, I asked each of them to introduce themselves as they would want to be introduced in my thesis; the biographies provided below, therefore, preserve what they felt was important to include. I aimed to use their own words as much as possible. They are introduced below in alphabetical order by last name.

Professor Ryan DeCaire was born and raised in Wáhta Mohawk Territory. He works to revitalize Kanien’kéha (the Mohawk language) amongst other Iroquoian languages in the area. He is both a teacher and avid learner of his language. He is an assistant professor at the University of Toronto in Linguistics and in Indigenous Studies. He is a PhD candidate at the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo in the Hawaiian and Indigenous Language Revitalization program. He is also a curriculum developer and language teacher at the Onkwawén:na Kentyóhkwa adult immersion program at Six Nations of the Grand River.

Professor Marianne Ignace was born and raised in a Friesian Plattdeutsch-speaking community in northwestern Germany. Her Haida name is Gulk̲iihlgad, which she received from her adoptive mother, the late Sandlenee Emma Matthews. Her Secwepemc name is Stsek̓úlecw, as she is a resident by marriage, kinship, and adoption into the Secwepemc community in Interior B.C. For the last thirty-five years, she has worked on language revitalization as a community member, and has worked with Elders and fluent speakers from all seventeen Secwepemc communities. She and her husband, Chief Ron Ignace have raised their children in the language. As director of the Indigenous Languages program at Simon Fraser University, and as a member of the Linguistics department, she engages in partnership with Indigenous communities throughout B.C. and Yukon, to enable and support local Indigenous language revitalization and learning projects.

Professor Wesley Leonard is Miami and a linguist. He is an associate professor of Native American Studies in the Ethnic Studies department at the University of California, Riverside. A linguist in terms of his professional focus in a broader research sense, he is engaged with Native American Studies as an activist discipline, looking at futures in which Indigenous communities and languages are thriving rather than “preserved.” He is currently engaged in supporting California Indigenous language efforts as a guest on the lands of the Cahuilla, Luiseno, Serrano, and Tongva peoples, although he is originally from Ohio, part of the original Miami homelands. His actual tribe as a political unit is located in present-day Oklahoma, the area to which a number of Miami people were forcibly moved in the nineteenth century.

Professor Keren Rice is a non-Indigenous linguist. She teaches in the Linguistics department at the University of Toronto, and was the first director of the Indigenous Studies program. She has worked with teams on developing teaching materials for some of the communities in the Mackenzie River Valley in the Northwest Territories.

4.2 Understanding “Language Revitalization”

Superficially, “language revitalization” may seem like a unifying goal: If both Indigenous language communities and Linguistics departments want Indigenous languages to be revitalized, one might imagine similar tasks and approaches from both areas. Professor DeCaire observes, however, that not only do communities and universities have different goals from one another, “in both areas those goals are very rarely explicitly defined or talked about.” To say that the goal is “language revitalization” is not enough:

> Well, what the heck is language revitalization? What does that even look like when it’s actualized? It’s hard for people to actually define that. So, does it mean it becomes a primary language, alongside English? Does it mean it’s translated on cereal boxes and signs, and it becomes an emblem of our identity? Does it mean we have a theoretical understanding of it linguistically, or how it’s changed throughout time, or how it contributes to our human mind and how we think and whatnot? (DeCaire, Dec. 11, 2020)

An overly-broad understanding of “language revitalization” and “language” may be part of the explanation for the different—and, at times, conflicting—interests and values between universities and communities. Professor Rice has noticed that Indigenous language communities are interested in languages as “part of something larger” than the languages themselves:

> I guess I’d say, to put it at extremes, that in a lot of cases in the universities, what people are interested in is language structure, and in communities, people are interested in what

> language tells them about themselves and who they are. And so that's a pretty big difference, and it's not always an easy one to reconcile. (Rice, Dec. 17, 2020)

Professor Ignace makes a similar observation:

> I think the goals and objectives of linguists to produce data on languages are different goals than the goal of reclaiming languages to produce their use in the home and community and to create new speakers. Those two are really different goals. As we often say, you don't need a linguist to learn your language. Linguistic work can be highly technical, so in that sense, individuals—including Indigenous individuals—whose passion it is to learn their language, may well be frustrated with the dissection of language. It does not address the creating of fluency. And Elders have many times to me commented on that as well. If what we'd call a meta-language of how we talk about Indigenous languages is so technical that it deters from that main objective, then I think it creates tension and frustration, and is counter-productive in the end. (Ignace, Dec. 16, 2020)

Professor Leonard remarks that, in all of the Indigenous communities that he has engaged with, "the definition of language is relational; it's tied to land, it's tied to peoplehood; it's tied to our community." The trend in the Linguistics field, however, is for language to be "framed as a lexicogrammatical object." He explains:

> It's not my experience that Indigenous people are not aware of other more dominant definitions of languages—as a named thing, as a named object that somebody can learn and use and document—but that this is not where people are coming from. With respect to language revitalization that I'm observing in Indigenous community contexts, people are very, very aware of ruptures that have happened, they are very aware that they are in

> many cases not enjoying the access to the languages that they really should have. And so people are responding to that as a way of healing, as a way of thriving, and as a way of being responsible to community, to ancestors. (Leonard, Dec. 6, 2020)

Professor Leonard also comments on the problem of "making Indigenous languages into part of *our* knowledge, what can *we* learn from them, where *our* and *we* tend to refer to non-Indigenous agents." This ideological perspective excludes Indigenous linguists from the conversation. It also erases from view the people whose language it is, and enables the objectification of Indigenous languages:

> There's a sense of ownership, a sense of universalism—with respect to the idea that these languages are part of humanity, which they are, but—where they should be thought of in that particular way, and where their contents, if you will, are there for the taking. (Leonard, Dec. 6, 2020)

Perhaps it is because of this that Linguistics departments' interest in Indigenous languages often does not extend to language work that facilitates revitalization. Professor DeCaire notes further that because Indigenous Language Revitalization as a subject is often "lumped into" fieldwork courses, Linguistics students often have to take it upon themselves "to go above and beyond" the work done in their courses—spending time with speakers, learning the language, becoming part of the community—to support revitalization (Dec. 11, 2020). Without the support of their departments, however, students may not have the time, the understanding, or the relationships to do work beyond their research assignments.

