Reviving Indigenous Voices: Ideologies, Narratives, and Methods
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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Danny Wyatt. May those who honor his passion for the Washo language continue to breathe new life into it.

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1 Thanks must go first to the indigenous language advocates who made this work possible: Shelley DePaul, Alfred “Bud” Lane, Wayne Newell, and the late Danny Wyatt. This project would not have been possible without the guidance of my advisor, K. David Harrison, who gave me invaluable advice, and shared his Washo interview materials with me. Thanks also to Marjorie Hunt, who co-conducted the interview with Bud Lane, and to Jeff Titon for sharing his Passamaquoddy interview materials. Thanks must also go to Jen Johnson, who shared her wealth of knowledge about the Siletz language with me. I owe tremendous gratitude to Maury Lander-Portnoy, Julia Fahl, and Hallie Garrison, who read and commented on drafts of this thesis. I am deeply grateful for the love and support of my friends and family, who kept me laughing and smiling throughout this experience. Lastly, in the spirit of acknowledging my own linguistic inheritance, I honor the memory of my grandmother, who first inspired my love of language.
Abstract.

Recently, the loss of indigenous languages worldwide has accelerated due to increased globalization and cross-cultural contact. North American indigenous languages have been especially vulnerable because native people in the U.S. and Canada lost their land and traditional livelihood involuntarily. Historically, these groups have been oppressed and disenfranchised by forces of national politics that have impinged on their indigenous sovereignty. Today, indigenous communities throughout North America are reclaiming their land, cultural identity, and political autonomy (Hinton and Hale 2001). For many of these communities, efforts toward language revitalization are part of a larger effort to maintain and revitalize cultural heritage.

This thesis examines community-based language revitalization efforts in four Native communities from across the United States: (1) Siletz Dee-ni, of Western Oregon, (2) Passamaquoddy of Northern Maine, (3) Lenape, historically of Eastern Pennsylvania and Northern Delaware, and (4) Washo of Nevada and California. To better understand how indigenous language advocates promote increased interest, pride in, and use of their heritage languages, I investigate the ways in which language attitudes and ideologies inform revitalization efforts. I draw my data from primary interviews co-conducted by myself (Siletz, Lenape) and from secondary materials from interviews collected by other scholars (Passamaquoddy, Washo) with key language advocates. I coded these interviews for common themes, and identified (a) language attitudes, (b) ideologies, and (c) strategies for effective linguistic and cultural revitalization, all embedded in the statements of these language advocates. With the hope of illuminating the ways in which language attitude and ideology influence the strategies used, and even affect the efficacy of revitalization, I identified six critical factors to investigate further: accommodation to English, technology, strategy, property, ineffability, and indigenous worldview.

I propose my own research as a remedy to a gap in the literature on language endangerment and revitalization: namely, that it often omits first-person narrative accounts of endangerment, revitalization, and language attitude and ideology. I discuss whether advocates accept Anglicized pronunciations of indigenous words, and how they accommodate English speakers when teaching their heritage languages. I examine the role of technology, with a particular emphasis on online talking dictionaries. I look at the dictionaries as a medium of language transmission, and use them as the basis for a brief investigation into lexical acculturation in three of my four case studies. I also consider strategies for teaching and maintaining indigenous language. In an effort to illuminate some of the unique insights that are gained when Native voices are added to the discourse on language revitalization, I discuss the value of language as an inherited cultural property, and consider the unique cultural and linguistic nuances that cannot be translated into another language effectively. I demonstrate the value of including Native narratives by showing that language revitalization is part of a larger effort to retain and celebrate indigenous identity and worldview.
1. Introduction

More than half of the 6,909 languages spoken in the world today are minority peoples’ languages (Ethnologue 2009, Tsunoda 2005). That is, they are not the languages of governments, education, or commerce. In these spheres, the dominance of major world languages such as English and Mandarin threatens the very existence of minority languages. Though language loss and linguistic shift occur throughout human history, the loss of indigenous languages has accelerated in recent years due to increased globalization and cross-cultural contact. Michael Krauss (1992) estimates that if language loss continues at the current rate, over half of the world’s languages will be extinct within the next hundred years.

Linguists and anthropologists who study minority languages and language endangerment have produced an extensive body of literature describing the plight of endangered languages worldwide (See Tsunoda 2005, Hinton and Hale 2001, Crystal 2000, Nettle and Romaine 2000, and Harrison 2007). They sometimes describe languages as “living entities” whose health must be attended to, if they are to survive and continue to be used by future generations of speakers. These scholars bring a sense of urgency and gravity to the phenomenon of language endangerment describing the value that linguistic diversity has for science, as well as for preservation of human cultural diversity. They draw on their own fieldwork and well-studied cases of language loss, documentation, and revitalization to provide frameworks that can be used to examine the extent of endangerment, as well as strategies that can be used to revitalize these languages.

Most of these authors describe the process of language loss and methods of revitalization using analogies and a paradigm that metaphorizes languages as living entities that will die if they
are not protected. This is a considerable contribution as it makes these accounts accessible to both scholars in other academic disciplines, and readers outside of academia. This is an important effort, however the focus of this paper is to address a troubling issue in the existing literature on endangered language revitalization. Much of this writing (aside from a few notable exceptions, see Harrison 2007 and Hinton 1994) neglects the voices of native people. Indigenous perspectives are excluded from the very literature that is intended to support linguistic and cultural revitalization within indigenous communities.

To better understand how indigenous communities promote increased interest in, add new speakers, and expand the domains of use of their heritage languages, I examine the key language attitudes and ideologies that underpin these outcomes associated with effective revitalization efforts. I seek insight into the critical, and often unexamined, factors that lead to renewed linguistic vitality in communities where endangered languages are spoken.

I develop a qualitative methodology to extract common themes from interviews with four North American indigenous language advocates. Listening to the voices of language advocates illuminated six qualitative factors not traditionally considered in the study of language revitalization.

2. Theory of Language Endangerment

There are several theoretical models that have been proposed to describe the severity and extent of language endangerment or loss in a given community. These theoretical models are also applied in the sense that they are largely based on particular cases of language obsolescence and shift. Because linguists have traditionally undertaken the study of language using scientific methods of inquiry, there has been considerable pressure to classify, quantify, and scale language
endangerment through models that invoke this scientific approach. In the discussion that follows I will present several models of language endangerment. I will highlight the aspects of language loss or change that are depicted by each of the models, as well as suggest certain limitations in the scope and nuance each model offers. Finally, I bring these models into conversation, and even confrontation with native views on language endangerment and revitalization. I seek to promote a dialogue between these theoretical models and the lived experience of language advocates, who advance a distinctly Native agenda.

Most of the existing literature on language endangerment classifies the severity of language peril based on the following criteria:

1. Number of fluent speakers (particularly of first language speakers)
2. Age of speakers (again, paying particular attention to first language speakers)
3. Transmission of the language to children, i.e. whether children learn the language at home from their parents, in school as part of compulsory education, or in other settings.
4. Functions of the language in community, i.e. whether the language is used in governing bodies, ceremonial settings, prayer, etc.

Each of the systems of classification presented in the discussion that follows emphasizes one of these four criteria, using it as the organizational focal point around which the analysis of language attrition centers.

2.1 Krauss 1992

Michael Krauss, in 1992, presented a paradigm that was mostly concerned with the degree of
language transmission to children:

(a) **Safe language:** a language that is likely to be still spoken by children in the year 2100.

(b) **Endangered language:** a language that will cease to be learned by children during the 21st Century.

c) **Moribund language:** A language that is, at present, no longer learned as a first language or no longer spoken by children.


This framework is particularly adept at addressing the importance of children’s language acquisition as a critical factor for language maintenance. Longevity, in terms of the health of a language, depends on the consistent addition of new speakers, particularly of new first language speakers. This framework concerns itself with continuity from generation to generation. However, it fails to evaluate the political or social role of language.

### 2.2 Fishman 1991

A framework that pays considerable attention to the way language functions or is evaluated in communities and societies, is that presented by Joshua Fishman, in 1991. The process of language change is described in terms of eight stages, using the following denotation: “Xish” refers to the name of any language, “Xmen” refers to the members of that language community, “Ymen” refers to the members of some other language community.

- **Stage 1:** (At least some) use of Xish in higher level education, occupational, governmental, and media efforts.
- **Stage 2:** Xish used in lower (but not higher) level spheres of governmental services and mass media.
Stage 3: Xish used in lower work sphere (outside of Xish neighborhood/community) involving interaction between Xmen and Ymen.

Stage 4: Xish used in lower education that meets the requirements of compulsory education laws.

Stage 5: There is Xish literacy in home, school, and community, but without extra-communal reinforcement of such literacy.

Stage 6: Intergenerational informal orality present in Xish, with demographic and institutional reinforcement. At this stage, Xish is the language used for the majority of informal spoken interactions between people of all generations. However, Yish may be used for matters of greater formality or technicality.

Stage 7: Most users of Xish are a socially integrated and ethnolinguistically active population, but they are beyond child-bearing age.

Stage 8: Most Xish speakers are socially isolated old folks.


In *Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages*, Fishman describes the way in which language users might move their languages to progressively lower numbered (less endangered) stages on the scale of endangerment. This scale, and the movement towards revitalization it proposes are useful to the extent that they address both speaker age, and the sorts of contexts in which it is used. Fishman suggests that in order to accurately assess the state of a language we need to pay attention not only to who speaks it, but also where it is used, and for what purposes.
2.3 Dixon 1991

R. M. W. Dixon, describing the plight of aboriginal languages of Australia, presents the following five stages of indigenous language loss and replacement with English. Here Language X represents an indigenous language:

*Stage 1:* Language X is used as a first language, in every imaginable domain, by a full community of at least 100 people.

*Stage 2:* Language X is still the first language for some, but is a second language for others.

*Stage 3:* Only a few old people still have X as their first language. English is the dominant language for most people in the community.

*Stage 4:* Nobody knows the full or original form of X. Some community members speak a modified version of Language X, with simplified grammar.

*Stage 5:* Everyone speaks English (at the exclusion of Language X).


