

Knowledge Synthesis Grant:

Ethical relationality, Canadian applied linguists and Indigenous language revitalization

FINAL REPORT

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Mela Sarkar (McGill University) and Andrea Sterzuk (University of Regina)

with

William Cook (University of Regina)

Tom Fullerton (McGill University)

Denise Runns (University of Regina)

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Ethical relationality, Canadian applied linguists and Indigenous language revitalization

KEY FINDINGS

- Across Canada, different kinds of language workers are involved with Indigenous language issues, or are interested in becoming involved with them in the near future
- These stakeholders include:
 - Indigenous knowledge keepers and Indigenous elders working within their communities
 - Indigenous language teachers working inside and outside their communities to pass their languages on to learners of all ages, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous
 - Second language teachers of other languages, both with and without formal training, and including preservice teachers, whose awareness about Indigenous language issues and the need for revitalization measures has been raised since the publication of the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) Report of 2015, and who want to know more
 - Applied linguists in academic, government or language teaching industry positions who seek to extend their professional activities to include work with Indigenous languages
 - Graduate students in applied linguistics and related fields (linguistics, education, psychology, speech pathology, Indigenous/Aboriginal studies, history) who are increasingly deciding to focus on Indigenous language-related topics in their careers
- All the above stakeholders have expressed the need for more and better resources to be placed at their disposal as they pursue their professional goals, when we approached them informally
- Professional academic applied linguists in particular (both current faculty members and graduate students in training) have expressed confusion and a desire to better understand issues of research ethics and of working with Indigenous communities as invited outsiders
- We think that the most convenient way for all stakeholders to begin to access and work with the information they need will be through a transparent, user-friendly, open-source free-access online “one-stop shop” database, ideally one that users could add to and help to shape over time
- There are many resources available online, but as yet no central repository that would be equally useful to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous *language professionals* specifically (as well as to other second language learners from a variety of backgrounds and from across the lifespan)
- Such a repository is straightforward to put together, though it is necessarily a time-consuming process (now underway) requiring extensive consultation among all the stakeholders named
- Sustained funding will be needed to keep such an online resource repository continually updated
- Searching for this sustained funding will be the next major priority of the current investigators
- Continued networking and exchange of information among current and future stakeholders will be needed to ensure that the online repository is useful to the largest number of potential users
- A realistic short-term goal: find more funding and establish a working group of committed stakeholders to decide on medium- and long-term goals for the project
- A realistic medium-term goal: elicit opinions and materials from as many kinds of potential users as possible and decide on future directions for website design and access
- A realistic long-term goal: assurance of funding in perpetuity that will cover work needed to bridge innovations in the relevant technology, as well as regular updating of available materials, writing and editing of any accompanying text that may be judged useful by the working group of stakeholders, and periodic impact assessment that can be used to guide future work
- Desired outcome: this online resource repository will be crowd-sourced, crowd-assessed and will be shaped by an evolving community of users/stakeholders; it will attract as well as solicit contributions, and will continue to grow as long as technological and human resources permit.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Indigenous languages all across Canada are in danger of dying out. This is not news to Indigenous peoples in Canada themselves or to the professionals in the education, social work and health care fields who have been working with them over the decades as allies. Over twenty years ago, in 1996, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) provided copious detail on the situation in its voluminous reports (not well known to the general public) after five years of fact-finding. It was clear back then that many of the languages of Canada's first peoples were in danger. Indigenous or Aboriginal communities (the term Indigenous is preferred here) were only too aware of how fragile their languages were.