Ultimately, what students are taught in Linguistics programs about Indigenous languages and Indigenous language revitalization is often fixed within the context of preserving language for linguistic research. Professor DeCaire reminds us what meaningful revitalization actually looks like:

> At the end of the day, if I'm gonna define our language revitalisation for myself, it requires two things, and one is for people to pass it on to a new generation—but, [two], in order to do that you gotta speak it, and so people in the community are concerned about that, usually, speaking it. And not in a superficial way, actually speaking it to maintain functions within a society. (DeCaire, Dec. 11, 2020)

Using this clarification of Professor DeCaire's as a unifying, working definition for language revitalization, we can consider the arguments for Linguistics departments investing in not just preservation, but actual revitalization.

4.3 Responsibility

While the academic world has a vested interest in Indigenous languages, it has, in many cases, a pronounced preoccupation with language structure. Consequently, the needs of communities that would effect language revitalization are overlooked. That said, some may question why the Linguistics field would have any responsibility to contribute to language revitalization at all; i.e., if the traditions of the field are centred on language structure, why should the field not focus on the data, and leave language revitalization to the community?

Professor Rice's rejoinder to this objection is that "universities have a responsibility to the larger community," and adds that "we, as people in universities, have a lot of privileges, and we've gotta be sure that we aren't part of denying those privileges to other people" (Rice, Dec. 17, 2020). Professor Rice further outlines the relevant context of Canadian universities' historical relationship with Indigenous peoples:

> We have to remember that the university system in Canada was complicit in the treatment of Indigenous peoples, and in the devaluing of Indigenous knowledge systems. When I was first director of Aboriginal Studies at U of T, there were no Indigenous faculty members, very few Indigenous staff, and, at least to my knowledge, there were some Indigenous graduate students, but they were treated like second-class citizens in terms of getting funding. I'm sure that there were individual faculty who helped out these graduate students, but I don't think it was a very pretty picture at the time. Things have changed dramatically across the country, but the universities played a big role in being unable to see that there were alternative knowledge systems to the Western ones. I suspect that there were always some people who placed a value on Indigenous knowledge systems, but they were not the ones in positions of authority. (Rice, Dec. 18, 2020)

One aspect of responsibility, in this context, is reconciliation. Professor Ignace helpfully recalls Truth and Reconciliation Committee director Justice Murray Sinclair's words that reconciliation is a *Canadian* problem rather than an Indigenous problem (Sinclair 2014), adding, "with that, postsecondary institutions carry that responsibility" (Ignace, Dec. 16, 2020). Postsecondary institutions are included in the call for Canada to close the education gap for Indigenous students, and to provide culturally-appropriate content and curricula (Truth and Reconciliation Committee of Canada 2015b). This is not only to make amends for the historical—and often continued—exclusion of Indigenous knowledge from academic curricula, but to affirm the existence of Indigenous knowledge and to valorize it. Recalling the Linguistics field's general dismissal of Indigenous knowledge about language, it follows that Linguistics' role in reconciliation would involve a centring of Indigenous knowledge about Indigenous languages.

Responding to my question about whether universities have a responsibility to Indigenous peoples, Professor Leonard, speaking from an American context, revisits the relationality between people, language, and land:

> It absolutely is a responsibility, and this responsibility of course goes beyond Linguistics departments or programs—but Linguistics as a named field, and professional linguists as practitioners of that field, even if Indigenous language work isn't what they do or what they care about, even if they're seemingly removed from it, I think it is entirely irresponsible not to recognise how the field came to exist, particularly in North America, where it's significantly based on drawing from Indigenous languages in a particular way. I think it's highly irresponsible for Linguistics departments, and for that matter universities, to *not* assert and recognise and realise their responsibility to the Indigenous peoples on whose lands their institution is built, which is always Indigenous land in the case of North America—that is a reality. And with my institution, my institution is what the United States refers to as "land grant"—the institution is actually created through this public mechanism, meant to serve the people, the idea being that the land would be granted for free, that is, provided, and so that responsibility becomes even stronger. I won't go into the irony of how the United States really doesn't have the prerogative to provide land that isn't theirs, but… That's of course common in settler-colonial societies. I'd say yeah, absolutely, Linguistics has a responsibility. (Leonard, Dec. 6, 2020)

Though Professor Leonard is describing the situation in the United States, his observations are similarly applicable to postsecondary institutions in Canada, which are built on the traditional (and, in most cases, unceded) territories of Indigenous peoples.

Professor DeCaire speaks of responsibility not only at a departmental level, but at an individual level:

> Linguistics departments are made up of individuals, and individuals in those Linguistics departments have certainly benefited a lot from Indigenous languages, and many of those have not given back to communities for the work that they've benefited from. So just on that, politically, I think they have a responsibility to do that. (DeCaire, Dec. 11, 2020)

Professor Ignace reminds us that researchers who do not give back to Indigenous communities are acting against ethical recommendations that research with Indigenous peoples should be mutually beneficial, and that researchers should enact reciprocity in their research processes (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2018; Ignace, Dec. 16, 2020). On the subject of benefit, one could add that Linguistics departments often use Indigenous language data as illustrations in course material (generally in the context of traditional Western linguistic analysis), so they have benefited from Indigenous languages, and the speakers of those languages, in that sense as well.