While each of the models presented thus far does an excellent job of assessing language endangerment or loss with respect to a single criterion for evaluation, they are all limited for not drawing on multiple criteria and putting the insights that each criterion brings to bear in conversation with one another. In order to get an accurate and informative sense of the state of a language, we need a model that combines these criteria in order to present a more nuanced, multifaceted understanding of language endangerment. One model that effectively synthesizes multiple criteria, is that presented in Lindsay Whaley’s 2003 work.
2.4 Whaley 2003

Whaley assesses number and age of first language speakers, as well as the societal functions of language, and intergenerational language transmission in his model:

*Safe:* Safe languages are spoken by all generations in all or nearly all domains. They have a large speaker base when compared to other languages spoken in the area. Because they are spoken by sizeable populations, they are often used in government, education, and commerce. Many safe languages are recognized with official status within nation-states, and benefit from the higher prestige attached to their use.

*At risk:* Languages at risk continue to be learned and used by speakers of all age groups, but lack some of the properties associated with safe languages. For example, a language at risk could be spoken in a limited number of domains, or could have a smaller number of speakers than other languages spoken in the region.

*Disappearing:* Languages are disappearing when there is an observable shift to another language in the communities where they are spoken. This is accompanied by a decrease in intergenerational language transfer, which leads to a diminished speaker base because it not being replenished by the younger generation. Because fewer people speak the disappearing language, a language of wider communication will start to replace it, relegating the disappearing language to a more restricted set of functional domains.

*Moribund:* Moribund languages are no longer transmitted to children.
Nearly Extinct: Nearly extinct languages are spoken by only a handful of speakers who are of the oldest population.

Extinct: Extinct languages have no remaining speakers.

(Grenoble and Whaley 2006).

2.5 Resisting Moribundity

Whaley’s framework evaluates language endangerment in a considerably more refined manner than the models presented before it. It shows the ways speaker age and number relate to the functional domains in which the language will be used. Similarly, it demonstrates the connection between transmission of language to children, and the range in age of fluent first language speakers. However, none of these frameworks effectively accounts for progressive movement away from endangerment. None of them describes communities that are actively revitalizing their languages, making observable gains against language death. As one Native language advocate puts it,

*I’ve had many linguists describe our language as moribund over the years, meaning it was headed for the ash heap of history. We refuse to accept that. Our tribal council, our government, all of our elders and cultural people have gotten behind this effort, and we’ve seen some tangible results already.*

-- Alfred “Bud” Lane, Siletz Language Advocate

This assertion is a rejection of a pessimistic prognosis for the Siletz language. Languages facing obsolescence are commonly described using the biological metaphors of “death” (e.g. Crystal 2000) and “extinction” (e.g. Romain and Nettle 2000). Scholars, such as Jane Hill, have criticized these metaphors, asking whether they are imposed on indigenous languages and their speakers. While this is an important question to raise, the criticism is unwarranted. Native language advocates do use biological metaphors. Bud Lane’s statement is not a rejection of the word ‘moribund’ as a metaphor, but rather a rejection of the fatality it implies. In fact, Lane not
only uses this metaphor, he adds another: ‘language as trash, or exhausted resource.’ In this way, Native advocates do not reject the biological metaphors for language endangerment; they use them as a starting point from which to add other metaphors and insights.

In adding native voices to the literature on language revitalization in theory and practice, I hope to show the complex and often contradictory ways in which the criteria that underpin these paradigms for language endangerment interact in the on-the-ground efforts of community language advocates. Because these factors interact in complicated ways, it will be helpful to conceptualize the degree of language health or endangerment as something that exists on a continuum, and that must be analyzed in the context of multi-directional flux and change.

3. Historical Background

3.1 General Background on Native Peoples and Languages in the United States

The history of colonization in the United States is a history of widespread displacement of native peoples, through forced relocation, and taking of their land. This systematic displacement resulted in consistent marginalization in the social, political, educational, and economic spheres. Indigenous language loss in the United States has occurred as part of a larger eradication of Native peoples and culture through social, political, and economic displacement. Community-based language revitalization stands as a challenge to this history of marginalization and displacement. The work of native language advocates exemplifies both “speaking out” and “speaking back” from the margins in a way that gives merit to a distinctly Native perspective (Hornberger 1997, May 2006).

3.2 Background on the Passamaquoddy People and Language:
Prior to European contact, ancestors of the Passamaquoddy and Maliseet peoples lived in the area that is now Maine and New Brunswick, Canada. These early ancestors lived sustainably on their land as hunter-gatherers. They lived in family band camps, organized around patrilineal kinship, which allowed multiple marriages and residence options. Europeans repeatedly moved the Passamaquoddy from the aboriginal lands. Today, there are two reservations that belong to the Passamaquoddy in Maine: one at Indian Township, and the other at Pleasant Point. Traditional crafts such as basket weaving and canoe carving are important parts of present-day Passamaquoddy culture. *Ethnologue* lists Passamaquoddy-Maliseet as a single language, part of the Algonquian family, which is spoken by two distinct cultural groups: Passamaquoddy, in the United States, and Maliseet, in Canada. According to the most recent *Ethnologue* figures there are approximately 1,000 native Passamaquoddy speakers in the U.S., and roughly 655 native Maliseet speakers in Canada. The website notes that most speakers (in both communities) are older adults, and that English is quickly replacing Passamaquoddy as the preferred language among younger people. The loss of the Passamaquoddy language is in large part caused by the infringement of English as result of colonization, U.S. federal policy toward Native Americans, the politics of the residential school era, and language shift (Passamaquoddy Tribe 2011).

### 3.3 Background on the Washoe People and Language:

"The Maker of All Things was counting out seeds that were to become the different tribes. He counted them out on a big winnowing tray in equal numbers. West Wind, the mischievous wind, watched until the Maker had divided the seeds into equal piles on the basket. Then he blew a gust of wind that scattered the seeds to the east. Most of the seeds that were to have been the Washoe people were blown away. That is why the Washoe are fewer in number than other tribes."

--As retold by Jo Ann Nevers; Tribal Elder

The Washoe people have lived in the area surrounding *Da ow a ga*, or Lake Tahoe in present-day Nevada and California for more than 9,000 years. Throughout their early history,
Washoe people lived sustainably on their land: hunting, gathering and fishing in accordance with the seasons. Traditional foods included antelope, deer, rabbits, and other small game, as well as pine nuts and acorns. Gathering pine nuts and acorns, basket weaving, and deer hunting are elements of traditional Washoe culture that persist in the community today. The Washo language is unrelated to other languages spoken in the surrounding regions in California and Nevada, and is therefore considered a language isolate. According to the most recent *Ethnologue* figures, there are fewer than 10 native Washo speakers. The website notes that all of these speakers are elderly, and that the language is ‘nearly extinct.’ Like Passamaquoddy, boarding school era politics, colonialism, American nationalism, and language shift are all factors that have contributed to Washo language endangerment (Keliiaa 2012).

### 3.4 Background on the Siletz people and Language

The Siletz people have lived throughout history on the Northwest Plateau of Coastal Oregon. Today, there are the federally recognized Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians (CTSI). Prior to contact with white Americans, the indigenous peoples who now comprise the CTSI, were made up of many different familial or kinship groups, who lived around rivers and creeks throughout Central and Southern Coastal Oregon. Native people from this region typically trace their ancestry to contemporary river names (Johnson 2011). As part of a campaign for westward expansion on the part of white American settlers, the Siletz people were forcibly relocated from their ancestral lands on to increasingly smaller parcels of land. The many family bands or tribes that lived throughout the area were confined to a single area, known as the Coast Reservation. Residential school era politics, along with forced assimilation and language shift, this caused a dramatic decrease in use of and fluency in the Siletz Dee-ni language. (Johnson

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2 In academic circles, the spelling “Washoe” generally refers to the tribe or people. The spelling “Washo” is commonly used by linguists and anthropologists to refer to the language. I will adhere to these conventions throughout.
2011). Siletz Dee-ni belongs to the Athabaskan language family. Today there are fewer than 10 native speakers, all of whom are older adults (Ethnologue).

3.5 Background on the Lenape People and Language

The ancestral home of the Lenape people includes Eastern Pennsylvania, Northern Delaware, as well as parts of New York and New Jersey. Prior to European contact, the Lenape lived as agriculturalists. Women cultivated corn, beans, and squash, while men hunted and fished. Society was organized around matrilineal kinship clans, and female elders held considerable power in clan leadership. In the 1860s the U.S. government sent the Lenape west to the Oklahoma Territory under Indian Removal policy. A large Lenape population remains in that area. According to the Ethnologue, there are no remaining native speakers of Lenape. Technically, this means the language is designated ‘extinct.’ However, current efforts to revitalize and relearn the language are challenging the notion that language death is irreversible (DePaul 2008, Hahn 2002)

4. Methodology

I draw my data on language attitudes and ideologies from primary interviews co-conducted by myself (Lenape, Siletz) and secondary materials from interviews conducted by other scholars (Passamaquoddy, Washo) with key language advocates: (1) Wayne Newell, Passamaquoddy elder and teacher; (2) Alfred “Bud” Lane, Vice Chairman of the Siletz tribal council and director of tribal language programs at the Siletz Valley School; (3) Shelley DePaul, Language Keeper and language teacher of Lenape; (4) Danny Wyatt, Washo language advocate. These people were selected because they have been influential in language revitalization efforts in their respective communities. Each of them has been involved in
developing curricula and pedagogical strategies for long enough to be a reliable commentator on the progress the language and its speakers have made since community revitalization efforts began.

I transcribed these interviews, then re-listened, and took notes. These transcriptions and notes became the raw data from which I coded for keywords. I used these keywords to identify recurring themes in the statements these language advocates made. I flagged any concept that was articulated more than twice in an interview, and created a master list of the most frequently articulated themes from each interview. I sought common themes both within and across the various language communities.

Using this master list of themes as a baseline, I discovered that there were some themes that were articulated by all the language advocates interviewed for this study. Labeling these common themes, I returned to the interview transcriptions to map out how these concepts were articulated and how they illuminated factors that foster a climate of revitalization. Using this corpus of information, I determined a set of critical factors, which seem to be common issues that underlie robust revitalization efforts. To bring Native voices and worldview into the discussion these critical factors, I have identified (a) language attitudes, (b) ideologies, and (c) strategies for effective linguistic and cultural revitalization, all embedded in the statements of these language advocates. I hope to illuminate the ways in which language attitude and ideology influence the strategies, methods, and efficacy of revitalization.

I identified six critical factors that will be further investigated in this paper:

1. **Accommodation** to English (and speakers of English).

2. **Property**: The idea that language is an inherited cultural and intellectual property.
3. **Strategy**: Language planning strategies, as well as strategies for language instruction and transmission.

4. **Ineffability**: The idea that certain indigenous concepts cannot be translated.

5. **Technology**: An investigation of dictionaries and other online language materials.