How did the situation get so bad? For about 150 years—since before the founding of the Dominion of Canada in 1867—speakers of Indigenous languages have been told that their languages were worthless. In the residential schools so many children were forced to attend, washing young speakers' mouths out with soap, if they were caught speaking to their friends or siblings in the only language they felt truly at home in, was common practice. The residential school era in fact drew to its ignominious close in 1996, the same year as the publication of the RCAP report. Furthermore, in the not so distant past, Canadian government policy had for decades openly labelled Indigenous languages as “primitive” and “backward”, relics of a preindustrial past that were only hampering their speakers in what was conceived of as an unstoppable rush to modernity and prosperity. As a direct result, many young speakers lost their first languages and crossed over to English during their time at residential school. It became difficult or impossible for them to speak to their parents and grandparents when (or should that be *if?* Tragically, many did not survive the schools) they made it back home. Consequently, in many places the languages stopped being passed on in families. When it became clear that knowledge of, for example, Mi'kmaq, Kanien'keha (Mohawk), Siksika (Blackfoot), Nakawemowin (Saulteaux), Skw̓w̓w̓mesh (Squamish), Nuu-Chah-Nulth (Nootka)—it's a long list, of over sixty languages—was worth precisely nothing in the white settler economy, language shift happened almost imperceptibly over time without speakers ever having chosen it. Most of the sixty-plus languages are now on the endangered list. The three that have done a bit better according to the RCAP report, so have a better chance of surviving into the next century—Anishnaabemowin (Ojibwe), Nēhiyawēwin (Cree) and Inuktitut—have been protected more by their numbers and the extreme isolation of many of their communities of speakers than by any collective decisions in the communities that the languages should be retained. That isolation will not last. Technology and rapid communication in dominant languages is reaching even the most remote communities.

Why is it important to keep Indigenous languages alive and strong? For one thing, there's no other homeland for these languages (unlike the situation for immigrant languages). If they die out here, where they were born, they are gone for good. For another, some scholars and activists consider that *all* languages form part of our common heritage as a species, with potential (mostly untapped) to tell us about how humans think, behave, and create culture. This point is more debatable; many Indigenous speakers maintain that the decision about whether to share their linguistic heritage is rightfully *theirs* and that outsiders must wait to be invited in. But most importantly, the continued health of Indigenous languages is intimately connected to deep issues of identity and belonging for Indigenous peoples. This is true not just for Elders and for younger Indigenous-identified Canadians who have maintained a connection to the languages through their parents and grandparents, but may no longer be speakers themselves. Whole communities where the languages were lost a generation or more ago are looking for ways to bring them back. The challenge of Indigenous language revitalization *matters* to thousands of

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people who feel that they have been robbed of a piece of themselves—but that it's not too late to repair the damage, for themselves and, crucially, for the generations yet to come.

Is Canada capable of real change around Indigenous issues? It has taken a hundred years or more of persistent Indigenous activism, but the tide is slowly beginning to turn. In 2008 Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) began its painstaking, often painful fact-gathering work. Starting in 2012, the Idle No More movement brought Indigenous issues to the forefront of public discourse and started a new groundswell of interest and commitment to activism, most importantly on the part of Indigenous peoples in Canada, but also among settler Canadians. The most recent event to draw renewed public notice and an awareness of Indigenous issues by settler Canadians has been the 2015 publication of the TRC's reports, which, aided by renewed top-down political resolve, helped fuel a national public debate around relationships between Indigenous and settler Canadians. All across the country, settler institutions seem to finally be waking up. Changes *are* starting to happen, at both policy and funding level. What is new and noteworthy is that there is now also a growing wider Canadian acknowledgement of settler colonialism and its ongoing effects on Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Applied linguists hear the wake-up call: The TRC resulted in 94 widely publicized Calls to Action highlighting the responsibility that settler Canadians and Canadian institutions and organizations have for working towards reconciliation. A number of the calls pertain specifically to language and culture (Calls 13-17). After widespread publicity around the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's reports, it seemed that non-Indigenous Canadians had realized that the issues involved were of concern to everybody living in Canada, regardless of origin. This new awareness extended to our professional body, the Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics / *L'Association canadienne de linguistique appliquée* (ACLA/CAAL). Unlike theoretically oriented linguists, applied linguists grapple with the day-to-day difficulties of teaching and learning second languages in their work as educators and researchers. Responding to the Calls to Action pertaining to language and culture, at its 2016 Annual General Meeting, ACLA/CAAL voted to make reconciliation part of its official mandate by committing to support the work of researchers, educators, and students in the maintenance, revitalization, and strengthening of Indigenous languages. This resolution became part of the association's official mandate (<http://www.aclacaal.org/statement/>). It aroused interest, excitement and a desire to support Indigenous language revitalization work among professional applied linguists in Canada. However, the majority of ACLA/CAAL members have very little knowledge of Indigenous contexts in Canada. They tend to assume that the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages by and for Indigenous communities should draw upon the same theoretical frameworks, bodies of literature and pedagogical principles that have been developed in and for settler contexts. Much research has been done that shows that this is not the case. *ACLA/CAAL members urgently need to educate themselves about Indigenous research ethics and about how to work with Indigenous communities around second language teaching issues.*