Finally, Professor DeCaire spoke about the responsibility that comes with being Canadian:

> How do Linguistics students—non-Native, let's say—define themselves as Canadians? And if you ask all of them, they won't say anything to do with Indigenous people. They'll say, oh, hockey, Tim Hortons, I don't know, poutine… I'm just kinda being jokey, but that's kinda the things they'll think about, right? There's of course greater things than that, but they'll think of peacekeeping, they'll think of… I don't know, all kinds of stuff. And oftentimes they won't associate their identity as a Canadian with a relationship with

> Indigenous people. But, when you really look at what it means to be a Canadian, it's clearly a connection with Indigenous people. So if you work to educate students about that identity piece as a Canadian, then it's going to lead to something profound, in my opinion. And I think having expertise specifically in Linguistics departments that focus only on local communities is gonna have a positive impact on that in the long run—creating linguists who, at their identity, identify with Indigenous languages, not as "something that's out there that I study, that my work on that language has a direct connection not just to Native people—and I have this responsibility to Native people—but has a direct positive impact on me, and my family, and Canada as a whole." And if they thought that, I think we would have amazing linguists a few years down the line. (DeCaire, Dec. 11, 2020)

In summary, enacting responsibility is not, as is often asserted in the Linguistics discipline, a sidebar or an add-on to fieldwork with Indigenous communities, but something that arises intrinsically from the social and historical contexts of Indigenous language revitalization. It is on several levels that the Linguistics field within academia has a responsibility: to the wider community, including Indigenous peoples (Rice); to amend its historical failures and patterns of exploitation of Indigenous peoples (Rice); to identify and rectify power imbalances within its system (Rice); to fill the gap in education about Indigenous peoples and their knowledge systems (Ignace); to better understand Indigenous languages within—rather than removed from—the context of their communities (Leonard); to repay its debt to the Indigenous peoples on whose land it operates (Leonard); to repay its debt to communities who have benefited scholars within the institution (DeCaire); and to maintain, as citizens, community connections and relationships as intrinsic component of Canadian (or American) identity (DeCaire).

With this sense of responsibility in mind, we can examine some specific proposals for change to Linguistics curricula.

4.4 Identifying the Issues and Some Proposals for Change

All of my interviewees agreed that there are many non-Indigenous linguists—and specifically Linguistics instructors—who would like to reorient and decolonize[7] their courses, but knowing what to add, and knowing how to discuss it, is not necessarily intuitive. I asked my interviewees for practical suggestions to address this challenge.

Professor DeCaire observes that it is often the case that many non-Indigenous students complete a Linguistics degree without knowing anything about political situations involving Indigenous communities, or where the field's knowledge of Indigenous languages has come from; he states, "It's not necessarily that the focus on the theoretical curriculum is wrong, it's that there's this gap in actually showing students that it's really about the community, and that there's *people* speaking these languages." The problem with this omission, he explains, is that it often "gives [students], in their subconscious, the idea that languages do exist in a vacuum." (DeCaire, Dec. 11, 2020)

Barriers to correcting the narrative that languages exist in a vacuum are in part caused by positivist ideologies, as discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis. Professor Leonard refers to the Linguistics discipline as "having what's called 'Physics envy'—the idea is that we should be more like prototypical STEM fields." He debunks the idea of so-called "objectivity," which:

> …has been debunked by many, many people, and I'll do the same: These linguistic analyses are being done by *people*, they're being presented by *people* who have a

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[7] For a comprehensive outline of decolonizing academia, see Chapter 3.

> particular cultural lens and operate in particular cultural contexts. Even if the focus is not on a social phenomenon per se, say even if it is a structural analysis, the way that data are crafted, the way that data are interpreted, presented—all of that is extremely embedded in a particular, or a series of particular, cultural contexts. (Leonard, Dec. 6, 2020)

Professor Leonard maintains that it is "irresponsible" to leave out researcher positionality in one's work:

> I'm going to say who I am, how I was trained, what my assumptions are, what sorts of frameworks I'm using; I'll probably document, in the case of fieldwork, how I've discussed this with respect to the other participants in the fieldwork, I'll note any differences between others' views and my own, and I'll present the analysis, or present the work, whatever it might be. (Leonard, Dec. 6, 2020)

Though many linguistic fieldworkers have begun to see researcher positionality as part of the criteria for their own work, it is not often the case that positionality is addressed in Linguistics courses. Students are frequently shown language data out of context—in a unit on phonology, morphology, etc.—and, as a result, may not be conscious of the connection of that language to the people who speak it.

In addition to cultural contexts and belief systems, Linguistics curricula do not always address the violent history of Indigenous language shift in Canada or the United States. Professor Ignace describes the way in which language is inextricably tied to the grief around colonization:

> We live the results of colonisation; residential schools here in Canada—that were a big factor in how languages got literally beaten out of generations of children—led to the loss of intergenerational transmission. So language revitalisation, as people relearning or reclaiming their languages, does not come from an empty slate, but it comes from within

> the context of that baggage. And that kind of baggage, and the grief around that happening, you can't suddenly turn off and say "move on," because that is so deeply ingrained in the fabric of our communities, and the fabric of who people are, and the history that has guided that. (Ignace, Dec. 16, 2020)

Additionally, Professor Ignace notes that the loss of Elder speakers as they pass away is an additional source of grief to community members. These burdens can create stress around language learning. Unfortunately, she remarks, "that situation is sometimes really hard to get across to linguistic departments," because those working within them are "a world removed from the situation" (Ignace, Dec. 16, 2020).