6. **Indigenous Worldview**: Connecting language vitality to other aspects of cultural revitalization.

I will analyze each of these themes with respect to how they bear on language revitalization in theory and practice. I will also show the connection between these themes and language attitudes and ideologies they reflect.

### 5. Defining Language Attitudes and Ideologies

To address this research objective, it will be important to develop a working definition of language attitudes and ideologies.

#### 5.1 Language Attitudes

David Crystal defines language attitudes as "the feelings people have about their own language or the languages of others" (1992). An example of a language attitude, as articulated by Passamaquoddy language advocate, Wayne Newell, is presented below:

> I remember one of the teachers saying, because we all spoke Passamaquoddy.... “Don’t speak that language, it will never get you anywhere.” I’ve carried that all of my life. I think that’s my motto, is that I’m opposed to that. I can still hear her voice, and it a very strong, powerful voice, and I’m in opposition to that. I think that’s what keeps me going.

This example actually embeds two attitudes about the value of the Passamaquoddy language.

The first, presented by Newell’s teacher, suggests that the Passamaquoddy language offers little value to its speakers in terms of providing them with opportunities or cultural capital. The
second attitude, Newell’s, stands in direct opposition to the first. His desire to see the
Passamaquoddy language valued and respected drives his current language advocacy work.

Washo language advocate, Danny Wyatt, presents the following language attitude:

...when I’m around the old people, I try to talk to them in Indian.

This statement suggests a special respect for elders as keepers of heritage who perhaps hold their
indigenous language in higher regard than younger speakers do.

Lenape Language Keeper and advocate, Shelley DePaul, expresses an attitude that
legitimizes imperfections in the speech of those who are learning a marginalized language.

There are some purists in the language, that say that it has to stay how it was. They’re
not interested in fluency. I’m like, “What’s the point.” Language is going to change, and
it’s going to develop, because it’s used for communication. Certain archaic
constructions in Lenape, we’re going to have to drop.

This attitude also suggests a preference for viewing the language as a living entity, and one that
will survive in spite of and even because of changes modern users make.

5.2 Language Ideologies

Shieffelin, Woolard, and Kroskrity define "Language ideologies" as “cultural
representations, whether explicit or implicit, of the intersection of language and human beings in
a social world. Mediating between social structures and forms of talk, such ideologies are not
only about language. Rather, they link language to identity, power, aesthetics, morality and
epistemology. Through such linkages, language ideologies underpin not only linguistic form and
use, but also significant social institutions and fundamental notions of person and community.”

Another definition of language ideology comes from Michael Silverstein, who defines ideology
as the “set of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of
perceived language structure and use.” This definition suggests that ideologies are conscious,
secondary ways of conceptualizing the power and value of language use.
An example of a language ideology, presented in a statement on the Siletz Language from the Siletz Dee-ni Tribal Language Website is presented below:

*Our language is as old as time itself. For countless generations our people lived out their lives speaking our words. In all that time, our words were never written. They were carried in the hearts and minds of our ancestors. They were learned by each generation and in turn taught to the next.*

This statement actually embeds several language ideologies: language as connection to antiquity and the importance of language as an inherited cultural property, the importance of orality, and the value of intergenerational transmission. These ideological themes, and others, will be taken up later in this paper.

The study of language ideology allows for a more accurate and holistic understanding of a particular linguistic situation. Often native language advocates express their ideologies about their languages in ways that are unique to an indigenous worldview, and therefore more consistent with native experiences. Often native interpretations of the way language fits into a broader cosmology are distinctly “performative.” That is, they imagine language and speech as powerful, creative forces that play a role in constructing the natural and social worlds they inhabit. Western understandings of language, in contrast, tend to be “reflectionist,” emphasizing denotation and reference (Schieffelin, Woolard, Kroskrity 1998). Words are thought to represent and communicate an objective reality. This difference in understanding of both cosmology and the role of language within it, contributes to the unique insights and ideas indigenous languages communicate.

5.3 Discussion

As these definitions and examples suggest, attitudes are smaller scale, more concrete perceptions of language held by language users. Within a language community there may be many different attitudes, both positive and negative, about the native language, how and when it
is used, who uses it, and how it is evaluated with respect to other languages. Ideologies are larger scale, and often situate language and language use in the context of a broader worldview, or culturally specific cosmology.

6.0 Accommodation to English Speakers

‘Accommodation’ is a word used by sociolinguists to describe the “adjustments which people make unconsciously to their speech influenced by those they are talking to” (Crystal 1994). Among the reasons speakers adjust to their listeners “are the desires to identify more closely with the listener, to win social approval, or simply to increase the communicative efficiency of the interaction (Crystal 1991). I draw on language advocates’ attitudes toward correct pronunciation of the indigenous language, and their conceptions of whether it’s acceptable to assimilate the phonology to accommodate native speakers of English, both within and outside of the tribal community. I will also address to what extent language advocates are willing to allow their students and speakers with limited vocabularies to intersperse English words into their speech in the indigenous language, or to conduct a conversation in which they code-switch back and forth between the indigenous language and English. I will conclude this section with a discussion of how these attitudes tend to be motivated by the level of fluency available within the community.

You can’t give in to English, that’s what we’ve been doing all of these years, and you cut down on quality of our own language if we do that.  
--Wayne Newell

Wayne Newell, a native speaker of Passamaquoddy, believes that accommodating English-speakers by Anglicizing pronunciation of Passamaquoddy words detracts from the integrity or ‘correctness’ of spoken Passamaquoddy. This attitude reflects the high value given to
authenticity. The language that most resembles that which was spoken by heritage speakers of an earlier generation is most authentic, and therefore best.

...you need to have correct pronunciation. We can’t make any shortcuts, and I’m very, very fussy about that...They [speakers of Passamaquoddy] try to accommodate English-speaking people, and I don’t take that liberty.

--Wayne Newell

Lenape language advocate Shelley DePaul³ offers a direct counterpoint to the view on authenticity presented by Wayne Newell. She believes that focusing too much attention on ‘correctness’ discourages people whose linguistic knowledge or ability may be limited from using the native language at all.

Many language teachers are extremely anal. “It’s gotta be correct, you’ve gotta pronounce it perfectly...and I’m like screw that. It’s important to encourage them to speak whatever language they have. Acknowledge that we’re going to be speaking broken Lenape for a while.

This attitude reflects a pedagogical ideology which claims that learning and using the language, even if it means interspersing English words when a speaker does not know a Lenape word or phrase, is preferable to adopting a reluctance to use imperfect language. According to DePaul, the notion that speaking imperfect or broken Lenape is something to be ashamed of is partially responsible for language decline in the community. She also challenges the notion that ‘correctness’ is an essential part of respecting the heritage language.

There are some purists in the language that say that it has to stay how it was. They’re not interested in fluency. I’m like, “What’s the point.” Language is going to change, and it’s going to develop, because it’s used for communication. Certain archaic constructions in Lenape, we’re going to have to drop.

This statement articulates the stance that robust revitalization requires that as many speakers use the native language as possible. DePaul thinks that when the language is used in the context of informal conversation, speakers gain a sense of ownership over their heritage.

³ All quotations are from my 2012 interview with Ms. DePaul, unless otherwise noted.
language. Regardless of how faithful their pronunciation, lexicon, or grammar is to the language used by their ancestors, the fact that modern day speakers are actively using the language, makes it their own.

Perhaps these differences in attitudes about the acceptability of grammatical imperfections or the influence of English in indigenous language utterances reflect the disparity in the levels of fluency present in the Passamaquoddy and Lenape communities. Passamaquoddy still has a small, but vocal contingent of fluent first language speakers. Most Passamaquoddy who live on one of the two major reservations have contact with a Passamaquoddy-speaking person on a regular basis. In contrast, there are no fully fluent speakers of Delaware Lenape anymore. Language advocates have had to piece a grammar and lexicon together using antiquated texts written about the language, heritage recordings of deceased native speakers using the language, and their own memories of its sounds and words. There is no model of perfectly fluent Lenape spoken today. For this reason, any use of the language at all is seen as a step toward revitalization, not a loss of indigenous language integrity as in Passamaquoddy.

The question of fluency influences the number of functional domains in which an indigenous language may be used in a community. Assimilatory pressure and lack of fluency have made the English language exclusively suited to certain functional domains. In *Defying Maliseet Language Death*, Bernard Perley describes Native elders using English in their campaign speeches during tribal council elections. “These older and experienced councilors knew that few people would know what was being said if the speeches were given in Maliseet. This public event was just one more social context in which the language of effective communication was English” (40). This anecdote suggests the dominance of English as a lingua franca of the political sphere, even within tribal politics. Perley suggests that the dominance of
English extends to other domains, such as commerce, higher education, and urban environments, where one is less likely to find indigenous language speakers in concentrated number. There is a sense that in these domains English is the language that provides cultural capital. Perley quotes Annette Schmidt’s 1990 work on Australian Aboriginal languages, “English, rather than Aboriginal languages, is associated with the acquisition of technical skills, education, youth, modernity, and materials success” (quoted in Perley 2011: 53).

When English is seen as more useful in a greater variety of situations, it is difficult to encourage indigenous language fluency. Language advocates must work not only to promote increased use of their heritage languages, but also to increase the number of domains in which it is seen as useful. Often this means revitalizing not only language, but also the cultural practices that demand indigenous language use.

7. Property

“Now, Mr. Phonograph, do the best you can in order that we may hear it in the future” -- Jesse Walter Fewkes, Ethnologist with the Smithsonian Institution’s Bureau of American Ethnology, in one of the first field recordings of Native American folktales and music, demonstrating the capabilities of the phonograph to a Passamaquoddy man in Calais, Maine, 1890.

Recordings of ancestors speaking, telling stories, and singing traditional songs are a tremendous resource for language advocates who want to hear their language as it was spoken when it was less endangered. The American Folklife Center, part of the United States Library of Congress, has somewhere between 7,500 and 8,000 wax cylinder recordings that document the sung and spoken traditions of Native American peoples (Gray 1994). Among the earliest of these recordings are Passamaquoddy songs and folktales recorded by Jesse Walter Fewkes in 1890. These stories and music were recorded on wax cylinder, and have since been transferred
to reel-to-reel tapes. Though the stories and chants are quite difficult to hear, as many of the wax cylinders were cracked or otherwise damaged before they could be transferred to tapes, a careful listener with enough understanding of Passamaquoddy would be able to make out most of the words. The dance and ceremonial songs have a performative force that is tangible despite the cracked whirring of the old phonograph.