Who can and should be involved with revitalization work on Indigenous languages? As ACLA/CAAL executive members and settler applied linguists ourselves who have been working together with Indigenous partners for many years on language issues, we recognize that the important questions, around how Indigenous language revitalization initiatives might proceed, can only be asked and answered in the communities themselves and by community members. While settler applied linguists may have much to contribute, they must wait to be invited into the ongoing conversation.

How can settler applied linguists make the transition to a more respectful way of being available? After 2015, we saw a need for large-scale education of our own professional community around

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Indigenous language issues. We both work with teachers of Indigenous languages (in Gaspésie and Treaty 4 territory, where the local languages are Mi'kmaq and Nêhiyawêwin) and know first-hand how much energy and commitment they put into their language teaching with learners from all backgrounds, community members and settlers alike. We have become aware of many resources on the ground, often materials created by teachers—mostly produced and used locally and not widely disseminated—and, in our capacity as academics, we have also been exposed to the extensive but not sufficiently well known research literature on Indigenous research ethics and working with communities. It seemed to us that a productive way forward would be to put together and then publicize a free online repository of many different kinds of information that our fellow applied linguists could tap into as a way of starting to learn about the complexities of working with Indigenous partners, since so many of them were expressing a keen desire to do so. We have frequently heard comments like, “We know so much they can learn from!” However, we saw this as precisely *not* the attitude our colleagues should take, as they begin to think seriously about Indigenous language and revitalization issues. They possess strong backgrounds in issues around the teaching and learning of Canada’s two official languages, and sometimes other modern world languages or “Heritage” (immigrant-origin) languages, but can claim very little knowledge or understanding of Indigenous languages or contexts. Very few of the membership are Indigenous-identified. While there are certainly commonalities between settler-conducted applied linguistics research over the decades and what Indigenous educators and activists have been saying about the passing on of their languages, the differences are so great as to make straightforward comparisons of research results or teaching contexts misleading to the point of being harmful.

How to create a “one-stop online shop” for many different kinds of users? We have started, therefore, to put together a website that was originally conceived as being mainly for the use of professional applied linguists. However, as the work proceeded in the first six months of 2017, the involvement of Indigenous language teachers on the team made us realize that we had underestimated the amount of consultation needed with stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds. Language teachers can benefit enormously from the kind of repository we proposed to create, *if* it is designed to be easily accessible given their customary ways of working. The online needs of university researchers and of community language teachers on the ground (as well as of other potential users) do overlap to some extent, but careful planning and considerable technical expertise is needed to put all the available materials together into *one* repository that meets a wide variety of needs.

A steep learning curve: technical know-how, long-term sustainability, crowdsourcing/assessing: As we started collecting and compiling existing online resources, therefore, we realised that we would have to engage more closely with language teachers on the ground before we could finish the work. We also realised that we needed to expand our technical know-how, and sought the aid of a specialized media technician/webdesign educator who was not originally on the team. Our goal is to become self-sufficient once we have learned enough to move the project forward both technically and in terms of the different stakeholders who we hope will become involved. In May 2017 we asked ACLA/CAAL members for their input; in November 2017 we presented the work-in-progress at the First Nations Language Keepers Conference in Saskatoon in order to elicit feedback from language teachers working in communities. The Knowledge Synthesis Grant funding we have received, while essential as a way to kick-start the technical groundwork needed to start building the repository as well as to get the consultation process off the ground, is only the launchpad for what we envision as a long-term, low-cost grassroots resource. Our next step will be to seek sustainability through new funding sources and eventually to move the repository into being completely crowdsourced by users and regularly assessed by communities.