Another barrier to change is the systemic racism that is often entrenched in academia. Professor Leonard notes that oftentimes those who dismiss revitalization work as not academically rigorous are really saying that Linguistics "needs to remain white; this means to remain embedded in the particular Euro-American tradition that reflects epistemologies largely associated with populations that have asserted dominance and colonised others." For those who adhere to that ideology, Indigenous worldviews have no place in Linguistics. "Acknowledging the potential value of those other ways of knowing upsets those power balances," Professor Leonard explains (Dec. 6, 2020).

Upsetting those power balances, however, is precisely what needs to happen in order for Linguistics departments to enact their responsibility towards Indigenous peoples. Professor Leonard asserts that "it's hugely important that Indigenous Language Revitalization courses, or similarly-themed courses, fully engage with Indigenous Studies, and Indigenous ways of knowing, and the idea that language shift never occurs in a sociopolitical vacuum" (Dec. 6, 2020). Professor DeCaire recommends including topics such as "issues around language decline, or why languages *do* decline, or the interconnected challenges, power dynamics and language ideologies, and overcoming systemic barriers to revitalise a language" (Dec. 11, 2020). Professor Leonard agrees that when this sort of context is erased, the impression given is that "Indigenous communities don't really exist, or exist only as cultures, not as full-fledged political units, and certainly not as peoples that have intellectual traditions;" therefore, "it's very easy to not be responsible to Indigenous communities." He highlights the importance of the Linguistics discipline focusing on these topics:

> It depends a lot on the person, on the particular circumstances, but I've seen too many examples in Linguistics as a profession where that whole story gets left out. Rather it's framed around: "Languages are disappearing." But disappear is one of those unaccusative verbs, it's one of those verbs where the grammatical subject is the recipient, the object, the experiencer… and the agent of the disappearing—what disappears those languages, so to speak—is left out. And that's where I think we need to put the focus, because if we have a strong idea as to why this is occurring in the first place, then we have a better way of responding to it. (Dec. 6, 2020)

Part of actively responding to language decline is to work with Indigenous individuals and communities not only in a fieldwork context, but in the context of Linguistics programs as well. Professor DeCaire notes that Linguistics departments without community connections do not have the capacity to work with communities, adding:

> And meanwhile there is a lot of expertise in Indigenous communities, and I think a lot of the solution comes from Indigenous communities. And I think that that's the step forward—that Linguistics departments can do things like partnering with Indigenous Studies programs, as well as other community Indigenous organisations. (Dec. 11, 2020)

Departments that facilitate these kinds of partnerships for their faculty and students create opportunities for learning how linguistic research can support language revitalization in a given community, by learning directly from the community what kind of support is needed: "If the idea wasn't made with Indigenous communities then it was made without Indigenous communities. You don't ask for partnership after you come up with the idea, you create the idea in partnership" (DeCaire, Dec. 11, 2020). Professor DeCaire also notes that Linguistics departments often are not working with local Indigenous communities, which "would automatically lead to more community connections, more fieldwork opportunities, and developing as a student, a future linguist, a sense of responsibility and a sense of connection to a local Indigenous language" (Dec. 11, 2020). He also recommends that Linguistics departments hire faculty who are from the community, or who have long-term connections to it, noting that "often faculty are a mechanism for the programming that is offered in undergraduate programs and graduate programs, and it's through faculty oftentimes that students are exposed to certain Indigenous languages, or whatever language" (Dec. 11, 2020). Professor Rice also encourages hiring Indigenous faculty to Linguistics departments (Dec. 17, 2020).

Professor Ignace says that one of her objectives is to train more Indigenous linguists, to "Indigenize the field of Linguistics" (Dec. 16, 2020). Professor DeCaire specifically addresses the low numbers of Indigenous people who pursue Linguistics degrees:

> It's often because they don't see the relevance to their language, or to Indigenous languages in general, or just the relevance to us and into Indigenous culture—How is Linguistics research rooted in our history? What does it mean to understand a language theoretically, or to be able to speak it, or to compare it to other languages—What's the point of all that? Or in understanding the human mind—How does it relate to us? And, of

> course, if that was more of a focus within Linguistics curriculum—Indigenous pedagogy, or Indigenous ways of knowing—then I think it would work to make it more relevant. (Dec. 11, 2020)

Professor Leonard adds, moreover, that even when Indigenous views of language are talked about in Linguistics programs, "they're almost never used as ways to do Linguistics, as ways to create the theory; rather they're talked about as ideologies, as objects that can be reported on" (Dec. 6, 2020). In addition to the problems with objectifying Indigenous languages discussed in the previous chapter, this scenario makes it difficult for students—Indigenous or non-Indigenous—to draw connections between Linguistics and language revitalization, or to find linguistic tools useful to a language revitalization project.

Professor Leonard mentions choosing to emphasize Indigenous ways of knowing as early as introductory courses, pointing out that it is often the case that "those introductory Linguistics courses are the only Linguistics courses that a given student has." Having courses emphasizing Indigenous ways of knowing at the outset also benefits students who do continue into upper level courses or even to a professional career in Linguistics: "Whatever comes first, I think, is likely to set the stage for other things." Professor Leonard begins his own introductory Linguistics courses with Indigenous definitions of language, and encourages others to do the same. In his case, he shares a definition of language from his own community, as well as a definition of language from a member of a local Indigenous community. He adds, "I think any Indigenous definitions would be useful, but if people are at a loss as to where to start, well, start with what's local to wherever you happen to be" (Dec. 6, 2020).

