Establishing Equitable Partnerships: An Endangered Language Revitalization Model

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Northwest Indian Language Institute
University of Oregon

Research Colloquium Lang and Lit
University of Toronto, March 10, 2022
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
Context

Endangerment and Revitalization

Extractive Practices

Two Examples of Equitable Partnerships

Spheres of influence and Analysis of Actors
Context
Endangerment and Revitalization
Extractive Practices
Examples of Equitable Partnerships
Spheres of influence and Analysis of Actors
Activists topple pioneer statues on University of Oregon campus

Dana Sparks dsparks@registerguard.com
Published 7:58 p.m. PT June 13, 2020

The Pioneer statue lies on the porch of Johnson Hall after it was toppled by protestors Saturday night. [Andy Nelson/The Register-Guard] - registerguard.com Andy Nelson

Activists on Saturday night toppled two pioneer statues on the University of Oregon campus. A third statue remained intact.
At the 1919 dedication, the President of the Oregon Historical Society a the virtues of the Anglo-Saxon race, stating,

"the Anglo-Saxon race is a branch of the Teutonic race. It was and is a liberty-loving race. It believes in the protection of life and of liberty an in the rights of property and the pursuit of happiness. This race has large powers of assimilation, and its great ideas of liberty and of the rights of mankind caused other races to become a part of it, so it became a people as well as a race."
The Northwest Indian Language Institute (NILI)

Those involved with NILI come from a variety of backgrounds and specialize in a variety of areas including:
The Northwest Indian Language Institute (NILI)
Context

Endangerment and Revitalization

Extractive Practices

Examples of Equitable Partnerships

Spheres of influence and Analysis of Actors
Boarding School Era

"In the difference of language today lies two-thirds of our trouble ... Schools should be established, which children should be required to attend; their barbarous dialects should be blotted out and the English language substituted".

J. D. C. Atkins - Annual Report by the Commissioner on Indian Affairs for the year 1868
Boarding School Legacy

Individuals
- Loss of identity
- Low self esteem
- No sense of safety
- Institutionalized
- Difficulty forming healthy relationships

Families
- Loss of parental power
- Near destruction of extended family system

Tribal Communities
- Loss of sense of community
- Loss of language
- Loss of tribal traditions and ceremonies

Tribal Nations
- Weakened nations structure
- Depleted numbers for enrollment
Boarding School Legacy

2014 report on Native youth

- More than 1 of 3 American Indian and Alaska Native children live in poverty
- American Indian/Alaskan Native high school graduation rate is 67%, the lowest of any racial/ethnic demographic group
- Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools have a graduation rate of 53%, (compared to a national average of 80%)
- Suicide is 2.5 times the national rate—for Native youth in the 15 to 24 year old age group.
Native language learning within a rich cultural context is a **protective factor** that supports wellness and academic achievement of Native students.
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Native American Tribes and Language Groups

Tribes
1. Clatskanie
2. Chinook
3. Sahaptin
4. Cayuse
5. Nez Perce
6. Tillamook
7. Kalapuya
8. Alsea
9. Molalla
10. Northern Paiute
11. Sluslaw
12. Coos
13. Tututni
14. Takelma
15. Klamath/Modoc
16. Shasta

Language
The color represents language groups. The names represent the dialects spoken in that group.

This area inhabited by speakers of: Yukichetunne, Tutuni, Mikonotunne, Chemetunne, Chetleshin, Kwaishhtunetunne
Language Revitalization in Oregon

Native American Tribes and Language Groups

- Nez Perce
- Umatilla (Ichishkiin)
- Walla Walla (Ichishkiin)
- Warm Springs (Tenino)
- Northern Paiute
- Klamath
- Modoc
- Takelma
- Southern Athabaskan
- Hanis and Miluk
- Chinuk Wawa
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Population (*on reservation)</th>
<th># of Speakers/Age 1st; Bilingual; 2nd/apprentices) other (school Ls)</th>
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<th>State of Igl when learning</th>
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<tr>
<td>Burns</td>
<td>Northern Paiute</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>? &gt;100; ?L2</td>
<td>Elder; all ages</td>
<td>No home transmission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coos</td>
<td>Hanis, Miluk Coos</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>0 (1960s); 2 L2</td>
<td>Teenager, adult 30</td>
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<td>Coquille</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Chinuk Wawa</td>
<td>5200</td>
<td>0 (1990s); 6 fluent L2; pre/high school Ls</td>
<td>Preteen (+12); 20s</td>
<td>+/-10 L1</td>
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NOTE: Locations on this map represent a mix of general area where the languages were traditionally spoken and where there are current revitalization efforts.
LR fundamentally different

The Teacher-Learner

These are the homelands

Forced vs. voluntary assimilation

ex) Russification of Ukraine
Context

Endangerment and Revitalization

Extractive Practices

Examples of Equitable Partnerships

Spheres of influence and Analysis of Actors
Extractive Linguistics

Knowledge as a commodity

Logic of Domination

- European forms of knowledge spread
- Indigenous knowledge suppressed
- Native informants trained

Language as object divorced from the community who speaks it.