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CONTEXT

Due to “a succession of colonial government incursions, including genocide, forced relocation of villages, linguistic imperialism, prohibition of Indigenous economic, social, and political systems, and enforced enrolment of children in Indian residential schools,” most Indigenous languages in Canada are not likely to survive down through the generations as community languages without the help of massive revitalization efforts (Ball & McIvor, 2013). Only Inuktitut, Nêhiyawêwin (Cree) and Anishnaabemowin (Ojibway) are considered sufficiently strong to be able to survive into the 22nd century. This is a reality which Indigenous peoples in Canada understand only too well. Decades of reflection and research (Atleo & Fitznor, 2010; Jacobs, 1998; Kirkness, 1998; RCAP, 1996; Richards & Maracle, 2002) have been spent looking at the challenges faced by Indigenous communities that want their languages to be spoken by current and future generations of bilingual youth, not just by older speakers.

What is new and noteworthy is that there is now also a growing wider Canadian acknowledgement of settler colonialism and its ongoing effects on Indigenous peoples in Canada. Canada’s 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC, 2015), aided by renewed top-down political resolve, has helped fuel a national public debate around relationships between Indigenous and settler Canadians. The TRC resulted in 94 widely publicized Calls to Action highlighting the responsibility that settler Canadians and Canadian institutions and organizations have for working towards reconciliation. A number of the calls pertain specifically to language and culture (Calls 13-17). These calls highlight several ways in which professional language educators in Canada can participate.

At its 2016 AGM (Annual General Meeting), the Canadian Association of Applied Linguistics / *L’Association canadienne de linguistique appliquée* (ACLA/CAAL) voted to work towards reconciliation by supporting the development of Indigenous language teachers, Indigenous language degree and diploma programs at college and university level, and the work of researchers, educators, and students in the maintenance, revitalization, and strengthening of Indigenous languages. This resolution has now become part of the association’s official mandate (<http://www.aclacaal.org/statement/>). It has aroused a desire to support Indigenous language work among our 150-200 members nationwide.

However, the majority of the membership are settler applied linguists. They have very little knowledge or understanding of Indigenous contexts in Canada. Very few of the membership are Indigenous-identified. For change to happen, ACLA/CAAL members as well as thousands of second language (L2) teachers across Canada must be better informed about Indigenous language issues.

As ACLA/CAAL members in leadership positions within the association, we know our members well. Members tend to assume that the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages by and for Indigenous communities will likely draw upon the theoretical frameworks, bodies of literature and pedagogical principles developed in and for settler contexts. Due to their own limited awareness of the colonial nature of so many educational projects, some members may further assume that their offers of help with second language program design and delivery and/or related research will be welcomed by Indigenous communities who are still living with the violent effects of government incursions.

These types of naïve settler assumptions could lead to a great deal of well-intentioned harm being done (Sarkar, 2017; Sterzuk & Mulholland, 2011). It is Indigenous communities who must determine the terms under which collaboration can go forward (Working Better Together, 2015). This is as true for language acquisition research contexts as it is for second-language pedagogical contexts. *ACLA/CAAL members urgently need to educate themselves about Indigenous research ethics* and about how our “different histories and experiences position us in relation to each other” (Donald, 2009). There has been up until now no easily accessible compilation of the relevant material. This project stems from that lack.

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IMPLICATIONS

The existence and widespread publicization of a free online resource repository on Indigenous language issues and Indigenous research ethics, set up to allow eventual ongoing shaping by users and crowdsourcing/crowd-based evaluation, will:

- demonstrate to users the potential of the potential of the internet to democratize access to useful information on this topic for *all* stakeholders (Indigenous and non; academic and “lay”) with an interest or potential interest in Indigenous languages and Indigenous language revitalization
- motivate users to contribute their own materials and to become part of an ongoing long-term professional learning community online
- help build up a Canada-wide (and possibly also international) network for this language work
- provide users with one (we hope there will be many such) online gathering point around which activism and language teaching/learning in Canada can go forward at low cost or no cost for materials; this is important because of the near-absence of federal and provincial government commitment to long-term funding for Indigenous languages
- make it more feasible for:
 - (1) Indigenous knowledge keepers and elders to be able to direct interested community members and outsiders to the right kind of resources for the seeker in question, when information about Indigenous language revitalization and Indigenous research ethics is sought, no matter by whom;
 - (2) Indigenous teachers working in their communities to have more to draw on in their teaching and more links with other people doing the same kind of work—they will be better equipped to train other speakers to be teachers;
 - (3) settler Canadians to have easily accessible ways to find out about what is happening in communities so they can start to turn the tide of public opinion (ordinary people don’t think much about language and how important it is; tools to raise awareness are needed)
 - (4) applied linguists like the members of ACLA/CAAL and indeed L2 teachers all across the country to start to hear about and to promote the welfare of Indigenous languages, so that the rising generation of language-focused academics will be aware of the issues (and will vote for politicians who care about them) in ways that are not, to our knowledge, typical of the already-tenured generation