Professor DeCaire finds fault with Linguistics programs in which Indigenous Language Revitalization as a subject is "tucked away in fieldwork," and "usually pushed to the end of one's undergraduate degree." He adds that for these programs to claim that they are preparing students to work in Indigenous communities is "stretching the truth" (Dec. 11, 2020). On a similar note, Professor Leonard expresses concern with the tendency of Linguistics textbooks and courses to group Indigenous languages into a single chapter, or a single unit: "It's not a natural linguistic area. There are language families and structural units *within* it that might make more sense, but as a collective it only makes sense because of colonization." These chapters and units also generally leave out any relational ties that the language has: "Language and land and peoplehood and colonization and education—all of the above and beyond—are part of the same unit" (Dec. 11, 2020).

Professor Rice notes that "there's a lot of literature that could be read on Indigenous research paradigms and Indigenous ways of knowing" that could be incorporated into Linguistics courses. She also describes a course, which she designed and currently teaches, as "structure-light and more language use-heavy." The course content includes a paper by Professor Wesley Leonard on decolonizing Linguistics, a video of Tahltan language revitalization programs, and language revitalization websites that have been built by communities (Dec. 17, 2020).

Professor Ignace describes the positive benefits that she sees in non-Indigenous students learning from community members as part of their linguistic fieldwork: "It's those kind of practical experiences that really shape the kind of positioning and the ways in which the non-Indigenous Linguistics students can learn about issues of revitalisation, and becoming an ally and supporting those kind of local efforts." She adds:

> In our communities, we need all the allies we can get to do this work of revitalisation, documentation in particular. So then having students who are able to engage with

> speakers and Elders, gain their confidence and build trust, and then also produce results that can be further fine-tuned and critiqued. I think that's a positive step. (Dec. 6, 2020)

These fieldwork experiences may be, at present, the only opportunities for non-Indigenous students to learn about language revitalization's cultural context. Though some institutions are including Indigenous views of language in Linguistics curricula, Professor Leonard emphasises the importance of making those views salient:

> Right now, the status quo is that Indigenous peoples are so invisible, at least in the United States, that in many cases we have to go out of our way to say that we exist. And Indigenous programming at universities is very often framed around the theme "We are still here." And I think: If we have to go out of our way to say that we exist, then you know that the baseline is really, really low. And so, in that particular context, I'm going to choose to really centre Indigenous ways of knowing, to make that the default, with the assumption, which I think is a correct assumption, that more dominant views of language are so incredibly prominent that they're going to be there already. So, for me, the notion of trying to find balance in multiple ways of knowing entails centring those that are non-dominant. If you're giving equal time, then the ones that are already dominant are going to continue their dominance. (Dec. 6, 2020)

Centring Indigenous ways of knowing creates opportunities for new ways of doing Linguistics:

> The real shift will occur when we can use Indigenous ways of knowing for purposes of doing linguistic science. And the really big shift will have occurred when people are doing that for Linguistics that isn't about Indigenous languages—that is to say, using Indigenous ways of knowing for doing theoretical phonology about languages that are not

> Indigenous. That's when I would say, "Okay, the shift has really occurred." (Dec. 6, 2020)

From comments in this section, I summarize the following practical suggestions: teaching students that language does not exist in a vacuum, isolated from cultural or political concerns, and that notions of objectivity are erroneous and misleading (DeCaire and Leonard); teaching students the relevant history of Indigenous languages in Canada (or the United States), especially the historical and ongoing ramifications of colonization (Ignace and Leonard); confronting racism and the common prioritisation of dominant epistemologies and practices (Leonard); strengthening ties with communities by developing community-department partnerships (DeCaire), hiring faculty from the community (DeCaire and Rice), and training more Indigenous linguists (Ignace); focusing on Indigenous ways of knowing at the beginning of a Linguistics program to reinforce Indigenous epistemologies as foundational to language work (Leonard), and not having these topics relegated to fieldwork courses only (DeCaire); and encouraging allyship through collaborative fieldwork projects (Ignace).

The above insights and ideas in this section on decolonizing courses and curricula are not, of course, a complete list of possible changes to be made to Linguistics programs; furthermore, changes may need to be more tailored depending on the local context within which the programs exist. The ideas above merit further discussion, and further ideas may be brought to the table in future research.

4.5 Sidebar: Community-University Partnerships

My conversations with my interviewees brought up topics that go beyond the scope of this thesis, in which I focus on Linguistics curricula. Designing and implementing curricula are not the only things that Linguistics departments do, however; in fact, designing and implementing curricula should not necessarily be the only vehicles through which Linguistics departments support Indigenous language revitalization. For example, Professor DeCaire points out that for a language to be revitalized, the language needs to have speakers, and intergenerational transmission needs to be restored. Consequently, even the work of helpful, respectful non-Indigenous linguists "doesn't seem to be effecting that goal." There are ways, however, that Linguistics departments can support Indigenous language learners:

> There are community organisations in Indigenous communities that *are* effecting that goal, and the question is whether or not those organisations should be supported or partnered with the university in order to better achieve those goals, and help supply things like resources, linguistic expertise such as better understanding the complex morphology of our languages so we can create better curriculum strategies or better pedagogical strategies that allow our own languages to be the guide in how we teach it, rather than taking a, say, Indo-European approach to teaching languages. (Dec. 11, 2020)

Professor DeCaire offers the Kanyen'kéha adult immersion school, Onkwawén:na Kentyóhkwa[8], as an example of a community program that is focused on creating speakers, and suggested that a partnership between a university and a program like that would give language learners an opportunity to not only become proficient speakers, but to understand the language at a theoretical level as well: "The impact that they could have at the community level would lead to exponential benefits" (Dec. 11, 2020). Making these kinds of partnerships happen, however, is difficult.