The Library of Congress also has many recordings made by Leo Frachtenberg of what has now become the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians of Oregon. These recordings, which date back to 1916, feature storytellers and performers speaking several of the different dialects that were once found on the Siletz reservation including Kalapuya, Shasta, Mikonotunne, Rogue River Athabascan, Tutuni, and Umpqua. These recordings, also transferred from wax cylinder to reel to reel tape, showcase a variety of dance songs, love songs, gambling songs, and even a sweat-house song in which the singer imitates the panting and squeals that are produced by a ‘sweating’ person when the stones are too hot. The Library also holds recordings from the late 1940s and early 1950s, of Washo and Delaware- Lenape stories and songs collected by Willard Rhodes. These recordings are much easier to hear and interpret as they were originally recorded on 33 ⅓ rpm long-playing records. In the ceremonial songs from both communities, you can hear the voices of multiple singers, and you can discern low volume instrumentation such as small drums and rattles. In 1985, the American Folklife Center received a grant from the Ford Foundation to facilitate the repatriation of these recordings to the descendents and tribal communities of the performers whose voices were captured. Each of the language advocates I interviewed pointed to the use of heritage language materials as key resource for language and cultural revitalization.
Wayne Newell has collaborated with the American Folklife Center extensively, and utilized heritage recordings in a variety of ways. In 2009, he and Blanch Sockabasin, another Passamaquoddy language advocate, performed and recorded traditional songs they heard in the Fewkes tapes from 1890. This music was featured as part of the 2009 Homegrown Concert Series, an American Folklife Center project, which celebrated traditional ethnic and regional music from throughout the United States. In this way, Newell has both made use of heritage materials and added to the cultural heritage resources that will be available to future generations of Passamaquoddy people. Newell has also been working to translate some of the Library’s older tapes.

I just [recently] got a tape from the Library of Congress in the ’40s, and I know all the people who were on there...They asked me to translate what they were saying, so I’ll be doing that. What happened was there is somebody just came on the reserve, turned on the tape recorder, and disappeared. Now that they’re starting to find key people in the community who are doing some of this, stuff comes out...

This statement is a testament to the fact that repatriated materials truly are returning to the descendants of those who were recorded. Language advocates can play a critical role in disseminating these heritage language materials within their communities.

Bud Lane is also using legacy sound recordings to add a historical perspective to the Siletz Talking Dictionary.

My goal now is I have all kinds of archival information from everybody’s grandmas and grandpas, aunt, and uncles in Athabascan that’s been recorded. I’ve already isolated those good audio, they call them legacy files, and we’re going to move them into where I’m saying gay-yu: baby basket and you’ll hear Ida Benson say gay-yu and the first language speakers too, who have a little bit of a different take on how things are said...We’re all listening to our family members saying our language.

This use of the heritage materials will give speakers who are learning the language a sense of connection to the language that their ancestors spoken, by actually presenting those ancestors’
audible voices. Additionally, language learners will be able to see how the pronunciation of the language has changed over time.

Shelley DePaul is also using heritage materials to expand the working lexicon of the Lenape language. She mentions gaining access to a series of recordings featuring elder Norma Thomas Dean, made in the 1970s. According to DePaul, Dean helped to create new words for modern concepts, and lent her authority as a native-speaking elder, to give these words legitimacy. Of these heritage recordings, she remarks:

*It’s tremendous that these language resources are here and readily available, so that going forward these resources are here.*

In a sense, DePaul understands these heritage language materials as both resource and responsibility. As a Language Keeper for Lenape, DePaul must utilize these recordings to inform her own knowledge of the language, and preserve them so that can continue to be used by Lenape people in the future.

Bud Lane talks about heritage materials as a sort of inherited wealth given to modern-day Siletz people by their ancestors. He describes language as a legacy commodity. It is the responsibility of Siletz people today to preserve the language and heritage materials for future generations.

*Any steps that we can take to preserve what’s left of it...there’s part of it that is gone, in a way that will never come back. There’s parts of it we will never retrieve, but there’s a large part of it that’s still intact, and we need to pick it up, and dust it off, and keep improving it, and leave it there for [our] kids...grandkids...*

In this statement, Lane metaphorizes language as a physical entity, a valuable and shared property belonging to Siletz people. He talks about caring for a language as one might protect a precious heirloom. This stresses both the value of language as shared cultural wealth, and the
importance of maintaining the language so that it can continue to be inherited, passed down from generation to generation.

8. Technology

In this section I examine the ways language advocates have embraced technology in the form of online talking dictionaries, recording materials, as well online pedagogical tools such as textbooks and video lessons. I pay particular attention to the role of online dictionaries, looking specifically at how presenting the language in this format allows for a new view of the language. For example, online dictionaries enable searching and illuminate orthographic and morphological patterns in a way that might not be possible in other textual and oral formats. Similarly, I look to the dictionaries for evidence as to how these communities are adding modern terminology to their lexicons. I connect this investigation to attitudes about accommodating English, and linguistic purity.

8.1 Creation of the Dictionaries

All of the dictionaries were co-created by outside scholars and native language experts. The Siletz and Washo dictionaries were created utilizing the resources of colleges and universities; Swarthmore College and the University of Chicago host and maintain the websites for the Siletz and Washo dictionaries respectively. The online version of the Passamaquoddy dictionary was created under the guidance of the authors of the print dictionary. Audio recordings were added to the lexical entries as part of a project funded by a grant from the Administration for Native Americans to the Passamaquoddy Tribal and Historic Preservation

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The dictionary has been published in book form as Peskotomuhkti Wolastoqewi Latuwewakon: A Passamaquoddy-Maliseet Dictionary (Orono, University of Maine Press; Fredericton, Goose Lane Editions, 2008).
Office. The Lenape dictionary was created as part of the Lenape Language Preservation Project, which received grant funding from the National Science Foundation.

8.2 Insights from the Dictionaries

Looking at dictionaries gives incredible insight into how language advocates and communities present their language for public consumption. The Siletz, Passamquoddy, Lenape, and Washo dictionaries are all publicly accessible on the Internet, and can be found through a simple web-based search. Comparing the four dictionaries gives us a sense of the various ways a lexicon can be organized. In all of the dictionaries I examined, users can input either an English or Native language word to search the lexicon. Additionally, all of the dictionaries contain audio components, which allow users to hear a word as it would be pronounced by a native speaker. An examination of dictionaries as both textual and multi-media language-learning resources informs a discussion of reimagining indigenous lexicography. In the discussion that follows, I explore indigenous approaches to modernizing the lexicon, and often the orthography and phonology, to accommodate the addition of new words and language users. I also explore online dictionaries in the context of a larger effort to create and utilize various new technologies as a resource supporting language development.

8.3 Organization of the Lexicon

The Passamaquoddy and Washo dictionaries allow users to search the dictionary by head letter. In the Passamaquoddy dictionary, selecting the letter ‘a’ from the top of the search box returns all the entries that begin with ‘a’ in the Passamaquoddy orthography. This sort of head letter search will also return entries such as ‘t-acehtun ‘s/he changes it, transforms,’ which immediately follows the entry for acehtasu ‘it is changed, modified.’ Seeing these entries side by side, users gain insight into the morphology of the language. This example suggests that
Affixation is a process used to add a subject to the verb root. The fact that the dictionary gives a literal piece-by-piece gloss, helps us determine that the language is polysynthetic. That is, that the words are composed of many different morphemes or parts of words that impart meaning independently.

The Lenape and Siletz dictionaries do not allow this sort of search by head letter. Instead, dictionary users may search by either English or indigenous word or phrase. The Lenape dictionary will return all the results (words or phrases) that contain the exact string entered in the search. Sometimes this yields enough entries to see morphological patterns, but often a search only returns a single lexical entry. Similarly, some entries contain an “analysis,” which breaks the work down into its morphological and semantic parts. However, these analyses do not indicate which morphemes mark which features, or which segments confer certain aspects of the compositional meaning. Like that of Lenape, the Siletz dictionary returns all the results that contain the search term. This allows users to make certain inferences about the morphology. For example, a search for the term ‘eye’ yields both naa-ghe ‘eye(s)’ and sh-naa-ghe ‘eye, my,’ which suggests that the sh- morpheme marks the first-person singular possessive.

Photographs accompany many of the Siletz dictionary entries. These images feature traditional crafts, the landscape of the Siletz reservation, and help to connect the lexical entries to a sense of place and cultural significance.

The question of whether a dictionary can give us a sense of speakers’ attitudes and values is a complicated one. Dictionaries do not present a coherent narrative, but rather list words in an isolated, alphabetical form, that though structured, does allow for serendipitous finds. Dictionaries translate individual words or concepts by providing a glossed semantic equivalent or near equivalent in the target language. While dictionaries may translate a single word or phrase
effectively, they struggle to translate the mind-set and unique insights embedded in the languages they present. Linguist, Robert Leavitt articulates this limitation elegantly.

This same phenomenon—collectively generated knowledge—governs the creation and cataloguing of a language’s vocabulary. The way words are used reflects consensus in speaking. And, conversely, the roots of words can be extracted only by listening to everyone—to know how they use the words and when. One hears in this way that roots themselves are combined and regrouped to create meanings from many points of view simultaneously—spatial, substantive, geometric, kinetic, qualitative, quantitative, and personal (Leavitt 1992).

Literal word for word translations give a unique, but limited sense of how certain aspects of meaning or certain concepts are imputed in the language. Readers must make a cognitive, imaginative leap to arrive at a more idiomatic understanding of the language. Dictionaries, though incredibly useful as organized, and searchable databases, disconnect words from their rich cultural contexts.

### 8.4 Incorporating New Words

In a stable language community, new words are created often. Adding a new coinage or semantic extension does not threaten the integrity of authenticity of a stable language. Take the English word ‘google,’ for example. ‘Google has been added to the lexicon relatively recently as a transitive verb meaning ‘to search (for something) in the Google search engine.’ In less stable language communities, new word creation is an issue of language ideology. In a community where no one is a first language speaker, people tend not to feel empowered to create new words. People are reluctant to see their new words as legitimate without the approval of an elder who is a native speaker of the language. When this approval is impossible because such linguistic authority is unavailable, younger speakers may hesitate to create and use new words (Johnson 2012).
The ways in which each dictionary incorporates or excludes new words is indicative of language attitudes and ideologies of native language experts. Decisions about whether or not to include new coinages reflect attitudes and ideologies about linguistic purity, and the authority that new language users have to adapt and modify their heritage language. The Siletz dictionary, for example, only contains entries that Bud Lane heard spoken by elders. Though young people in the Siletz community may have a word in Siletz Dee-ni that is used for ‘internet,’ this word is not yet included in the dictionary. Similarly, the geographic spread of Siletz language users also complicates the adoption of new words, as two speakers who have no contact with one another may develop two completely different words to describe the same item or concept, simultaneously. In this situation, a new word may develop without ever being adopted by a larger community of speakers. In order for a new word to take hold in the language, the speech community must agree that a certain set of sounds refer to a certain item or concept. This process of making new reference relies on an audience, in this case the speech community, to accept the authority of the speaker to name something.