We will then be in a better position to move toward significant changes at policy level, on the model of some current initiatives across the prairie provinces to provide opportunities to all children to be exposed to Indigenous languages, not just Indigenous children. While we hope that Indigenous communities and teachers themselves will be the most consistent users of the resource repository we are building, we are also working to build into the website ease of access for a wide variety of users, including non-Indigenous parents, teachers and children. In pre-internet days (1965-1995) it took ten or twenty years for the benefits of French immersion programs to become well enough known among parents and educators for the groundswell of interest to catch on widely in Canadian educational circles, to a point where now, the learning of French to advanced levels of proficiency is part of everyday education for young Canadians from widely diverse geographic, socioeconomic and ethnocultural backgrounds all across the country. We suspect that it will not take that long for settler Canadians to realize how valuable a knowledge of one or more Indigenous languages can be for themselves or their children, once given no-strings access to the resources needed to start the learning process.

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APPROACH

At its inception, this project had as its primary goal to provide tools that will help make it possible for settler applied linguists and other L2 language educators in Canada to better inform themselves. Responsible self-education and critical reflection on privilege, whiteness, and settler-colonialism is the first step that professional applied linguists and L2 classroom teachers must take, if they are to start building healthy, reciprocal relationships with Indigenous educators and communities in Canada engaged in language maintenance and revitalization work (Lewis, 2016).

Among the “best practices” we are exploring are those related to the building of Indigenous/non-Indigenous relationships, what Willy Ermine (2007) describes as “ethical space”, Dwayne Donald (2009) refers to as “ethical relationality” and Shawn Wilson (2007) has referred to as “relational accountability.” The importance of building and maintaining relationships is typically much better theorized and actualized in Indigenous tradition and scholarship (Kovach, 2009) than on the Western side. Settler academics are the ones who badly need to learn about this (Castleden et al, 2012).

As Donald (2012) has said, “Ethical space is a space of possibility. This space offers a venue to slip out of our allegiances, to detach from the circumscriptive limits of colonial frontier logics, and enact a theory of human relationality that does not require assimilation or deny Indigenous subjectivity.”

With our team of research assistants, therefore, we set out therefore to explore this space through the available free online resources we have been able to gather together, partly from our past experience as academics working in Western-defined applied linguistics subfields (second language acquisition, sociolinguistics) but much more through the additional fields that have opened up through Indigenous/non-Indigenous collaboration. This is still very much a work in progress.

In addition to pursuing online and library research, we are continuing consultations with Indigenous language teacher-researchers at Cree and Saulteaux communities in Saskatchewan and plan to open up the consultation to other communities when we present this work at the First Nation Language Keepers Conference in Saskatoon in late November 2017 (abstract accepted 8 September 2017); William Cook, team member and Cree language teacher, presenting). We anticipate that other forms of consultation through conference presentation and at other venues will follow.

In late May 2017 we presented the work-in-progress to the ACLA/CAAL executive and membership for their input as well. We have needed frequent pauses to reflect; the conflicting nature of the demands placed on the kind of resource we are building by Indigenous communities and by professional academics have meant that issues of graphic design, layout, queryability and scalability need to be very carefully thought out. An expert in this domain (Tom Fullerton, experienced website designer/media tech educator at McGill’s Faculty of Education and elsewhere, including with Indigenous groups in the North as an independent consultant) was brought into the project as a consultant, but only in August 2017, once we had fully grasped the need.