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[8] Onkwawén:na Kentyóhkwa is a Kanyen'kéha (Mohawk language) school in Ohswé:ken (Six Nations), Ontario. It offers in-person adult immersion courses as well as online courses.

Though exploring this avenue of support for revitalization is a whole thesis topic in and of itself, I mention it here to reiterate to my readers that changes to Linguistics curricula are not the solution to Indigenous language revitalization. Those working in Linguistics departments who want to support language revitalization should always be considering whether or not their curricula designs are facilitating support for local Indigenous communities, and if not, how they can reorient it.

4.6 Optimism

Though there are still many changes that Linguistics departments should make, that is not to say that progress has not been made. Professor Ignace states that many—though not all—of her colleagues "embrace" Indigenous perspectives, even "among mainstream syntacticians and morphologists and semanticists and language acquisition specialists" (Dec. 16, 2020). Professor Leonard's experience has been that "people are really trying, for the most part, to be ethical—not everybody; some people are not ethical in a very overt way. But I think *most* people are." He also remarks that "there are a number of non-Indigenous leaders, I think, who have participated in shifting the field with respect to Indigenous language issues" (Dec. 6, 2020). Professor Rice reports that the undergraduate students in the University of Toronto's Linguistics department are "really excited" about engaging with Indigenous language issues (Dec. 17, 2020).

Those who are working on tackling these challenges should not give up if change does not happen overnight. Professor Rice recommends observing her three Ps:

> My words are Patience, Perseverance, and Persistence. I think you need to have those, and if you don't have those, then you're gonna give up. Just remember that along with being persistent, you've gotta be patient. I've actually learned that from working with a

> lot of the Elders here, that they understand that change is slow, and sometimes we're the ones that are impatient about those changes. (Dec. 17, 2020)

Professor Leonard expresses both fear and excitement about the future of Linguistics: "A lot of things have been and continue to be relatively problematic, but they're not intrinsic, they're not inherent, they have developed in a particular sociopolitical context, and that sociopolitical context can change." He acknowledges that, at present, racism and power structures allow people within Linguistics to be irresponsible towards Indigenous communities, but recent shifts in the field have given him more optimism:

> I'm imagining a positive future, and I'm imagining a situation, say, twenty years from now when I will be a more senior scholar—I consider myself mid-rank at this point—but where I'll be more senior, if things go well, where I might be asked to speak at a conference or something like that, within that capacity of somebody who has been in the field for a long time… and I'm imagining a situation where I'll be able to say, "And back then, people didn't have to consider Indigenous ways of knowing!" and then I'm hoping that the audience will laugh because it's just so ridiculous that that was ever the case. (Dec. 6, 2020)

4.7 Conclusion

It is critical that Linguistics departments align their ideas of what language revitalization looks like with the communities with whom they are (or should be) working. Additionally, they must be realistic in assessing whether their programming is preservation-focused or revitalization-focused.

Linguistics departments must acknowledge their collective and individual responsibilities towards Indigenous peoples, and ensure that their students are also made aware of these responsibilities.

Making practical changes to curricula includes adding in what is often missing: acknowledging the inherent connection between languages and the peoples who speak them, and recognizing that the definition and the outcomes of Indigenous language revitalization are determined by the given Indigenous community. The historical context of language decline and subsequent revitalization efforts also must be taught to students. Students should also be taught the importance of researcher positionality, and how to address it in their research.

Changes to curricula also include challenging the systemic racism in the Linguistics field (and, more broadly, in academia), and upsetting power balances in which Western understandings of language and linguistic theory dominate.

Building community connections and fostering partnering relationships are crucial not only for professional researchers in the department, but also for students who are still in the process of learning what those partnerships look like in practice. Through this, departments should also, if they are able to, hire Indigenous linguists, who are able to directly expose students to Indigenous languages, Indigenous worldviews, and active Indigenous language revitalization projects. Even non-Indigenous professors, however, are able to introduce students to literature by Indigenous scholars on Indigenous ways of knowing, Indigenous research paradigms, and Indigenous language revitalization efforts.

That more scholars have been making dedicated efforts to decolonize Linguistics departments demonstrates that the field is shifting in a positive direction. There have been many significant contributions to this shift, coming both from Indigenous scholars and from non-

Indigenous scholars speaking on their experiences in changing their research methodologies. The next step is to ensure that this knowledge is passed down to the next generation of linguists.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

In undertaking this research, I established a number of guiding questions to direct my investigation of my principal research question.

First, I asked whether collaborative language research requires specialized study and training. The significant number of misunderstandings and misaligned research goals among non-Indigenous linguists and Indigenous community members suggested that this was indeed a pressing need. Further investigation uncovered specific problems with linguist-focused models (Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009) of linguistic fieldwork when applied to the context of work with Indigenous language communities. I therefore concluded that models of collaborative fieldwork needed to be taught to students in order for those students to be able to orient themselves, in their work, towards community needs. Students also need to be taught what kind of linguistic tools can support not only research for the Linguistics field, but, more critically, research for Indigenous language revitalization.