8.5 Lexical Acculturation

Lexical acculturation is the process through which new words are created as the result of contact with another language. There are several mechanisms through which a language can adapt itself to accommodate new or foreign concepts. ‘Loanwords’ are words borrowed directly from the source language. The borrowing language will adopt a word that approximates the source word’s sound, in a way that is congruent with the phonology of the target language. ‘Semantic extension’ is a process through which an existing term in the target language is extended to a new, but related concept. ‘Neologisms’ are truly new words, usages,
or expressions. They may draw on existing concepts in the target language, but these concepts are constructed such that they create an entirely new word in the language’s lexicon.

8.6 Methodology

I selected fifteen English words commonly associated with modern technology to get a crude, and admittedly limited sense of how lexical acculturation happens in each of the languages. The words I selected are as follows: computer, internet, telephone, dictionary, television, supermarket, airplane, radio, car, video, eyeglasses, train, horse, sugar, and alcohol. I make the assumption that the words I selected would not have had an indigenous language equivalent prior to contact with speakers of English. My goal in this section is to conduct a brief investigation into how these languages incorporate modern concepts into their lexicons, either by coining new words, or by extending existing words and concepts so that they apply to new semantic domains.

8.7 Examination of the Dictionaries

Regrettably, this section excludes Washo data. The current version of the online dictionary does not include enough information about the literal translations or glosses, and this, along with my limited knowledge of the language’s structure, renders this sort of crude analysis of lexical acculturation uninformative.
### 8.7.1 Lexical Acculturation in Siletz Dee-ni

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Siletz Dee-ni Term</th>
<th>English Gloss</th>
<th>Literal Translation</th>
<th>Acculturation Mechanism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary entry</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary entry</td>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me’-naa-draa-’a</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>Into it one talks-</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wee-ya’-me’- ch’ghvtlh-dersh</td>
<td>Dictionary</td>
<td>Words are written there</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tii-bi</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>Loanword</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daa-ch’vstlh-na</td>
<td>Supermarket</td>
<td>Things set out</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>srii--ghee-naa-t’a</td>
<td>Airplane</td>
<td>High it flies</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ak-’v-muu-t’i</td>
<td>Car</td>
<td>Automobile</td>
<td>Loanword</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ak-’v-muu-t’i</td>
<td>Video</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naa-ghe’-det-stan’</td>
<td>Eyeglasses</td>
<td>Naa-ghe’ : eye; det-stan’: ‘closed door’</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ee-k’wee-nalh-da</td>
<td>Train</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR min’-dee-dghvtlh-ya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lhin’-chu</td>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>‘dog big’</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch’ee-svn-tu</td>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>‘venison juice’</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xwvn-tuu-’i</td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>‘fire water’ (alcohol)</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nine of the eleven available entries from the Siletz dictionary are neologisms: entirely new words that were created to express concepts that didn’t exist in the language prior to contact with English-speaking people. The fact that neologisms outnumber loanwords suggests that speakers value the uniqueness of the Siletz Dee-ni sound system, and prefer to use words that cohere with Siletz rather than English phonological patterns. Similarly, the more willing a language community is to add new words to its lexicon, the less language users will have to code-switch to English in order to discuss a concept for which an indigenous word does not exist.

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8.7.2 Lexical Acculturation in Passamaquoddy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passamaquoddy Term</th>
<th>English Gloss</th>
<th>Literal Translation</th>
<th>Acculturation Mechanism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kompiyuhta²</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Loanword</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary entry</td>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattoktihiikon; telihpum</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kehsanokahte</td>
<td>Dictionary</td>
<td>it has so many pages or layers (e.g., dictionary with sections A-Z)</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sakihwewey</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary entry.</td>
<td>Supermarket</td>
<td>Verbal forms for shops for groceries</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary entry.</td>
<td>Airplane</td>
<td>Verb meaning he/she/it flies (as a bird, airplane, etc.)</td>
<td>Semantic Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motiyewestuwiiw</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>It is heard speaking (but not seen)</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>atomopil</td>
<td>Car (automobile)</td>
<td>Automobile</td>
<td>Loanword</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary entry.</td>
<td>Video</td>
<td>Word glossed as ‘he/she tape records/puts it on video’</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sisqeyal OR Nisalokiqehtasu</td>
<td>Eyeglasses</td>
<td>‘It has two eye-pieces, has (bifocal) lenses</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary entry.</td>
<td>Train</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahahs</td>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Possible loanword</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sukol</td>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Possible loanword</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary entry for noun form.</td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This sample of Passamaquoddy dictionary entries has a roughly equal proportion of neologisms and possible loanwords. Because audio files for ahahs and sukol were not available, I am not sure how closely their pronunciation resembles those of ‘horse’ and ‘sugar’ in English. Therefore, I am not sure whether these lexical entries can accurately be labeled ‘loanwords.’ It is interesting, perhaps even ironic that there are several potential loanwords, as language advocate Wayne Newell frequently stressed his desire that Passamaquoddy speakers not assimilate their pronunciation of Passamaquoddy words to accommodate English speakers.
8.7.3 Lexical Acculturation in Lenape

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lenape Term</th>
<th>English Gloss</th>
<th>Literal Translation</th>
<th>Acculturation Mechanism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pënælìntämìhikàn⁶</td>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Thinking machine</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary entry.</td>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sëkahšën</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>Iron; general term for electronic things having wire, e.g., telephone, radio, television, telegraph, tape recorder</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary entry.</td>
<td>Dictionary</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>péhpënunhikehikàn⁷</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Reduplicated nominalized form the ‘hike’ portion of the word possibly connotes something <em>looked at</em> (new word by Nora and Lucy)</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xinkwi</td>
<td>Supermarket</td>
<td>A big store</td>
<td>Semantic extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mënhamalìmìntikaon⁸</td>
<td>Airplane</td>
<td>Fly-machine (new word by Nora and Lucy); fly-inanimate conjugation (coined by Jim Thompson and Willie Longbone)</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kënthwikàn also</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>It sings to you (such as a musical instrument, radio, etc.)</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pëmihëlak</td>
<td>Car (automobile)</td>
<td>Automobile</td>
<td>Loanword</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary Entry.</td>
<td>Video</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wëshkinkhòkàna</td>
<td>Eyeglasses</td>
<td>Wëshkinkw: eye;</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ténteëpcëhëlës</td>
<td>Train</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nehë naïkënës</td>
<td>Horse</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Neologism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shukël</td>
<td>Sugar</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Possible loanword</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No dictionary entry.</td>
<td>Alcohol</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Lenape entries from this sample are neologisms by overwhelming proportion. This suggests a preference among Lenape language users to coin new words when there is not a suitable Lenape word already in existence. Shelley DePaul, addresses the issue of creating new words directly, “We didn’t have a word for things that didn’t exist, so we have to make up

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⁶ The dictionary also contains words glossed as ‘he/she types, as on a computer’ (sësâphitehike) and ‘typist’ (sësâphitehikès).
⁷ The form *sëkahšën* can also be used for ‘television.’

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⁸ The first word, *xinkwi* means ‘big.’ Without this compound, *mënhamalìmìntikaon* is glossed simply as ‘store.’
⁹ The dictionary also contains a word glossed as ‘on the radio, or phone’: *sëkahšënìn*
words.” DePaul describes the way language users draw on the polysynthetic nature of the language to combine existing morphemes in new ways to create new words. Perhaps because there are no living first language-speaking elders, there is less reluctance in the Lenape community to create new words, and to attribute legitimacy to new coinages.

8.8 Orality, Orthography, and Domestication

Whenever a language is written down, it becomes fixed to a certain extent. Siletz, Passamaquoddy, Lenape, and Washo fluency are all deeply rooted in the oral tradition. The orthographies of these languages were developed recently in response to interest on the part of linguists and Native community members who wanted to formalize and preserve their languages. The Passamaquoddy orthography was developed as part of collaboration between Dr. Ken Hale, and Philip Le Sourd of MIT, and Passamaquoddy elder David Francis in the early 1970s (Newell 2012). The Lenape orthography represented in the online Lenape dictionary was developed to approximate the phonology of the Southern Unami Lenape dialect, and does not reflect the pronunciation of other Lenape dialects. It is designed to be syllabic and easily readable by language learners (DePaul 2012). The Washo orthography was developed by linguist William Jacobsen in 1964. It contains symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet that are not found in the Roman alphabet. Additionally, the dictionary was created and is maintained by non-Native linguists. Many Washo speakers remain unfamiliar with the orthography (Kelliiiaa 2012).

The most recent version of the Siletz Dee-ni orthography was developed by Loren Bommelyn in the 1990s. It replaces a Unifon writing system, also developed by Bommelyn, and is designed to be more phonetically based, and therefore give speakers greater ease of pronunciation when reading a written form. Siletz shares its orthography with Tolowa, a related,
and some say mutually intelligible dialect also of Coastal Oregon. Though Tolowa and Siletz are structurally similar languages, there are many differences in pronunciation. For example, there is no \([dʒ]\) sound in Tolowa, but the sound does exist in the Siletz phonemic inventory. However, because the orthography was originally developed to conform to Tolowa pronunciation, Siletz words that contain the \([dʒ]\) sound are written with a ‘ch’ (Johnson 2012).

The Siletz-Tolowa example illustrates the way writing systems reflect the particular historical moment in which they were created. Orthographies and dictionaries reproduce one dialect’s variant of a given word or sound. These written and online materials are created based on a very limited speaker pool, and many times the tokens included in talking dictionaries are vastly different from tokens found in heritage recordings (Johnson 2012). In many ways, the online dictionaries may not be an accurate representation of the language as a whole, but without these resources, many people, both within the language community, and outside of it, would not have access to the language at all. In today’s internet-dominated, geographically disparate culture, it is no longer practical to rely only on oral language transmission.