At this point, therefore, we are conceiving of this work not as a project that will be over in December 2018 when Knowledge Synthesis funding is no longer available, but as one that will at least be well launched by then and able to sustain itself (because there will be added interest by people who want to contribute, and solid technical know-how that will have been laid down) and that will continue to grow.

We consider, furthermore, that this approach combines the “Aboriginal knowledge” goals of SSHRC in this program with SSHRC’s well-known “Emerging Technologies” focus (2015 Knowledge Synthesis Grants competition), so should be even more attractive to future funders, as well as highly compatible with ongoing crowd-sourcing and crowd-assessing.

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RESULTS

We have gone some way toward the compiling of a body of public-domain based resources on language revitalization and Indigenous research ethics for the express use of ACLA/CAAL and other applied linguists in their sphere of influence (such as the members of the American Association of Applied Linguistics and/or the *Association internationale de linguistique appliquée*); to make these resources permanently and freely available online in forms easily usable by settler applied linguists and language educators (including L2 classroom teachers and applied linguistics graduate students, a large population across Canada); and to give them wide publicity in the coming years, starting with major conferences and continuing through other forms of awareness-raising and active education among our members.

We are currently in the process of collecting materials in easily accessible form through a dedicated website that will be linked to the official ACLA/CAAL site. This work is in line with the statement adopted at the ACLA/CAAL 2016 AGM, to the effect that, in addition to the other details of the new resolution sketched above, we “commit our efforts to work towards reconciliation by supporting the development of Indigenous language teachers and... language curricula with Aboriginal content and perspectives,” along with “the integration of education for reconciliation into teacher education programs (building intercultural understanding, empathy, and respect; supporting language teaching that takes into account residential schools and Aboriginal history)” (<http://www.aclacaal.org/statement/>).

Originally we had planned to work on ways to transform this package of resources along lines that might make it potentially useful to Indigenous language educators at a later stage, in line with the sub-theme (under *Education and research capacity*) of “How should Aboriginal Peoples and other Canadians build and enhance capacity by and with Aboriginal communities to engage in and benefit from mutually respectful research?” However, as we got deeper into the sourcing and compiling work needed for this project, we became aware that the most important users of the repository we set out to create would be Indigenous language teachers themselves. The input of William Cook and Denise Runns, Indigenous teachers from communities in Saskatchewan (Cree and Saulteaux respectively), research assistants on the project, sent the work in a slightly different direction from what we had originally planned. We now recognize that we want the repository we are creating to be just as useful to Indigenous language keepers, communities and teachers as to settler applied linguists in our professional association. The need is as, if not more, pressing. This realization could not have been rushed, as we now see in retrospect. Although this put us behind on our planned timeline, it was essential to the eventual usefulness of the work. After seven or eight months of working together on this Knowledge Synthesis project (from mid-January through late August 2017) therefore, our team succeeded in laying the groundwork for the task ahead. Essential relationships are in place for long-term sustainable work.

However, our online resource repository is still a long way from completion. Key aspects of graphic design, queryability and scalability have yet to be decided on and implemented at the website construction level. This will be our major task during fall 2017. Once these issues have been resolved, we will proceed to populate the site with the resources we have been bringing together. These now number in the hundreds (see Additional Resources section, below); we anticipate that this number will increase rapidly over time, especially once we are able to invite users to contribute and upload as well.

One task remaining to be addressed is the writing of original texts designed to guide potential users of the resource to the information they would find most useful, and to then help them in the use of that information, across a wide range of purposes and populations. Additional funding may be required.

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STATE OF KNOWLEDGE**Knowledge strengths**

We now have a well-developed idea of the state of existing resources and ways to compile them.