Second, I asked whether there were critical ideological differences about language and language revitalization among Western academic institutions and Indigenous language communities. Through both my research of the literature as well as my interviews, I found that the Linguistics field has, over many decades, developed into a field that is data-oriented, positivist, and dominated by Euro-American ideologies. Overwhelmingly, these regnant ideologies are accepted as the traditional and only way of studying and working in Linguistics. For Linguistics programs to decolonize, program developers must acknowledge, first, that these ideologies exist as ideologies and not as objective truth, and, second, that these ideologies dominate to the exclusion of Indigenous ideologies of language. Ideologies of language differ among Indigenous communities, so I will avoid making generalizations, although it would be fair to say that Indigenous views of language tend to differ from the views of language found within Linguistics departments. It would appear universally the case that when it comes to communities working towards language revitalization, language *use* is of significantly more importance than language *preservation* (wherein what is documented is only helpful to Euro-American linguistic study).

Third, I asked what changes had been made to Linguistics curricula in response to publications that call for Indigenous language research to be collaborative. Though I do not have a comprehensive overview of programming shifts across North America, I found, through my interviews, examples of initiatives that professors had undertaken to change how students were learning about Indigenous languages and Indigenous language revitalization. The common aim among these changes was to create environments for students in which Indigenous languages were discussed in their social and cultural contexts, and Indigenous language revitalization was discussed in its historical and modern-day political contexts.

As a supplementary question, I expected to be able to explore how the Linguistics field can benefit from the inclusion of Indigenous views of language and language revitalization. This is a more subjective question, and it is difficult, therefore, to offer a definitive answer. The above findings, however, suggest that the Linguistics field can only broaden and become richer from decentring its narrow definitions of language. The field will be more welcoming, and have more relevance, to Indigenous linguists, and there will be more diversity in the kinds of research being undertaken. Regarding the field’s involvement in Indigenous language revitalization: for those who want to support language revitalization, understanding the kind of work that will be of practical use to Indigenous communities will forward this goal.

Finally, my principal research question asked how postsecondary Linguistics departments can prepare and support its students to work collaboratively with Indigenous communities towards Indigenous language revitalization. My answer to this question is presented in the following section as a series of recommendations.

5.1 Recommendations

These recommendations, arising from my reading of the literature and from the interviews, for Linguistics departments' programming comprise what has emerged from this research; these recommendations, however, are not intended to be a comprehensive list for all Linguistic departments in all contexts. Some of the recommended items may not apply to all circumstances; more importantly, there are undoubtedly further recommendations that could be made. I encourage non-Indigenous Linguistics faculty not to use these recommendations as a checklist, but as a basis for the thoughtful consideration of their own context. I also encourage non-Indigenous Linguistics faculty to be in discussion with Indigenous community members (especially local Indigenous community members), be they faculty or partners, so as to determine what the best options are for the given context. With that said, I present the following recommendations as a starting point, in no particular order:

1. Teach about Indigenous languages and Indigenous language revitalization in context.

Indigenous languages are inseparable from Indigenous peoples. Rather than presenting Indigenous languages as data to be preserved, supporting Indigenous language revitalization entails supporting the peoples to whom these languages belong. For students, an understanding that there is cultural context behind the "data" is the first step towards generating that support.

2. Teach the history of why language shift has occurred.

Responding to language shift entails understanding what has caused it to happen, and what is still causing it to happen in a number of cases. In teaching this, moreover, Linguistics departments have an opportunity to acknowledge and clarify their own responsibilities in Indigenous language revitalization, and to teach that to their students.

3. Challenge racism; challenge the idea that Linguistics needs to reflect only Euro-American traditions; acknowledge the value of Indigenous ways of knowing and the intellectual traditions of Indigenous language speakers.

The dominance of Euro-American traditions of linguistic theory in postsecondary institutions—and the exclusion of Indigenous intellectual traditions—has a number of consequences, including a homogenization of linguistic theory, the perpetuation of an unwelcoming environment for Indigenous students and faculty, and a devaluation of Indigenous epistemologies. The goal is not to abolish Euro-American linguistic practices, but to decentre them so that other views of language may also be learned. In these circumstances, moreover, non-Indigenous students would be in a better position to understand how to practice language research that is collaborative rather than hierarchical.

4. Acknowledge Indigenous and Indigenist methodologies as a way to do linguistic work.

This is similar to the point above; I add that Indigenous views of language should not be looked at as another object of study, but as a way to do linguistic work. Depending on the circumstances and on the methodologies in question, it may not be culturally appropriate for a non-Indigenous student to use Indigenous methodologies in their own research, but this is an issue that can be discussed and clarified in the context of a research partnership. It is important, moreover, that faculty members are accepting of the work of Indigenous students using culturally-grounded methodologies.

5. Partner with local Indigenous communities and create ideas in partnership.

One of the best ways to help non-Indigenous students learn about a language in the context of its people is for postsecondary institutions to have community connections. Students will have a sense of what kinds of language projects are being done by the community, and they will have active support of Indigenous language revitalization modelled to them in observing work done in partnership.

6. Hire faculty from local Indigenous communities.

Partnerships between Linguistics departments and Indigenous communities also facilitate the hiring of Indigenous language experts as faculty members. This is one way that departments can enact their responsibility to value the knowledge and expertise of Indigenous speech community members. Having Linguistics faculty members will mean that non-Indigenous students are receiving a firsthand account of Indigenous views of language, not to mention looking into Indigenous language revitalization beyond how it tends to be represented in the Linguistics field.