Ex) Revitalizing from documentation
Ex) Miccosukee language
Evolving Paradigms

ON > FOR > WITH > BY
Evolving Paradigms

ON > FOR > WITH > BY

D-D.A+R

Description and Documentation, then Archiving plus Revitalization
Evolving Paradigms

ON > FOR > WITH > BY

D-D.A+R

Description and Documentation, then Archiving plus Revitalization

COLANG 2022
Context
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Examples of Equitable Partnerships
Spheres of influence and Analysis of Actors
Ichishkíin Language

With Nez Perce is the Sahaptian family.

Collectively is the largest language group, landwise and number of L1 (50+) and bilingual speakers (4 adults), and L2 (children, youth, young adults, adults (100+) learners, and learner-teachers, in Washington and Oregon.

Dictionaries and grammars/grammatical sketches exist for Yakama, Umatilla and Warm Springs dialects/languages.
Class Wáḵ’amu Project – Linguistics Seminar

Linguistics 407/507 Seminar

“Language Revitalization: A community perspective”

Winter Quarter 2015

15 students, both UG and Gr

Mixed Native and Non-native
Class Wáŋ’amu Project – Linguistics Seminar

• Goals
  • Training linguistics students
  • Curriculum development
  • Language documentation

• What is compelling to all the participants?
  • Projects go to communities
  • Experience documenting language and creating teaching materials
  • Contributing to the corpus of Ichishkíin texts
Class *Wáḵ’amu* Project Products – Linguistics Seminar

- addressed the request of a Yakima Ichishkiin speaking Elder to document a traditional food by creating teaching materials
- documented in Ichishkiin *wáq’amu* (‘camas’) identification, life cycle, gathering, preparation and use
- developed lesson plans and materials with the input of tribal teachers
- curriculum was piloted at a Yakama reservation high school and at the UO
- refined at NILI’s summer program, which led to additional documentation
- materials are now part of the Ichishkiin language curriculum,
- are used as materials to further document language and processes involving *wáq’amu*. 
Class Wáḵ’amu Project – Linguistics Seminar

- Student created
  - identification
  - life cycle
  - gathering
  - preparation and preservation
# Class Wáḵ’amu Project – Linguistics Seminar

## Camas Lifecycle

### Standards
- Camas lifecycle: tracking how plants cycle carbon and nitrogen within an ecosystem.
- Evaluating conditions necessary for rapid population growth.

### Objectives
- By the end of the unit, students will be able to describe, in detail, the lifecycle of the Camas plant.
- Students will understand Camas in a biological, ecological, and cultural context.
- Students will be able to describe, in detail, the lifecycle of the Camas plant.

### Outline
- See attached lesson plan.

### Materials
- Camas diagrams from identification unit.
- Photo cards of camas lifecycle.
- Camas plants, if possible.
- Worksheets and quizzes.

### Step One:
- **Plant Vocabulary (Review)**
  - Show students a diagram of the Camas plant (or an actual mature plant, if possible).
  - Ask students to name the parts of the plant.
  - Teach the vocabulary for plant parts.

### Step Two:
- **Plant Lifecycle**
  - Show students pictures of the Camas lifecycle, ask them to order them as best they can.
  - Explain correct order to class, step by step.
    - Teach which parts of the plant are involved in the Nitrogen cycle, detailed on attached sheet.
    - Teach/review order/numbering and fill in vocabulary.