After working together for the better part of a year, our team has built some solid assets:

- first, itself. Team-building and learning to work together took some time, especially since some of our members are in Regina and some are in Montreal, with very few opportunities to cross that gap. Although in fact we have never been able to have all team members in the same room together, we feel that we have nonetheless managed to create a stable working relationship through frequent emailing, texting, phone calls, and occasional virtual online meetings. In the context of Indigenous working styles, where face to face communication is much more the norm, we consider that this represents a substantial achievement.
- an extensive collection of materials ready for uploading, assembled mostly by our Indigenous graduate research assistants; other members of the team helped as much as we were able to manage, but the time constraints on full-time faculty members necessarily limited our ability to participate in this part of the work as much as we would have liked to
- many pointers towards other materials not yet accessed but which we look forward to gathering together and uploading this fall
- an incipient network of potential users across a wide variety of backgrounds, including Indigenous language teachers, elders and other community members; academic linguists who are members of ACLA/CAAL, and their graduate students (many of whom are working on the ground as practising ESL or FSL second language teachers) and associated networks
- the beginnings of a great deal of new specialized technical knowledge among team members and an understanding of how to add to this knowledge through training over time (essential for the long-term upkeep and future expansion of the resource repository)

Knowledge gaps

Need for more and continued consultation with Indigenous language workers from across Canada.

There are several areas in which we still need to expand and consolidate our knowledge:

- an understanding of access and use habits, preferences and desired skills acquisition pathways on the part of potential Indigenous users of the resource repository, especially elders (whose ways of using—and even reliable access to—digital technologies may be very different across communities and different from those of younger Indigenous users), Indigenous language teachers, language keepers, other creators of resource websites in Indigenous contexts, and current or future learners of Indigenous languages both embedded in their communities and out of them (in urban or other less connected contexts)
- a thorough grounding in the technical knowledge that will underlie the ongoing upkeep and expansion of the resource repository, on the part of more than just one already-experienced team member
- last but not least, a “map” of possible funding avenues so that we can build sustainability for this project over time and publicize it across all possible stakeholders with the assurance that it will stay in place and stay usable for as long as it will be deemed necessary and useful.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The website itself, including the URL: <http://indigenoulanguagelearning.ca/>—this is the landing page for the project and leads to many other linked pages (the number will grow into the foreseeable future).

The resources listed below are among the ones we have found most useful, and are therefore included here rather than in the References section at the end. They have been carefully chosen.

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KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

Our initial plan was designed to engage members of ACLA/CAAL in the mobilization and sharing of knowledge on language revitalization and best practices in Indigenous research ethics. This goal required that we use a number of traditional and non-traditional dissemination methods to mobilize the sharing of the synthesis results with our users. We built on several previous examples of knowledge mobilization our team has conducted in the areas of language revitalization, reconciliation and best practices in ethical relationality. These previous experiences in knowledge mobilization informed our plan for knowledge mobilization. We organized the plan into four delivery approaches: 1) Public Domain-Based Resources; 2) Conferences; 3) Social Media; and 4) Interactive face-to-face workshops.

Public Domain-Based Resources

- We are in the process of compiling, and will then work on the ongoing evaluation of, a body of public-domain based resources on language revitalization and Indigenous research ethics for the use of:
 - Indigenous knowledge keepers and Indigenous elders working within their communities
 - Indigenous language teachers working inside and outside their communities to pass their languages on to learners of all ages, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous
 - Second language teachers of other languages, both with and without formal training, and including preservice teachers
 - Academic applied linguists at our professional association, ACLA/CAAL, and others in their sphere of influence (such as the members of the American Association of Applied Linguistics, AAAL, and/or the *Association internationale de linguistique appliquée*, AILA).
- These resources are being collected in easily accessible form through a dedicated website that will eventually be linked to the official ACLA/CAAL site (confirmed), as well as to other sites, e.g., band websites, school boards, social networking sites for Indigenous educators/second language teachers (not yet confirmed). The dedicated website will include: scholarly articles; pedagogical materials created by the team in document, audio and video form; links to other sites; and dedicated tools intended to walk users through the use of the materials and direct them to related resources elsewhere online (e.g. Working Better Together, 2015). Guides for English and French classroom second language teachers at all levels, and for undergraduate and graduate instructors in second language teacher education and applied linguistics graduate programs, will make up an important part of the resource package.
- We will make these resources permanently available online in forms easily understood and used by applied linguists and language educators (including classroom second language teachers and applied linguistics graduate students, a population of many thousands across Canada) and will give them wide publicity in the coming years through our routine professional activities. ACLA/CAAL members can be found on the faculty of every Canadian university and are mandated by provincial Ministries of Education with direct responsibility for designing, staffing, and overseeing second language teacher education programs leading to certification for the public schooling system. Second language teachers can be found in every Canadian primary or secondary school, as well as in a wide range of community-based contexts. The resource package we are compiling therefore has the potential to reach a very broadly based population of educators at primary, secondary and tertiary level and beyond, and hence their students as well, all across Canada.