7. Introduce Indigenous views of language in introductory courses, and incorporate them throughout curricula.

Introductory courses, which create a foundation for how students go on to understand *language* throughout their program—and even their professional career—can offer students a broader, more heterogeneous understanding of language by discussing Indigenous views of language as well as traditional Euro-American linguistic theories. For non-Indigenous students who do pursue courses in fieldwork or Indigenous language revitalization, these introductory courses provide the ideas that are foundational to this work. Incorporating Indigenous epistemologies throughout the curricula reinforces that they are not simply a niche area of Linguistics, but are valuable in all areas of Linguistics.

8. Study language revitalization work done by Indigenous communities.

Linguistics students who take fieldwork courses will likely learn methodologies and methods useful to eliciting data considered of value for the Linguistics field, with little or no attention to what kinds of language work are undertaken to support or effect language revitalization. Seeing examples of what Indigenous language revitalization looks like in practice may give students ideas as to how linguistic theory can be used in language revitalization work.

5.2 Directions for Future Research

I look forward to a continuation of this discussion, particularly from linguists (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) who would speak from their own experiences in order to make further recommendations, or who would give thoughtful criticisms of the ones presented here. It would be helpful, moreover, to read case studies that examine what Linguistics departments are doing to make Indigenous language revitalization and Indigenous views of language more salient in their programming, with respect to both what is and what is not working.

5.3 Concluding Thoughts as a Non-Indigenous Scholar

I was fortunate to be able to present some of my initial thesis research at the Stabilizing Indigenous Language Symposium in 2021, co-hosted by Tsi Tyónnheht Onkwawén:na and Queen’s University. During the question period of my presentation, I was asked by a Linguistics graduate student what she and other non-Indigenous Linguistics students could be doing in their own learning and practice if their programming were not sufficiently supporting them or training them in revitalization-oriented collaborative language work.

I do not wish to imply that there is a single correct way to do this, so I will offer my own experience as an example rather than a guide; I will also mention that I stumbled into my path more by accident rather than by design. In my case, I had the good fortune of learning about Indigenous language revitalization from a number of inspiring Indigenous scholars. Prior to that, my understanding of language revitalization was more naïve: I did not know that there was a difference between what kind of language information was of interest to Linguistics as a field of study and what kind of language information was useful for language revitalization as practice. I did not know that the community members who are doing language revitalization work, including Elders, are generally stretched extremely thin, and often do not have the spare time to indulge linguists in their pursuit of the latest theory. I did not understand the cultural, political, and personal significance of language to Indigenous peoples. These were all things that I learned from Indigenous teachers and classmates.

First and foremost, therefore, I recommend learning about Indigenous language revitalization from Indigenous people. This can happen within the context of a Linguistics program, or through taking Indigenous Studies courses. In my case, beyond reading work by Indigenous linguists, it was critical for me to read Indigenous scholars on decolonization theory, Indigenous epistemologies, and Indigenous research methodologies. Conferences focused on language revitalization are another space for learning from Indigenous scholars and language activists.

Non-Indigenous teachers are also important for non-Indigenous students: we are following in their footsteps, and they generally had to learn on their own—having not learned during their training—how to navigate the world of collaborative language research in a way that was respectful and beneficial to Indigenous communities. They have a sense of what kinds of challenges we will run into, and what kind of mistakes we will make. It is important to take the time to learn from them as well.

In my own case, it was helpful for me to begin to learn Kanien’kéha (Mohawk), not only because it gave me an opportunity to learn about an Indigenous language outside the context of my Linguistics program, but also because learning a local Indigenous language is a helpful, continual reminder to myself that I have a personal responsibility to my Indigenous neighbours.

Non-Indigenous Linguistics students—myself included—have a lot to learn. I have made an effort to pursue research from which I believed I would learn the most, and I will continue to do so. Until Linguistics curricula teach these things to non-Indigenous students, we will have to continue to research beyond what our programs expect of us—but there is no alternative, because we cannot support Indigenous language revitalization without being willing to learn how to walk together with Indigenous peoples. Doing so is not only in the interest of collaborative linguistic work in the field, but it is also in the interest of making Linguistics programs a less alienating space for Indigenous students and faculty. We learn, and then we do our best to pass on that knowledge through the work that we do, with the hope that eventually Linguistics departments will uphold their responsibilities so that students don’t have to write theses like this one.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

1. Could you introduce yourself, and talk about your involvement in Language Revitalization?

2. A) Do you see differences in how Indigenous language revitalization is viewed by Indigenous language communities and postsecondary linguistics departments? If so, what are the differences?
   B) Do you see differences in how Indigenous languages are viewed by Indigenous language communities and postsecondary linguistics departments? If so, what are the differences?

3. A) What are the consequences of how Indigenous language revitalization is represented and taught within postsecondary Linguistics programs?
   B) What are the consequences of how Indigenous languages are represented and taught within postsecondary Linguistics programs?

4. Have there been changes to Linguistics programs that have resulted from collaborative research models being pursued by more researchers than in the past?

5. In his 2018 reflections on colonialism in language documentation, Dr. Wesley Leonard makes suggestions as to how Linguistics departments can “foster a norm of including Indigenous ideas about language in introductory courses and of continuing this practice in training that is more specific to language documentation, such as field methods courses.” Do Linguistics departments in North America have a responsibility to educate their students—particularly those studying Indigenous languages—in Indigenous views of language and Language Revitalization, and if so, how can they do that?

6. Have there been—and/or are there currently—barriers that have kept Linguistics departments from implementing changes to programs and curricula? What are they, and how can they be challenged?

7. Are there ways that Linguistic theory has benefited, or could benefit, from the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge about language?

8. Is there anything else that you would like to discuss that we haven’t addressed in previous questions?