Online dictionaries mediate a delicate space between making their languages readily accessible, learnable, and the process of linguistic “domestication” (Perley 2011). “Domestication” refers to the process of making an indigenous language closely conform to the structural conventions of English language, and to white\(^{10}\) cultural norms that is a necessary aspect of codifying the language so that it may be reproduced in dictionary format. According to Jack Goody, writing a traditionally oral language down changes the very nature of communication:

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\(^{10}\) It is important to distinguish “white” dominant cultural norms from an overgeneralized “American” culture, or euphemistic “modern”or culture. These dominant cultural norms have historically excluded people of color, and particularly the indigenous peoples of the United States. See Moreton-Robison, et. al. 2008.
“...writing shifts [language] from the aural to visual domain, and makes possible a different kind of inspection, the re-ordering and refining not only of sentences, but of individual words. Morphemes can be removed from the body of a sentence, the flow of oral discourse, and set aside as isolated units capable not simply of being ordered within a sentence, but of being ordered outside this frame, where they appear in a very different and highly ‘abstract’ context...it is a process of decontextualisation [sic]...it alters the nature of verbal communication.”

In this way there is a certain amount of reconciliation that must occur between dictionary users and those who wish to preserve both the tradition of oral transmission, and the rich cultural nuance embedded in language. Dictionaries present the lexicon in structured, linear way. Their organization makes sense to those who are familiar with using them. A certain amount of linguistic “domestication” is necessary to make a traditionally oral language suited to presentation in a dictionary format. The orthography must be fixed and standardized; word meanings must be simplified for the sake of translation. In short, the language must conform to fit a rigid, linear format. Online dictionaries are perhaps slightly less rigid, in that they allow for ‘undomesticated’ elements of language such as audio recordings of a lexical token to be included alongside a more traditional dictionary entry. Perhaps these audio segments are a form of reconciliation, reminding dictionary users of the tradition of oral transmission, and helping them to connect the words to a people and culture.

8.9 Conclusion

Online dictionaries are a tremendous resource for compiling and cataloguing a language so that it is readily accessible to a wide audience. They are a vital tool for linguistic preservation because they are searchable storehouses of agreed upon lexical items, recordings of native speakers, and often bring together linguists and community language advocates in their creation. The websites for the Passamaquoddy and Lenape dictionaries also direct visitors to other language resources such as videos of native speakers conversing, and online textbook resources.
The availability of online resources makes the work of language advocates available to a wider audience of consumers, and the visibility of this crucial work, increases with the expansion of its online presence.

9. Ineffability

This section will discuss language as a powerful expressive force. I examine concepts that do not translate well into English, and delve into the notion that certain cultural and linguistic nuances are lost when taken out of the context of their original medium of expression.

*The language is the roadmap to the culture. If you don’t have the language, you can interpret the culture from another language’s perspective, but it’s not as accurate...*  
--Wayne Newell, Passamaquoddy

Language is spectacularly nuanced. The way words impute meaning, and how they are used reveals a wealth of information about the culture of those who use them. A single word may express a concept that is so specific to a certain culture, or it may denote an idea so precisely, that there is no synonym that truly captures the same essence. Even a near synonym in the same language may not convey the exact connotation or implicit attitude that the original word did. Language advocates often articulate the importance of language as a conduit between people and their cultural heritage. Shelley DePaul articulates the interrelatedness of language and culture as follows.

*Language isn’t just words, it’s an artifact. There’s such a move these days of people trying to reclaim culture. The revitalization of the language is going to teach them....if you can’t speak your language, then it’s very difficult to completely understand your culture. So much of the culture is reflected in the language, in it’s inflections...*  
(DePaul 2008).
DePaul argues that in order to truly understand, appreciate and ultimately reclaim their culture, Lenape people must learn and appreciate the distinctness and nuance of their Native language.

The language of the Lenape people contains in its spectrum ways to express all of the intricacies unique to their own world view, spiritual view and sense of purpose. No other language can do that for them. No other language can teach them to "think" on a subliminal level, like Lenape (DePaul 2008).

This statement represents another important language ideology. Namely, that each language contains its own set of attitudes about the way the world is, and how humans might conceptualize their lived experience within that world. There is a sense, common among indigenous language advocates, that there is considerable discrepancy between Western and Native understandings of person and place, particularly with respect to the natural world, spirituality, and cosmology. DePaul and other language advocates attribute this discrepancy, at least in part, to difference between English and Native languages.

...the Lenape language is far from linear. Lenape words contain perceptions related to the objects they represent. The language is poetic. One word most often expresses an entire thought...it contains a whole sentence, as well as an inference related to that subject. Translating Lenape into English using a linear English pattern of thought bursts the conceptual bubble, transforms the spiritual to the mundane, and destroys the intricate web that connects all things in their world (DePaul 2008).

DePaul begins by discussing the structural differences between Lenape and English. Lenape is a polysynthetic language, with robust and complex morphology. Each word is composed of many different parts or morphemes, each of which contributes to the meaning of the entire word. In Lenape, the subject of a sentence is embedded in the verb root through affixation. Her statement that a single word may contain an entire sentence reflects both the structure and nuance of the language. Because English does not exhibit this sort of morphology, it is impossible to find a single word English equivalent for a Lenape word. Similarly, considerable modification must be
made to the composition of a Lenape sentence to translate it into English, and vice-versa. The last sentence of DePaul’s statement suggests a view that the structure of language influences not only the way language users put words together syntactically, but also how they put words together conceptually. Structure influences thought patterns because it influences which concepts or words must be necessarily connected to formulate a coherent utterance. In addition to being more synthetic than English on a structural level, the Lenape language, according to DePaul, demands a more interconnected view of the spiritual and natural worlds.

Conversely, language itself is a reflection of its culture: phrasing, inflection, diction, concepts, devotions, inferences, idioms, respect and protocol, humor - all of these elements are woven into the structure of the language, and they reveal, in a more direct and real way than any historical dissertation, the true personality of a culture (DePaul 2008).

The structure of the language is important because it influences the mapping of concepts to various word or morphemes, and also determines the expression of all forms of formal and informal speech. Without an understanding of the language and its structure, it is impossible to truly understand the language’s unique expressive capacities. This understanding is necessary to comprehend the true character of a culture.

Bud Lane, of Siletz, expresses a similar view about the way language and cultures are intertwined. Culture, for Lane, does not exist in the abstract, but rather is contained in every aspect of the Siletz way of life: their food, their beliefs, their language are all specific reflections of the culture.

When I talk about a culture...it’s our foods, it’s our way of life, our beliefs, it’s our thought processes in our heads, it’s specific in our language too. It’s a different way of looking at the world than we have in the modern day American culture that we’re all a part of.

In this statement, Lane asserts that Native worldviews differ from those embedded in the dominant western cultural norms. This is a language ideology that is prevalent among Native
language advocates. It suggests both a distinctly Native sense of the way the world is, and the sense that this worldview is in many ways a product of how the language expresses concepts such as the connection between humans and their natural environment, and a spiritual understanding of cosmology.

To illustrate this sense that differences in worldview are in large part attributed to specific difference in the language, Lane offers an example of a Siletz Dee-ni word, which has no English equivalent. He glosses the Dee-ni word *huu-chaa~* as ‘blessings as you go.’ However, he says that the word has another incredibly specific meaning.

‘*huu-chaa* can also mean ‘beautiful.’ Now, it’s not like female beauty, we have a [different] term for female beauty, but just for something that’s beautiful, an ocean view for instance. So ‘*huu-chaa*’ can cover a lot of ground that you wouldn’t use in English.

English uses the same word ‘beautiful’ to describe a landscape as it does to describe a person’s physical appearance. No single English word illustrates the difference between these two types of beauty. Bud Lane and other language advocates, view their Native languages as better able to express these sorts of nuance. This language ideology is instrumental in establishing a sense of value and pride in indigenous languages. In this view, indigenous languages, despite being historically marginalized, are capable of greater expressive power than English.

The expressive force of indigenous languages is lost in word for word translation. Even skilled bilingual translators struggle to capture the essence and spirit of the original words effectively. Passamaquoddy elder, Wayne Newell, talks about the inefficacy of translation with respect to storytelling.

*I can tell some of the best stories that I was taught in Passamaquoddy, but if I translate them into English, to people who are only English speakers the excitement of the story doesn't come across.*
Often, stories cannot be effectively translated because a single word may contain tremendous cultural information, which is lost in a word for word gloss. Take for example the Passamaquoddy word for ‘wind.’ Wocawson is verb meaning ‘it is windy.’ However, Wocawson is also a character in Passamaquoddy creation stories. In one story, Koluksap, the “cultural hero” of the Wabanaki peoples, attempts to tame the wind in the person of Wocawson, to make the world habitable for human beings. In this story, Koluksap learns the values of balance and harmony-- that no wind is as detrimental to the natural world as too much (Leavitt 2011). The word for ‘wind,’ therefore, contains a wealth of cultural knowledge. Knowing the word for ‘wind’ is deeply connected to an understanding of Passamaquoddy worldview.

Danny Wyatt, Washo language advocate, echoes Newell’s sentiment about the lack of cultural coherence when Native idioms are translated into English. He links the unique nuance of his indigenous language to joking and the difficulty of translating humor effectively.

*When you tell a joke in Indian, it just sounds really funny, it’s really vivid. And then if you translate it into English it doesn’t sound right.*

This statement attends to the subtle way that humor relies on linguistic nuance, and the ability to interpret multiple or varied meanings of a single word. Often, humorous expression demands the listener's ability to understand a less common connotation or sense of word, while simultaneously bearing the word’s more common usage in mind. Translations tend not to capture multiple connotations and subtleties. Jokes, because they rely on such nuanced understanding, are one of the most difficult forms of expression to translate.

Perhaps one of the most elegant articulations of the power of linguistic nuance comes from another Passamaquoddy language advocate, Roger Paul. He explains the importance of language as a means through which Native worldview is communicated and passed down through the generations.
You have to learn the language. We have to teach our children the language because in
our language is our culture and it tells us who we are and how we have to live. The
words that we use describe the world around us and how we’re related to the world
around us, how we treat the world around us. And in our language, as we teach the kids
our language, we teach them how to live as who they are. We’re related to the birds, the
fish, the animals, we’re related to the trees, we’re related even to our mother the
earth. When we talk about our mother the earth, when you pick up dirt, in English they
think it’s creepy and they want to get it off of themselves, but in the language, dirt is
made up of our ancestors, our grandmothers and grandfathers, and whenever we pick up
the dirt we remember that and we treat our mother the earth as though she’s a living
being, as our ancestors.