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Conferences

- We promoted a special launch event as part of the ACLA/CAAL 2017 annual conference at Ryerson University (on 30 May 2017), as an open Congress event; costs were minimal, included in the regular conference budget. The launch event took the form of an hour-long Question and Answer panel discussion. Sarkar, Sterzuk and the GRAs presented the project vision, introduced the audience to the online resources, and invited ACLA members to participate in an eventual webinar workshop.
- We made an announcement through the *Association internationale de linguistique appliquée* (AILA) triennial conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in July 2017.

Social Media

- We will use social media to promote the public-domain based resources. Sterzuk's personal twitter account (@andreasterzuk: 640 followers) and ACLA/CAAL's twitter account (@ACLA_CAAL: 1464 followers) will be used to promote the materials (including to public and parapublic audiences)
- We will also work closely with McGill's Media Office. McGill is the #1 most-followed university in Canada, with 25% more followers than the second-ranked school (<https://blog.twitter.com/2016/canadian-schools-take-to-twitter-for-back-to-school-2016>) and also ranks in the top 10 for Facebook. Through McGill, we will reach out to Canadian NGOs
- Videos from the launch events and workshops will be disseminated via ACLA's Youtube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJnLSxILlJlHFQ0forbN-Q>)
- Twitter chats were organized and hosted leading up to ACLA/CAAL 2017
- The ACLA/CAAL listserv will be used to promote the website-based resources to membership.

Workshops

- A webinar presentation will be held via Adobe Connect designed to show ACLA/CAAL members and other applied linguists how they can use the resource package in their regular graduate and undergraduate second language teacher education courses. The webinar will include examples of course outlines, lesson plans, and reports about other users' experiences and practices
- We will liaise with school boards through our contacts to set up professional development workshops for in-service teachers so they can learn about the resource package and ways it can be used in their classrooms, starting at the end of the 2016-17 school year and continuing into subsequent years (using ACLA/CAAL internal funding and/or funding to be applied for from other sources, e.g. at federal level, the SSHRC Connection Grant and/or new Partnership Engage programs; Heritage Canada's Aboriginal Languages Initiative under the Aboriginal People's Programs; other funding opportunities to be sought through provincial Ministries of Education and, especially, at local school board level, once the repository has been developed to the appropriate level and teacher guides have been incorporated).

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CONCLUSION

Despite the occasional setback during our initial ten-month working period, November 2016–August 2017, we consider that on the whole this Knowledge Synthesis Project has now been successfully launched, although it is still some way from being finished. We know much more about how to conceive, design and populate a resource repository website with the very specific technical characteristics required than we did at the outset. We have gathered together an impressive collection of materials that we will be uploading over a period of some months. We have also built relationships of mutual trust and empathy among members of the team, which at the time of writing comprises two faculty members (Mela Sarkar of McGill University and Andrea Sterzuk of the University of Regina), two Indigenous research assistants who are also language teachers with close ties to their home communities in Saskatchewan (William Cook and Denise Runns, teachers of Cree and Saulteaux respectively, both M.Ed. students at the University of Regina), and an experienced web designer and media tech educator, Tom Fullerton of Bright Ideas Consulting, Montreal.

A final stage of work on the site, while Knowledge Synthesis Grant funding is still available, will consist of translation into French of key signposting elements of the website and some of the ancillary documents (teachers' guides, other guides for users, publicity material), though not, of course, of all the resources—the cost would be prohibitive.

We would like to note in concluding that there were circumstances beyond the control of the team that meant that our start-up in the Winter and Spring/Summer terms of 2017 was slower and more difficult than anticipated and made it impossible for us to keep to our initial projected timeline. By Spring 2018 we were back on track and ready to continue the work as well as to seek sustainable funding sources.

We all remain extremely committed to and enthusiastic about our work together on this resource-building, capacity-building project and foresee useful, sustainable outcomes in the near future.

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