### Assessment
- Have students match descriptions of the stages to the correct order.

### Sam Brazil

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Plan Title/Focus/Topic</th>
<th>Camas Lifecycle – Lesson Plan 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Context &amp; Institutions:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Course: Life Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Length of Class: 30 minutes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Students:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Course Goals: Students will understand camas in a biological, ecological, and cultural context.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Text/materials/technology: Camas diagrams, lifecycle photo cards, life Camas plants, chalkboard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. What students know already: Students know Camas vocabulary related to identification and plant parts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Terminal objectives: Students will be able to describe, in detail, the lifecycle of the Camas plant.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Assessment: Assessment will be based on engagement and verbal mastery of vocab.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>Activity and Objectives</th>
<th>Step-by-Step Description</th>
<th>Type of Interaction</th>
<th>Materials/Technology Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 min</td>
<td>Check-in and Announcements</td>
<td>T will check for HW</td>
<td>T will give announcements/agenda, writing them on board.</td>
<td>T &gt; S</td>
<td>Chalkboard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 min</td>
<td>Warmup/Review</td>
<td>T will review the vocabulary from the Camas identification unit with Ss by verbally quizzing them, reviewing forgotten vocab as necessary.</td>
<td>T will ask Ss to retrieve their filled-out Camas diagrams</td>
<td>T &gt; S</td>
<td>Camas diagrams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 min</td>
<td>Lifecycle Picture Cards</td>
<td>Ss will learn basic lifecycle through picture cards</td>
<td>T will hand out picture cards to Ss.</td>
<td>S &gt; T</td>
<td>Picture cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>Assign HW</td>
<td>T will inform Ss of a short quiz the next day on the order of camas development.</td>
<td>T &gt; S</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wáḵ’amu Tsáxtsam
Tun íchi iwá?
Wapiitatát’ashamatash
Áyat iwíip’iksha wák’amu támaktay.

The woman is pressing out the liquid in the camas for baking in the ground.
A Message from Tuxámshish to Yakama Students

Paysh pam aw átk’ixsha shúkwaat íkwtn xnit
Maybe you want a lesson on this kind of root.

I know that íkuuk awínshma k’a’áwpa paxníxa ku pam shixki timnáki áxnita
I know that these days men dig and you all will dig with good hearts.

Aw pam ku uyt awinanúuta ku pam áwatí’awita wák’amunan
Now you first will go to it and you will request (of the) camas

Shix nam íchi tkwátat pa’ánichi íchna tiichámpa Tamanwilaanmí
‘The Creator put you, this good food, here on his land

ku mash t’ilks wínpa imanák inmíyay tawtnúkitay wáwnakwhashhay
And soon I will take you as medicine for my body

ku mash kw’alánúusha imýúuk amkú wák’ishwit imínk pinánisha inmíyay wák’ishwitay
And I will be grateful to you when you give yourself for my life’

Íkush nam áwinpta amkú uyt ámaatl’kta
This is how you will handle it when you first dig it up with the root digger.
Documentation projects

Wák’amu Project student-created materials circle around to serve as prompts for additional documentation.

- Materials are compelling to elders
- Provides an example of what can be done and how it can be done
- Builds trust in academic institutions
- Involves multiple elders and contexts; provides valuable feedback about revisions and expansion of topic
Context

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Examples of Equitable Partnerships

Spheres of influence and Analysis of Actors
Figure 1. Spheres of ideologies

Ex) Objective impartial science > social work > social engineering
Class Wáḵ’amu Project – Actors
Actors

At UO  Professor, students, Elder, videographer trainer, Ichishkíin language instructor, Ichishkíin students, Associate Dean of Humanities, Dean of College of Arts and Sciences, Professor of/head of Linguistics Department, Professor of Education and Yakama Tribal member

At Summer Institute  3 Ichishkíin Elders for Yakama and Umatilla tribes, 15 students, tribal members from Umatilla, Yakama and Warm Springs tribes, 2 UO student volunteers

At Tribe  Ichishkíin Elder 3 Ichishkíin language teachers, 50 high school students, 15 university students
At UO: Elder

Ling Professors

Ed Professor (Yakama tribal member)

Language Instructor

Students

Deans

International/Worldwide

Federal

Oregon

Local

Teaching of language

Tribal

University Of Oregon

NILI Outreach
At UO:
- Elder Ling Professors
- Ed Professor (Yakama tribal member)
- Language Instructor
- Students
- Deans

At Summer Institute: Tribal Elders - Students, Tribal Members, Student Volunteers
At UO: Elder Ling Professors Ed Professor (Yakama tribal member) Language Instructor Students Deans

At Summer Institute: Tribal Elders - Students, Tribal members, Student volunteers

At Tribe: Elders, Ich Teachers, Students - High School & University
Actors
Comments
University Dean