--Roger Paul, Passamaquoddy Speaker

Paul describes the way the words used to describe the natural world contain wisdoms that teach
those who understand them how they are related to that natural world, and how they may live
harmoniously within it. Understanding the language enables an understanding of a unique
worldview. The English words related to ‘soil’ do not imply any relationship to one’s ancestors,
but rather are related to negative concepts of uncleanness. In Passamaquoddy, ‘soil’ is
metaphorized so that it is inherently connected to the collective history of the Passamaquoddy
people, their ways of life, and their connection to the land they inhabit. ‘Soil’ in
Passamaquoddy, is not lifeless, but is composed of a living, and life-giving entity. Through
knowledge of their language, Passamaquoddy people can understand themselves within in the
context of a cosmology that celebrates their connection to their ancestors and the natural world.

10. Strategies

Each of the language advocates whose views are represented in this paper has been
tasked with teaching and transmitting their indigenous language to a new generation of speakers.
This section discusses the language attitudes and ideologies that are embedded in the ways
language advocates conduct language classes, facilitate intergenerational language transmission,
and how they engage their tribal communities in language maintenance.
As discussed in the chapter on Ineffability, uniquely Native understandings of traditional philosophies, relationship to the natural environment, and kinship roles have traditionally been taught at home. These concepts were often transmitted in the form of informal daily lessons. Parents could transmit a distinctly Native worldview in the simple thematic thoughts that make up informal, familial conversation. These sorts of informal teaching and learning strategies rely on oral transmission, and therefore spoken fluency. When this fluency is lost, the traditional philosophies that inform native identity become unavailable.

According to Nastasia Wahlberg, fluency is required not only to understand informal oral lessons, but also to develop a traditional literacy that includes distinctly Native interpretations of etiology, history, values, language, discipline, and ideology. Traditionally, elders were seen not as owners of this knowledge, but rather as ‘keepers,’ who had the express responsibility to preserve this knowledge, and pass it on to the next generation as a sort of inherited wealth. Wahlberg refers to these elders as “keepers of treasure” (Wahlberg 1997: 42). This title embeds two important ideologies: the value of language as cultural property, and the importance of intergenerational transmission.

In the absence of a broad base of elders and fluent speakers, it is easy for traditional knowledge to be forgotten, to lose its value within the community. In the modern social and scholastic landscape, Western knowledge, ideologies, and the English language have begun to replace indigenous languages and knowledge. This is especially true in tribal schools and other academic settings. “There is a silent message received when only Western knowledge is taught: that is indigenous knowledge is not valued” (Wahlberg 1997: 42). The preference for teaching English, and the Western values embedded within it, is an issue advocate Wayne Newell wishes to take action against.
We don’t have a lot of time to teach the language in the school, compared to other subject areas. Everybody wants the kids to learn and read English. They spend an inordinate amount of time doing that. My philosophy is: they can always learn English. There’s plenty of people speaking English down the road, but how many people are around to teach them Passamaquoddy?

This statement suggests that parents of school-aged children in Passamaquoddy tribal areas take a negative attitude toward the value of learning the Passamaquoddy language. English fluency is seen as more important and more valuable than Passamaquoddy fluency. This attitude is perpetuated, even institutionalized in the local schools because English classes are given more instructional time in the school schedule. Newell’s statement also speaks to the notion that there is considerable urgency to teach and learn Passamaquoddy. Unlike English, which is a stable language, there may not always be fluent speakers around to transmit their knowledge of the language.

Danny Wyatt echoes Newell’s frustration over the lack of interest among young Washoe people in learning their indigenous language. He also speaks to the sense of urgency he sees with respect to the loss of first-language speaking elders.

The way I see their language now is that we’re kinda grasping at straws, trying to save what we can. The old people, they’re all going... they’re the ones that should be teaching this. I don’t feel I should be the one going out doing it. And the people, they don’t want to learn, or they don’t have interest in our culture and our language. It seems like...they’re waiting ‘til the last minute, and by the time they wanna try to learn it, it’s gonna be too late.

Wyatt’s statement suggests not only that elders tend to be the keepers of knowledge about their heritage language, but also that they have a certain authority, and perhaps even responsibility, to be teachers of this language and traditional knowledge. However, it is impossible to criticize the older generation for not transmitting their knowledge, if the younger generation doesn’t see the value of learning their heritage language. Wyatt expresses a fear and frustration that young peoples’ attitudes about learning Washo will not change fast enough. He worries that young
people will only understand that their elders can be an incredible resource after those elders are no longer around.

As elders die, the base of available linguistic and cultural knowledge diminishes. Others in the community who see the value of this waning knowledge of language and culture must make up for the loss by learning their heritage languages, and in turn, passing their knowledge along. According to Jerry Lipka and Esther Ilustik, “traditional knowledge is fragmenting and the task of cultural brokers must expand to include being cultural learners, learning their oral tradition.” (Lipka and Ilustik 1997: 46). In the absence of a community of elders who are able to facilitate broad-based intergenerational transmission, these ‘cultural brokers’ negotiate between traditional and modern cultures. They become “active vehicles” whose presence in the community is critical to the continuation of language use, and cultural vitality (Lipka and Ilustik 1997). When intergenerational transmission of heritage languages doesn’t occur at home, or in other informal settings, cultural brokers have the additional responsibility of expanding the domains in which indigenous language learning takes place.

Increasingly, community schools are becoming sites where indigenous language learning and the transmission of traditional culture happen in a more formal classroom setting. The question of how to include traditional cultural and linguistic knowledge in a school setting is an important one for Native language advocates. They must reconcile the desire to preserve traditional ways of knowing and learning, such as oral transmission, with the existing structure of modern schools. Many Native language advocates ask themselves to what extent they must modify Native culture in order to make it more coherent with school culture. Often, this process of cultural brokering requires Native language advocates and teachers to develop new
pedagogies for language learning, as well as new strategies to plan for the longevity of their heritage languages.

Native language advocates often assume the roles of teacher and student simultaneously. Shelley DePaul, Danny Wyatt, and Bud Lane are not first language speakers of their heritage languages. They have been charged with preserving the languages of their communities because they have proven themselves capable and charismatic leaders. Their dedication to preserving and revitalizing their Native cultures gives them a special and generally well-respected position within their tribal communities. As non-native speakers of their languages, they teach courses, and develop curricula to promote fluency, without having the extensive understanding of the grammar or lexicon that a native speaker would. Siletz and Washo each have a handful of living, native-speaking elders. Lenape has no remaining native speakers. Language advocate Shelley DePaul has had to use old recordings of heritage language speakers, and grammars, which were written by non-native linguists many years ago, to reconstruct a working corpus of linguistic data. From this pieced together understanding of the grammar and pronunciation of the Unami dialect, DePaul has developed a creative pedagogical methodology, which encourages students to use the language even if their vocabulary or fluency is limited.

DePaul describes the process of developing fluency with limited resources, paying particular attention to the difficulty of not having enough native speakers to offer an immersion-based program.

There is still no fluency. People have picked up a lot more phrases, they’re able to identify a lot more vocabulary. People won’t have fluency until they can be immersed. Chief Bob [is] an example of how the language survived... [he] doesn’t conjugate the verbs, he has his own way of indicating past and present. He uses phrases in bits and pieces that were passed on from his elders.
This statement is indicative of the way language users are creating their own fluencies in non-conventional ways. In the absence of a descriptive grammar that reflects the current state of Lenape fluency, language users are developing their own methods to enable more robust conversational language use. Lenape Chief Bob relies on memories of the way his elders spoke: the phrases they used, and the way they pronounced them to inform his own language use. This suggests a desire to reconnect with the language and traditions of one’s ancestors, to preserve a rich cultural tradition.

Danny Wyatt also addresses the issue of building interest in and knowledge of the Washo language in spite of limited resources. He talks about how difficult his own experience learning the language was, in the absence of formal instruction.

‘Cause the way I learned to talk Washo was real hard. I learned it one word at a time, in the beginning. And just in the past two years I started putting it together. And then it’s a certain way that you’ve got to put it together, you don’t talk like you talk in English.

William Jacobsen published a formal grammar of Washo in 1964. This grammar was published by a linguist, for other linguists. It was intended to be a descriptive, documentary grammar, not a teaching tool that would instruct readers in correct conversational usage. Because these materials are insufficient resources when used in the context of language instruction and fluency development, many language advocates have started to create their own instructional materials. They develop teaching methods that better suit the needs of their communities.

Shelley DePaul describes developing her pedagogical methods based on her own appraisals of what would be most effective in her community.

I surveyed the community to find out what they wanted to say, what kinds of situations they wanted to use the language...I know my people, I talk to them, I look into their eyes. I don’t use grammatical or linguistics terms in my work...I put out little conversations and lessons.
DePaul used Yahoo groups and other online forums to connect with people in her community who were interested in learning the Lenape language. She surveyed these people to get a sense of the contexts in which they were most interested in using their indigenous language. DePaul insists that a deep connection to and understanding of the people she teaches helps her to develop pedagogies that will engage her students appropriately. She finds that her students retain more, and are more comfortable speaking the language when it is taught in the form of short lessons and conversation simulations.

Wayne Newell also discusses surveying and getting a sense of who is using the language as important tools to implement effective language strategies.

...do an accurate assessment...of how many speakers you have, how many people who speak and understand versus people who understand only, and then find an assessment of who doesn’t speak at all but would like to....Number one would certainly be trying to figure out how many people would like to start doing it immediately.

Like DePaul, Newell stresses the importance of knowing who in the community is most interested in acquiring the language, and who may be qualified to help with instruction. Newell adds that only after this sort of community survey is undertaken, can language advocates begin to formalize, even institutionalize language maintenance programs. He suggests that planning for language maintenance must be a collective effort. Languages advocates must assemble teams that include tribal leaders and educators—keepers of cultural knowledge and those who have access to and an understanding of the inner workings of schools.

... get a group of people, and that group could be called tribal, as well as educators, to sit down and map out, number one: a vision, number two: specific goals in that vision....Then, figure out a way to evaluate those as you go along. That can happen easily with multiple minds working together. Number two [three], and probably most important: figure out a recruiting program in the communities. ‘Communities’ plural, which could be more than Passamaquoddy, you could also work with Maliseet, to reignite the excitement, which can, and must be done if you’re going to get participants.
Newell stresses the importance of goal setting and evaluation. Language planning is not an end in itself, but rather a means to sustaining or rekindling linguistic and cultural vitality. This statement suggests a desire to draw on the variety of resources available, and reflects the attitude that language instruction and preservation ought to be institutionalized, to the extent that having an infrastructure in place will enable advocates and teachers to coordinate their efforts. Additionally, Newell presents an attitude that favors sharing language planning strategies with other tribal communities. He mentions using specific strategies from the Maliseet language program, such as using pictures to teach new vocabulary to children. Perhaps most importantly, when seen as part of a larger pro-Native social movement, the excitement around language revitalization can be particularly contagious.

All of the language advocates whose views are presented in this work suggest that an immersion-based program would be their ideal method of language learning and transmission. Danny Wyatt says that language immersion would be the most effective way to get young people engaged in and learning their heritage language.

_We’d need an immersion type thing. My brother had an idea that you take some teenagers and put them in a house with two elders that spoke the language and just have the elders talk to them in nothing but Indian. That would be the fastest way to learn it._

However, he notes that currently, there is not enough interest among young people in making a concerted effort to learn Washo. Because they sense that their linguistic knowledge isn’t valued by younger people, elders in the community are reluctant to teach the language in an intensive, immersion-based program. Wayne Newell notes that language immersion programs require considerable planning and structure in order to be successful.

_...you can’t put them in immersion right now because you don’t have the infrastructure here for immersion yet._
This statement points out some important limitations for language planning in endangered language communities. Total immersion requires robust infrastructure, and a broad base of fluent teachers who can provide an environment in which the target language is used exclusively. Additionally, immersion requires tremendous community support. Immersion programs need defined space in order to provide an environment in which there is the exposure to English is removed (or at least limited) for the duration of the program. Similarly, immersion requires willingness on the part of community members to participate, and critically, to enroll their children in a structured program.

Perhaps because the current state of their languages’ vitality does not permit true immersion programs right now, language advocates envision their roles as including both practical language planning and acting as cultural liaisons. They see it as their task both to provide access to language resources and to connect members of their communities, young and old, in order to promote renewed cultural vitality. Shelley DePaul describes her role as resource provider in the following way.

*People who are committed to the language need to provide the resources. I’m not in it for the money, it’s just always been my passion to revitalize the language.... People in the community wanted to learn the language. I’m not concerned with publishing... I wanted to develop a conversational course.... I started by sending out lessons to the [Yahoo] group week to week, then eventually I had enough to put together a textbook.*

As DePaul articulates clearly, she sees connecting people to language resources as a critical part of her role as “language keeper.” She believes in making her texts and conversational courses available to as wide an audience as possible. Many of the ‘textbooks’ DePaul refers to are available as .pdf online, and may be downloaded by any visitor to the Lenape language program’s website. In many ways, the availability of these materials marks a departure from the

attitudes of many other language advocates. Many indigenous communities whose languages are endangered protect their sacred cultural property, so that only tribal members have access to online pedagogical materials, such as language lessons, and other course materials. DePaul says that wants as many people as possible to learn the Lenape language. She teaches courses to non-native students at Swarthmore College. She believes that anyone who wants to can and should learn the language. Each time someone new learns the language, even if she is a non-native person, Lenape has one more speaker.

Rather than exclude anyone from learning the language, DePaul discusses the ways she’s been able to bring the value of language as an inherited cultural property through the teaching strategies she employs in her community.

*The elders find it more difficult to learn the language than the children do. When we use a word or concept the elders will explain the story and culture behind it. We try to keep everyone involved in the learning of the language.*

In this way, transmission of cultural knowledge from elders to young people is still possible despite the fact that the elders no longer speak their heritage languages. Relying on the memory of elders to give context and tell stories reinforces their role as keepers of traditional knowledge. Similarly, children learn to value intergenerational transmission, and gain an appreciation for how their heritage language relates to their unique cultural identity. Bud Lane echoes DePaul’s sentiment that the wisdom of elders is critical to understanding the deep connection between language and culture.

*[Elders are] the ones who lend clarity to everything. I can go through mechanically, and teach the language, but there’s just certain things that were said...they remember their aunt or uncle having said something a certain way; it’s invaluable.*

Like DePaul, Lane emphasizes the critical value of elders as keepers of traditional understanding of both language and culture. Elders often remember how the language was used when it was
spoken in more contexts and by more people in the community. For this reason, they are able to offer rich insights on when certain words were used, how they were pronounced, and how new language users can connect their learning to the traditional ways of their ancestors.

Like DePaul and Lane, Wayne Newell was eager to discuss the role of language advocates as community liaisons, who help others access language resources.

*Community information, you can do a lot of that now with the internet. That's such a blessing, email, that kind of thing. So there's lots of ways in which it can happen. Rely a lot on the wisdom of elders, obviously, but you want to rely also on the administrative capability of younger people to keep this all together.*

This statement embeds several important attitudes. Here, Newell is advocating technology as a useful tool for connecting language advocates and teachers to those in their community who are interested in learning the language. Additionally, he highlights the importance of drawing on intergenerational resources to make the work of language maintenance and revitalization successful. He suggests that elders and young people have distinct skills and insights to share with their communities—that each of these groups has something valuable to contribute.

Language advocates draw on a variety of roles, skills, and strategies to mediate between traditional Native and modern cultures. In doing so, they engage the diversity of their communities to promote active language teaching and learning.

### 11. Indigenous Worldview

Linguistic and cultural revitalization are inherently connected enterprises. Each of the language advocates whose views are presented in this paper asserts that language and culture cannot be abstracted away from one another. Often efforts to revitalize language are part of broader efforts to retain or regain political autonomy, tribal land base, and a sense of Native identity (Hinton and Hale 2001). Passamaquoddy language advocate, Wayne Newell, teaches
music as a way of inspiring interest in Native language and cultural identity. He speaks of the instrumentation and rhythms that are unique to Passamaquoddy music. Music, according to Newell, helps young people to take interest in their native culture and language.

*I hear more and more songs being sung in the native format and the native arrangement. The other thing I notice is that they don’t sing them exactly the way we do, my generation. They add their own, which is okay with me.*

The idea that young people can make the music and the language their own demonstrates the unique role that music has in helping people understand themselves within a larger sense of cultural heritage.

On the Siletz reservation, language learning and revitalization has led to a revival of traditional Feather Dances. According to Bud Lane, the development and success of language programs can in large part be attributed to a desire among community leaders to relearn Feather Dances, and perform them at tribal ceremonies.

*From that work on the dances came more and more language in the form of songs, and of prayers, and of dance protocols that have to be conducted in the language, so one kind of called for the other.*

As this statement indicates, it is impossible to perform a dance ceremony without voicing the associated prayers and songs in the Siletz Dee-ni language. Lane explains,

*We have ways of describing different things that there isn’t a real correlation for in English. To do [ceremonies] properly, you have to have a grasp of the language. The English language doesn’t do it justice.*

The prayers and songs lose their sacred value when they are translated. Ceremonies and dance performances are community events. When the community gathers around a sacred practice, people feel a deepened sense of connection to their culture, heritage, and language.
For Washo language advocate and teacher Danny Wyatt, the connection between language and preservation of traditional culture can be conveyed subtly in everyday lessons. Wyatt often teaches the traditional craft of basket weaving to young people in his community.

...when I teach a basket class, I don’t like them to speak in English. The words, like for an awl when you make a bowl basket, that’s called a mibi’, and that’s what I teach them to call it. And your knife is a taowi’, and that’s what they gotta call it. So every class I teach...there’s language there, because our culture and our language is all one and the same, you can’t have one without the other.

In this way, students may learn their language casually, in the context of learning a traditional craft. Learning in this way, helps young Washoe people to see their language and culture as inextricably connected. Wyatt articulates a view he shares with his fellow language advocates: that you cannot preserve cultural vitality without also preserving language.

Shelley DePaul echoes the idea that language and culture are necessarily linked:

*The language of the Lenape is a living language through which the web of life flows, and it is permeated with the notions of interconnectedness, humility, reverence and a deep sense of where each individual belongs in the scheme of things, from family relationships to relationships with the natural world. A non-Native person may observe a Native who appears to be speaking to the spirit of a tree and walk away with a notion of how "primitive" such a practice is. In his world, and language, trees don't have spirits, and so the trees will ignore him* (DePaul 2008).

Here DePaul elegantly articulates several important language ideologies. She suggests that the Lenape language is alive: an important notion, especially given the limited Lenape-speaking population. Despite a dearth of native speakers, a language can continue to thrive if people commit to preserving and learning it. This demonstrates the value of community-based language revitalization. Similarly, she explores the notion that language connects the Lenape people to a sense of who they are with respect to their Native identity, community, and the natural environment. Without an understanding of their heritage language, a distinctly indigenous worldview is unavailable to Lenape people. Every language encodes a unique understanding of
the world. When Native people speak their indigenous languages they gain the ability to express and understand their identity within a distinctly Native worldview.

12. Conclusion

By adding the voices of native advocates to the literature on language revitalization, I hope to demonstrate the unique value of indigenous ideology and worldview as they inform language revitalization in practice. In constructing a narrative around these advocates’ expressions of the value of the languages and how they envision their roles as language activists, I found many commonalities among their strategies for language preservation.

Most of the literature on language revitalization has been written by linguists and ethnologists who make scientific arguments to stress the importance of preserving linguistic diversity. As outsiders, they often look at the plight of language endangerment from the perspective of what the scientific community stands to gain from having as many of the world’s languages documented and archived as possible. In his famous call to action, Linguist Michael Krauss demands “some rethinking of our priorities, lest linguistics go down in history as the only science that has presided obliviously over the disappearance of 90% of the very field to which it is dedicated” (1992). Linguists have effectively made the case that documentation of endangered languages may provide evidence of linguistic phenomena that would otherwise remain unattested. However, the frameworks that have been used to categorize the degree of endangerment have been standardized. They place languages on a unidirectional scale from safe, to threatened, to critically endangered, and finally, to extinct. The more humanist arguments paint the plight of endangerment as a threat to cultural diversity. These standardized arguments, though compelling, abstract the phenomenon of endangerment away from the people whom it
actually affects. In their abstraction, these arguments dehumanize the tragedy of language endangerment, because languages are presented in isolation from the people who speak them.

This is problematic for historically oppressed and subordinated speakers of endangered languages, and in particular speakers of North American indigenous languages. In order to understand the humanity within a language, we must include the voices of the language users. We must include the voices of people whose investment in language revitalization is personal rather than academic. Inclusion of native perspectives on indigenous language revitalization enables new interpretations of the value of linguistic preservation.
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