...offering Ichishkiin gives our students another option for language study and contributes to the UO’s diverse, demanding, and high-quality curriculum. That kind of curriculum makes us a strong Research 1 institution. Ichishkiin study serves students who want to learn, in particular, about Native languages and culture because it is their own language and culture, because of an interest in the Pacific Northwest cultures, and/or because of myriad other interests.
Tribal Leader

the intellectual project of participating in Ichishkiin language documentation and revitalization serves as a scholarly contribution as well as social justice praxis toward building a “moral community” that recognizes the inherent worth of Indigenous languages as invaluable contributions to a society that values diverse worldviews.
University Instructor
The communities have not historically been well served by academic institutions. With respect, trust and time, the tribal communities... see benefits in collaborating with universities. **Today, these communities are our partners in research, are regaining some trust in the mainstream educational system and enhance our collective research.**
Tribal HS Teacher

That was the first time I had been introduced to linguistics as a educational discipline. As a bonus, during my initial NILI session, linguistic terms and examples were provided to me in Ichishkin. It was at this time I saw linguistics as a way of helping me better understand, teach, and more quickly learn Ichishkin. I saw linguistics as a tool to help unlock the code that holds languages together.
Graduate Student
My connections with the tribes and the university have been strengthened. For my senior thesis of my undergrad, I worked with a tribal elder and that connection was made through NILI. Also just gaining so many personal connections...helps bridge gaps.
Tribal HS/Undergrad Student
I have really enhanced my language learning experience because I have been exposed to classes and people who are so knowledgeable about Indigenous languages. It has also inspired me to work with my Indigenous language. ...helped get to know the welcoming community here at the university before I came in the Fall.
Elder
Seminar
Heritage College
Teachers
Umatilla Tribe
Yakama Tribe
Warm Springs Tribe

International/Worldwide
Federal
Oregon
Local
Tribal
University Of Oregon
Seminar
Ich Class
Elder
Heritage College
SI Class
Wapato HS
Welcome to Northwest Indian Language Institute Resource Center

The Northwest Indian Language Institute (NILI) provides Native language teachers and community members with training in language teaching, materials and curriculum development, benchmarks creation, and linguistics. With tribal partners, NILI supports and strengthens language preservation efforts by establishing collaborative, on-going projects which meet the specific needs and desires of each language community. Learn More >>

Click on your Language Community below to view your Digital Heritage items.

Ichishkiin  Chinuk Wawa  Lushootseed  Nuu-wee-ya'
Impacts/Benefits - to Language Work at the Tribe

- Builds capacity at schools and tribes
- Is multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary
- Develops strategies for institutional relationships and Ichishkíin language revitalization
- Is based on direct participation with and by Ichishkíin communities
- Creates a collaborative space for Ichishkíin elders, teachers, adult and youth learners
Impacts/Benefits - to the Academy

- Indigenizes the academy
- Provides a **pipeline (ACK!)** for Native students to attend higher ed institutions
- The class and summer institute maintains a continuity of developing teaching and linguistic materials and relationships with elders, teachers and learners, tribes
- Supports cross-institutional agreement of University and Tribal MOU
- Materials are accessible in resource bank at UO
BAMA: STOP THIS PIPELINE OR THE PEOPLE WILL
NILI as a River
an interactive graphic to demonstrate
NILI's impact on bridging Native communities and the UO

Strong Indigenous Languages and Communities

Tribal language Interest

Elders

Language

Teachers

Language

Learners

NILI Tribal

Outreach &

Collaborations

Language

Revitalization

Advocates

UO Undergrad &

Native Students

Ichishkiín Language

Class

Native ARC &

Native Studies

Sapsik'wilá

Teacher Ed

NILI LRLS

online

NILI Online

NILI Summer

Institute

NILI High School

Youth Program

Ling MA and

PhD Students

LTS MA

Students

NILI Student

Workers

NILI Volunteers

NILI GEs

UO Community

Outreach

Conclusion - Working equitably on collaborative projects…

- strengthens existing partnerships and long standing tribal-institutional relationships
- helps break down barriers between academia and tribal communities
- is responsive to speech communities needs and
- promotes reciprocity
- honors and incorporates tribal values,
- promotes the human and linguistic rights of Native teachers, students and communities (Roskos 2004, Falcón and Jacob 2011, Brayboy et al. 2012).
- promotes sharing linguistic and cultural knowledge;
- products are improved, and relationships between academic and tribal institutions are strengthened
Instead of a linear diagram that moves towards a pre-established end goal, our Decolonizing Digital series focuses on a series of related elements that we can visualize with the following diagram:

This diagram is not a definitive way to "achieve" ID-Sov. ID-Sov is an effort which is both collaborative and community-driven. It is about recognizing and respecting the sovereignty and rights of Indigenous Peoples. Learn more at

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